The Impact of Globalization on Linguistic and Cultural Sovereignty in Mali

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the impact of globalization on linguistic and cultural sovereignty in Mali, a nation characterized by its rich tapestry of languages and ethnic diversity. Utilizing a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 500 survey respondents, 30 interviews, and 6 focus group discussions across various demographic segments. The survey revealed that 85% of participants support the preservation of local languages, with Bamanankan spoken by 60% at home, yet 50% acknowledge the expanding influence of global languages, particularly among the youth. Findings from interviews pointed out key themes such as generational language shift, cultural erosion, and resilience of local traditions, with 75% of interviewees expressing concerns about the decline of indigenous languages and their cultural implications. Focus groups reinforced the need for a national language policy, with 80% of participants advocating for community-driven initiatives to promote linguistic diversity. This strong support highlights the importance of engaging local communities in efforts to preserve and enhance linguistic variety. Document analysis revealed significant gaps between policy objectives and implementation challenges, primarily due to resource constraints and the predominance of French in education. This study reveals the need for balanced strategies that support local languages while addressing the pressures of globalization. Such approaches are essential for preserving Mali's linguistic and cultural heritage for future generations.

Keywords: Cultural erosion, Globalization, Language preservation, Linguistic diversity, Mali.

Küreselleşmenin Mali'de Dilsel ve Kültürel Egemenlik Üzerindeki Etkisi

ÖZET

Bu makale, zengin dilsel ve kültürel çeşitliliğiyle dikkat çeken Mali'de küreselleşmenin dilsel ve kültürel egemenlik üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir. Çalışmada, birbirine paralel ilerleyen karma yöntem yaklaşımı benimsenmiş ve farklı demografik grupları kapsayan geniş bir veri seti toplanmıştır. Toplamda 500 kişiyle anket uygulanmış, 30 kişiyle birebir görüşmeler yapılmış ve 6 odak grup tartışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Anket bulguları, katılımcıların %85'inin yerel dillerin korunmasını desteklediğini göstermektedir. Ev ortamında en çok konuşulan yerel dilin Bamanankan olduğu ve bu dilin %60 oranında kullanıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Ancak katılımcıların %50'si, özellikle genç kuşaklar arasında küresel dillerin etkisinin giderek arttığını belirtmiştir. Görüşmelerde, kuşaklar arası dil değişimi, kültürel değerlerde aşınma ve geleneksel pratiklerin direnç göstermesi gibi önemli temalar öne çıkmıştır. Görüşme yapılan kişilerin %75'i yerel dillerin gerilemesinden ve bunun kültürel sonuçlarından duyduğu endişeyi dile getirmiştir. Odak grup tartışmaları ise, ulusal ölçekte bir dil politikasına olan ihtiyacı vurgulamış ve katılımcıların %80'i yerel toplulukların öncülük edeceği girişimlerle dilsel çeşitliliğin teşvik edilmesi gerektiğini savunmuştur. Belgelerin analizinden elde edilen bulgular, dil politikalarının hedefleri ile uygulama süreci arasında önemli boşluklar bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Bu boşlukların temel nedenleri arasında kaynak yetersizliği ve eğitim sisteminde Fransızcanın baskınlığı yer almaktadır. Elde edilen tüm veriler, yerel dillerin desteklenmesini ve aynı zamanda

küreselleşmenin yarattığı baskılarla başa çıkabilecek dengeli stratejilerin geliştirilmesini gerekli kılmaktadır. Bu tür bütüncül yaklaşımlar, Mali'nin dilsel ve kültürel mirasının gelecek kuşaklara aktarılması açısından kritik bir öneme sahiptir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Küreselleşme, Kültürel Aşınma, Dilin Korunması, Dilsel Çeşitlilik, Mali.*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, a multifaceted phenomenon characterized by the increasing interconnectedness of nations through trade, technology, and cultural exchange, has profoundly influenced societies worldwide. While it has fostered economic growth and facilitated the exchange of ideas and innovations, it has also raised concerns regarding the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity, particularly in developing countries. Mali, a West African nation with a rich tapestry of languages and cultural practices, presents a compelling case for examining the complex dynamics between globalization and linguistic and cultural sovereignty.

Mali's linguistic landscape is marked by the coexistence of over a dozen national languages, with Bamanankan serving as a lingua franca alongside French, the language of work. The country's cultural identity is equally diverse, shaped by its various ethnic groups, including the Bambara, Songhay, Tuareg, and Bwa, each with its distinct language and traditions (Diagana, 2012). However, the forces of globalization, primarily driven by the global dominance of Western media, communication technologies, and economic systems, have increasingly marginalized local languages and cultural practices. This trend has raised concerns about the erosion of Mali's linguistic and cultural sovereignty (Bamgbose, 2000).

Linguistic sovereignty refers to the ability of a nation or community to maintain and promote its indigenous languages without undue external influence (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Similarly, cultural sovereignty involves the preservation and promotion of a community's cultural heritage and values in the face of external pressures. In Mali, these concepts have been challenged by the spread of global languages, particularly French and English, as well as the proliferation of Western cultural norms through the internet, media, and educational systems (Konaté, 2009).

Globalization has also introduced new economic and political realities, further complicating efforts to safeguard local languages and traditions. While the integration of Mali into global markets has created new opportunities for development, it has also necessitated the adoption of global languages for economic and political engagement, often at the expense of local languages (Mazrui & Mazrui, 1998). This has resulted in the younger generation increasingly prioritizing global languages over their native tongues. As a consequence, the intergenerational transmission of Mali's linguistic heritage is threatened (Di Carlo & Good, 2014).

In this article, I explored the impact of globalization on linguistic and cultural sovereignty in Mali. I drew on a range of theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence to support my analysis. I aim to examine how global forces are shaping language policies, cultural practices, and identity formation in Mali, and what implications this has for the future of the country's linguistic and cultural diversity. My objective is to make a contribution to the wider conversation on language preservation by examining the interaction between global and local factors. The focus is on cultural sustainability in the context of globalization.

METHOD

A convergent parallel mixed-methods design is adopted in this study, wherein both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then integrated to form a holistic

picture of the phenomenon under investigation. This design allows for triangulation, which enhances the validity of the findings. It ensures that the results from one method corroborate those from another.

To gather quantitative data, a structured survey is used, targeting a broad cross-section of the population, including various ethnic groups, linguistic communities, and age groups across urban and rural areas in Mali. The survey aims to capture respondents' language use patterns, attitudes toward local and global languages, perceptions of cultural change, and experiences with globalization in their everyday lives. Specific attention is paid to language use in the home, education, and the workplace, as well as the consumption of global media and cultural products. A sample of 500 participants is selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across key demographic categories, including age, gender, ethnicity, and geographic location.

In addition to surveys, structured interviews are conducted with key informants, such as linguists, cultural leaders, educators, and policymakers, to gather qualitative insights into the effects of globalization on Mali's linguistic and cultural sovereignty. These interviews explore perceptions of shifts in language use and cultural practices, the role of education and media in these changes, and efforts to preserve indigenous languages and cultural heritage. This method provides in-depth perspectives that contextualize the survey findings, particularly in understanding the lived experiences of language users across various social settings. A total of 30 participants are selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation from diverse linguistic and cultural communities, as well as different sectors like education, media, and government. The interviews are audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded for thematic analysis.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) serve as an interactive platform to delve deeper into the community-level impact of globalization on language and culture. Six focus group discussions are organized with members from different ethnic and linguistic communities, including the Bambara, Songhay, and Bwa. Each group comprises 6–8 participants, facilitating a range of perspectives on how globalization affects cultural norms, traditional practices, and intergenerational language transmission. FGDs are particularly useful for understanding collective views on cultural sovereignty, the pressures communities face as global languages, and practices become more dominant. Moderated by trained facilitators, the discussions are recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Moreover, relevant documents, such as language policies, cultural preservation initiatives, and educational curricula, are analyzed to comprehend the official stance on linguistic and cultural preservation amid globalization. Key documents, including the "National Policy for the Promotion of Malian Languages" and the "Cultural Policy of Mali," are reviewed to assess governmental efforts in promoting linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. These policies are compared with actual practices observed in the field to identify gaps between policy and implementation.

Quantitative data from the surveys are analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, providing an overview of language use and cultural engagement patterns. Descriptive statistics—means, frequencies, and standard deviations—are employed, and statistical software (SPSS) is utilized for analysis, with results presented in graphical formats. For qualitative data, thematic analysis is used to interpret information gathered from interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. This process involves coding the data to identify recurring themes related to globalization's impact on linguistic and cultural sovereignty. Key themes such as "language shift," "cultural erosion," and "resilience of local traditions" are extracted and interpreted to shed light on the lived experiences of Malians facing globalization.

Ethical considerations are paramount in this study, with informed consent obtained from all participants prior to their involvement. Participants are assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and all data

are anonymized during the analysis and reporting process. However, this study is limited by the scope of its sample size, which may not fully capture the diversity of Mali's linguistic and cultural landscape. Furthermore, the rapid pace of globalization means that the findings may not entirely reflect the long-term impacts on linguistic and cultural sovereignty. Nevertheless, the use of multiple methods and triangulation helps mitigate these limitations and strengthens the study's validity.

FINDINGS

Findings From the Survey

The survey's demographic information revealed a youthful population, with 55% of respondents aged 18 to 35. This suggests that a significant portion of the respondents may be more exposed to and influenced by globalization and cultural change, as younger generations often engage more with global trends. The relatively smaller percentages of older respondents (36–45 at 20%, 46–55 at 15%, and 56 and above at 10%) indicate that language use patterns and attitudes might vary significantly across age groups, with younger individuals potentially adopting more flexible or global language practices, while older respondents may hold more traditional views. These variations across age demographics could provide valuable insights into generational shifts in language use and perceptions of cultural change in Mali.

Graph 1:

Age distribution of respondents
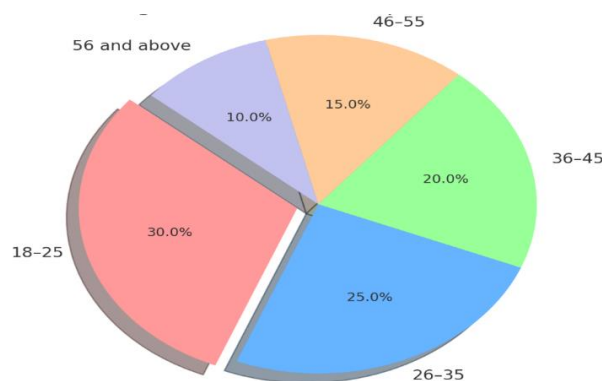
Source: Koita, 2024.

The survey data on gender showed an almost equal distribution between male (50%) and female (45%) respondents, with a small representation of other genders (5%), ensuring that perspectives across gender groups are well represented. The majority of respondents (70%) live in urban areas, while 30% are from rural regions, highlighting a predominantly urban sample. Education levels also reflect diversity, with 45% having higher education, 30% with secondary education, and 20% with primary education. The 5% with no formal education indicates that a small but important portion of the population may face different challenges regarding language use and cultural adaptation. Ethnic composition shows Bambara as the largest group (30%), followed by Fulani and Songhay (15% each), representing a range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In terms of language use in the home, Bamanankan is the dominant language, spoken by 60% of respondents, with significant portions also using Fulfulde (20%) and Songhay (30%). The data reflects Mali's linguistic diversity, with many respondents using multiple languages at home. Bamanankan is used always or often by 70% of respondents, showing its prominence, while French is less commonly used, with 40% of respondents reporting they never use it at home. This suggests that local languages,

particularly Bamanankan, are more central in daily interactions, while French is limited to certain contexts, perhaps related to formal education or professional settings.

The survey data revealed a strong consensus on the importance of maintaining local languages, with 85% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. This sentiment aligns with support for integrating local languages in education, as 85% favor their inclusion. Despite French being the primary language of education for 75% of respondents, there is a clear desire to see Bamanankan and other local languages more prominently featured. However, understanding of lessons taught in French varies, with only 40% comprehending them very well, indicating potential barriers to effective learning. Support for using Bamanankan in formal education is high, with 80% in favor, suggesting that local languages are seen as crucial to educational success. Meanwhile, 75% of respondents agree that global languages are emphasized in schools, reflecting the dual pressures of maintaining linguistic traditions while adapting to global influences.

In the workplace, Bamanankan is the dominant language, with 60% using it regularly, though French is still significant at 25%. This reflects the importance of local languages in professional settings, yet French remains a key player. There is strong support (65%) for using Bamanankan in workplaces, alongside the belief that global languages are essential for professional development, as indicated by 85% agreement. The consumption of global media is widespread, with 65% watching it frequently and 80% perceiving its influence on cultural changes. Despite this, the preservation of local cultural practices remains crucial for 95% of respondents, showing a tension between embracing global content and safeguarding traditional values. Lastly, while most respondents believe local languages should be preserved, 50% feel that global languages are expanding at the expense of local ones, raising concerns about linguistic and cultural sustainability in an increasingly globalized world.

Findings From Interview

Language shift

One of the primary themes emerging from the data is the generational language shift, where younger generations are increasingly adopting global languages, particularly in social settings. This shift is attributed to the influence of schools and social media, with 65% of respondents noting that younger people are more likely to switch to global languages compared to older generations. The concern about the erosion of local languages is closely tied to cultural identity, as 75% of participants expressed the belief that the decline of indigenous languages directly undermines their cultural identity. Despite the acknowledged need for global languages to access opportunities, 70% of respondents agreed that there is a tension between maintaining local languages and adapting to global linguistic trends.

Cultural erosion

Globalization has also contributed to the erosion of traditional cultural practices, with 60% of interviewees observing that ceremonies and dances have either evolved or diminished due to external influences. This cultural erosion, combined with the dominance of global media, has led to concerns that younger generations are losing connection with their heritage. For instance, 70% of respondents agreed that global media negatively impacts local language use. Furthermore, the education system is seen as failing to adequately promote indigenous languages, with 65% of participants believing that it does not prioritize local languages enough. There is a growing fear that, without urgent action, indigenous languages may be lost within a generation, as indicated by 90% of interviewees.

Resilience of local traditions

Despite the challenges posed by globalization, there is evidence of resilience in Mali's cultural and linguistic traditions. Over half of the respondents (55%) noted that certain cultural practices, such as

music and storytelling, have been preserved, continuing to serve as "lifelines" for the preservation of Malian identity. Additionally, 60% of respondents believed that Malian media could play a key role in promoting indigenous languages if adequately supported. The influence of the Malian diaspora is another factor contributing to this resilience, with 70% of participants acknowledging positive contributions from the diaspora, even as they bring new ideas and experiences that could further shape Mali's cultural landscape.

Efforts toward preservation

Finally, the interviews highlight efforts to preserve indigenous languages and cultural heritage. The majority of respondents (85%) identified resource limitations and lack of political support as major obstacles in preservation efforts. However, 75% of participants emphasized the importance of community-driven initiatives and comprehensive strategies involving education reforms. There is a widespread call for collaboration between educators and cultural leaders, with 80% of respondents agreeing that such partnerships are essential for safeguarding Mali's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Focus Group Findings

A pervasive theme across multiple groups, particularly among elders and women, is the erosion of traditional cultural practices, with elders noting that younger generations are adopting foreign customs and lifestyles, indicating a significant cultural shift due to globalization. Women observed changes in cultural norms surrounding marriage, clothing, and child-rearing practices influenced by Western media, which contribute to a perceived threat to the community's identity. Participants expressed concern over losing their heritage, as highlighted by a participant's quote: "Our children speak more French and English than Bamanankan. They are forgetting their roots."

Language shift is another critical theme highlighted in several groups, as elders pointed out that, although Bamanankan remains dominant, younger Malians increasingly use French and English, threatening the intergenerational transmission of native languages. Urban youth reflected a preference for global languages in academic and professional settings while still attempting to maintain their connection to Bamanankan at home. The discussions reveal a complex landscape where the use of local languages is declining as global languages gain prominence, driven largely by educational systems and media influences. "We learn English to get better jobs, but I still try to speak Bamanankan with my grandparents. It's important to keep that connection," said a participant.

Urban youth expressed mixed feelings about globalization, describing it as a double-edged sword that brings both opportunities and challenges. They acknowledged that while globalization facilitates access to global knowledge and experiences, it also dilutes local cultural practices. This theme reflects a broader negotiation of identity, where youth are striving to find a balance between embracing global trends and preserving their Malian identity. As one participant argued, "It's a struggle between what is modern and what is our culture."

Rural community members emphasized their pride in passing on local languages and customs to younger generations, indicating a strong commitment to maintaining cultural continuity. They highlighted that physical isolation has shielded their communities from the direct impacts of globalization, although media influences are gradually introducing foreign languages and values. As one participant noted, "Our children still speak the language of our ancestors, but they are starting to imitate what they see on TV."

Despite the pressures of globalization, many groups expressed resilience, with rural participants noting a resistance to external influences while maintaining traditional practices and language usage. Additionally, the women's group recognized the challenges posed by globalization, while also acknowledging the empowerment it offers, particularly in education and job opportunities. This dual

perspective reflects a nuanced understanding of how globalization can simultaneously threaten and empower cultural identities, as one participant stated, "We try to teach our children the old ways, but they are more interested in what they see on their phones."

Policymakers and educators highlighted the urgent need for a national language policy to promote local languages in education and public life, expressing concern over the dominance of French in the educational system, which marginalizes local languages and contributes to their decline. The focus group discussions underscored the importance of developing balanced policies that protect Mali's linguistic and cultural heritage while adapting to the demands of globalization. As one participant stated, "We must find a way to integrate local languages into our schools if we want to preserve our identity."

In whole, the findings illustrate a complex interplay between globalization and Mali's linguistic and cultural sovereignty. While there are genuine concerns about cultural erosion and language shift, there are also instances of resilience and adaptability. Participants voiced a need for balanced policies that not only safeguard local languages and traditions but also leverage the opportunities presented by globalization. The discussions reflect a collective desire to navigate the challenges of globalization while fostering a rich, diverse cultural landscape that honors Mali's heritage.

Findings From Relevant Documents

The findings from the analysis of documents on linguistic and cultural preservation in Mali highlight several key themes. These themes include policy objectives versus implementation challenges, community involvement and grassroots initiatives, and the impact of globalization. Additionally, resource constraints and the necessity for public awareness and education are also significant factors.

Policy objectives versus implementation challenges

The National Policy for the Promotion of Malian Languages and the Cultural Policy of Mali set ambitious goals to safeguard local languages and cultural heritage. However, significant gaps exist in translating these objectives into practice. Although the policies advocate for integrating local languages into education and public life, French predominantly dominates classroom instruction. This disconnect not only undermines the intended promotion of local languages but also weakens cultural transmission between generations. The lack of trained teachers proficient in local languages further complicates effective policy execution, signaling a critical need for systemic change.

Community involvement and grassroots initiatives

Both policies emphasize the importance of community involvement in language and cultural preservation efforts. Grassroots initiatives led by local NGOs and community members reflect a strong desire to engage in preserving cultural practices and local languages. However, the lack of governmental support and resources limits the reach and effectiveness of these initiatives. Community members are committed to reviving traditional practices, but their efforts are often hindered by inadequate funding and infrastructure. This situation underscores the need for stronger collaboration between local entities and the government.

The impact of globalization

Globalization emerges as a significant challenge to the preservation of Mali's linguistic and cultural identity. The influx of foreign cultural influences through media and technology often overshadows local traditions, particularly among younger generations who are drawn to global trends. This cultural dilution threatens the integrity of traditional practices and contributes to the erosion of linguistic diversity. The policies acknowledge these challenges, yet the actual implementation often fails to counteract the negative effects of globalization on local languages and cultural heritage.

Resource constraints

A recurrent theme in the findings is the lack of financial and material resources dedicated to implementing linguistic and cultural policies effectively. Educational institutions often lack the necessary teaching materials in local languages. This deficiency hinders the adoption of multilingual education. Additionally, cultural initiatives often depend on external funding, which can be unpredictable and insufficient for sustainable impact. The absence of adequate resources poses a significant barrier to achieving the policies' goals and reinforces existing disparities in linguistic and cultural preservation efforts.

Necessity for public awareness and education

The findings highlight a critical need for increased public awareness regarding the importance of linguistic and cultural preservation. Many individuals remain unaware of the existing policies and the opportunities for participation in preservation efforts. Enhancing public understanding can foster greater community engagement and support for cultural initiatives. Furthermore, robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to assess policy effectiveness and ensure accountability, preventing ineffective practices from continuing unchecked.

In sum, the analysis of key documents reveals a commitment to promoting linguistic diversity and cultural heritage in Mali amid the challenges posed by globalization. However, significant gaps persist between policy intentions and actual practices, particularly in the education sector. Addressing these gaps will require concerted efforts from the government, local communities, and civil society to create a supportive environment for linguistic and cultural preservation. Ensuring that Mali's rich linguistic and cultural diversity is preserved for future generations is essential for maintaining the country's identity and heritage.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of survey findings on language use and cultural adaptation in Mali provides a nuanced understanding of the interplay between globalization and local traditions. The demographic data reveal a youthful population, with a significant majority aged 18 to 35, aligning with previous studies that emphasize how younger generations are often more susceptible to global influences and cultural change (Pieterse, 1995). The survey's findings suggest a generational shift in language practices, where younger individuals may adopt more flexible or global language habits, as noted by Fishman (1991), who argued that younger speakers often prioritize global languages for their perceived economic benefits and social mobility.

The equal gender distribution in the sample allows for a comprehensive examination of language attitudes across genders, highlighting that both men and women contribute to the discourse on cultural preservation. The predominance of urban respondents echoes trends observed in studies by Becker et al. (2015), who found that urban environments often facilitate the adoption of global languages while simultaneously presenting challenges for the preservation of local linguistic practices.

The linguistic data indicate that Bamanankan remains a vital language in domestic settings, with 60% of respondents speaking it at home. This supports the findings of Lentz (2005), who argued that local languages play a crucial role in fostering community identity and cultural continuity. The survey's indication that 70% of respondents use Bamanankan regularly underscores its importance in daily interactions, despite the encroachment of French and global languages. The preference for local languages in education, with 85% of respondents advocating for their inclusion, reinforces the ideas of UNESCO (2003) regarding the importance of mother-tongue instruction for effective learning outcomes and cultural preservation.

Moreover, the survey reveals significant concerns regarding the dominance of French in educational settings, as 75% of respondents report it as the primary language of instruction, which resonates with findings by Ouane and Glanz (2010) about the marginalization of local languages in formal education systems across Africa. This gap between the language of instruction and students' linguistic backgrounds may contribute to the reported difficulties in understanding lessons taught in French, with only 40% of respondents expressing strong comprehension. The strong support for using Bamanankan in educational contexts (80%) reflects a collective recognition of the need for a more inclusive linguistic approach that values local languages as vital to educational success.

In the workplace, the survey highlights a duality in language use, with 60% of respondents regularly using Bamanankan, while 25% report using French, demonstrating that local languages remain significant in professional settings despite globalization's pressures. The finding that 85% of respondents recognize the importance of global languages for professional development aligns with the perspectives outlined by Crystal (2000), who noted that global languages provide broader opportunities in an interconnected world.

The widespread consumption of global media (65%) and its perceived influence on cultural changes reflect the tensions between embracing global content and maintaining local cultural practices. This resonates with Appadurai's (1996) concept of "globalization from below," where local communities negotiate their identities in response to global influences. Finally, the acknowledgment from 50% of respondents that global languages are expanding at the expense of local ones raises critical questions about the sustainability of linguistic and cultural diversity in an increasingly globalized landscape, a concern echoed in studies by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) on the impacts of globalization on minority languages.

The findings from the structured interviews reveal critical themes regarding the impacts of globalization on Mali's linguistic and cultural sovereignty. The specific themes identified include "language shift," "cultural erosion," and the "resilience of local traditions." These themes resonate with existing literature on globalization and its effects on local cultures.

The generational language shift identified in the interviews aligns with previous studies that highlight the tendency for younger generations to adopt global languages, particularly due to the influences of education systems and social media (Pieterse, 1995). The finding that 65% of respondents perceive a shift towards global languages among youth reflects the work of Fishman (1991), who noted that younger speakers often prioritize dominant languages for better socioeconomic opportunities. Moreover, the expressed concern that 75% of participants believe the decline of indigenous languages undermines cultural identity mirrors findings by García (2009), who argues that language is intrinsically linked to cultural identity, and the erosion of one leads to the weakening of the other. The tension noted by 70% of respondents between maintaining local languages and adapting to global trends reflects a broader discourse on language dynamics in the context of globalization (Bourdieu, 1991).

The interviews also reveal that globalization contributes to cultural erosion, with 60% of respondents observing changes in traditional practices such as ceremonies and dances. Appadurai (1996), who contends that the proliferation of global media often dilutes local cultural practices, leading to a disconnection from heritage, supports this finding. The observation that 70% of interviewees believe global media negatively impacts local language use echoes previous research by Crystal (2000), which indicates that exposure to global media can lead to decreased use of minority languages and cultural practices. Additionally, the sentiment that the education system fails to promote indigenous languages, supported by 65% of participants, aligns with findings from Ouane and Glanz (2010), which emphasize the marginalization of local languages in educational contexts throughout Africa.

Despite these challenges, the resilience of local traditions is a prominent theme in the interviews. The notion that 55% of respondents see music and storytelling as vital for preserving Malian identity aligns with the assertions of Hobsbawm (1983) regarding the role of folklore and tradition in sustaining cultural identity amidst change. The belief that Malian media could promote indigenous languages (60% of respondents) resonates with previous studies by Mufwene (2001), who advocates for the importance of local media in revitalizing and preserving minority languages. Furthermore, the acknowledgment of the positive contributions from the Malian diaspora (70% of participants) highlights the potential of transnational networks in cultural preservation, as discussed by Levitt (2001), who notes that diaspora communities can both maintain ties to their home cultures and adapt to their host societies.

The interviews also underscore the importance of community-driven initiatives in language and cultural preservation, with 85% of respondents identifying resource limitations and lack of political support as major obstacles. This finding aligns with the work of Fishman (1991), who argues that successful language preservation efforts require strong community involvement and support. The emphasis on collaboration between educators and cultural leaders (80% agreement among respondents) reflects the integrated approaches suggested by UNESCO (2003), which advocate for policies that consider local contexts and community needs to protect linguistic diversity.

The findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs) provide a nuanced understanding of the impact of globalization on linguistic and cultural sovereignty in Mali. Key themes identified include cultural erosion, language shift, cultural hybridity, intergenerational language transmission, resilience and resistance, empowerment, and the need for language policy. These themes resonate with previous research in the field, highlighting their relevance in the ongoing discourse.

The theme of cultural erosion, particularly articulated by elders and women, aligns with previous studies highlighting the adverse effects of globalization on local traditions and cultural practices. Research by Held and McGrew (2000) discusses how the influx of global media and Western customs can erode indigenous cultural identities, a sentiment echoed by focus group participants who expressed concerns about losing their heritage. As noted in the findings, the quote from a participant—"Our children speak more French and English than Bamanankan. They are forgetting their roots"—underscores the generational shift towards foreign customs, paralleling findings from Mohanty (2006), who indicates that the younger generation often favors global norms over local traditions.

The discussions on language shift reflect broader linguistic trends observed in multilingual contexts. The focus group participants noted that while Bamanankan remains dominant, younger generations increasingly adopt French and English, echoing findings by Fishman (1991) regarding the shift towards dominant languages in multilingual societies. The urban youth's preference for global languages for academic and professional advancement mirrors the observations of García (2009), who argues that such language shifts can jeopardize the intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages. The balancing act described by participants—"We learn English to get better jobs, but I still try to speak Bamanankan with my grandparents"—illustrates the conflict between economic necessity and cultural preservation, resonating with the work of Mufwene (2001) on language ecology.

The theme of cultural hybridity identified by urban youth aligns with the literature on the negotiation of identity in a globalized world. The acknowledgment that globalization brings both opportunities and challenges reflects Appadurai's (1996) concept of the "globalization of culture," where local identities are reshaped in response to global influences. The participant's statement—"It's a struggle between what is modern and what is our culture"—captures the ongoing negotiation that many young people face, mirroring Homi K. Bhabha's (1994) discussions on hybridity as a site of cultural negotiation and identity formation.

The pride expressed by rural community members in passing on local languages highlights a commitment to cultural continuity that resonates with previous studies on language maintenance. As noted by Edwards (1994), intergenerational transmission of language is crucial for the survival of minority languages. The observation that rural communities are somewhat insulated from globalization's direct effects, though media influences are gradually permeating, reflects the work of Lewis and Jones (1995), who emphasize the importance of community resilience in language preservation.

The findings on resilience and resistance, particularly among rural participants, suggest a strong cultural identity that persists despite globalization pressures. This notion is supported by the literature, including studies by Hobsbawm (1983), which highlight how local communities often resist external cultural influences while maintaining their traditions. The dual perspective shared by the women's group—that globalization can both threaten and empower cultural identities—aligns with findings by Lull (2000), who notes that globalization can lead to cultural hybridization while also providing opportunities for empowerment, particularly in education and employment.

Finally, the focus group discussions emphasize the urgent need for a national language policy to promote local languages in education and public life. This aligns with research by Ouane and Glanz (2010), which advocates for the integration of indigenous languages into formal education systems to combat their decline. The call for balanced policies that protect linguistic and cultural heritage while addressing globalization's demands reflects a broader consensus in the literature on the importance of policy frameworks in safeguarding minority languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

The analysis of documents regarding linguistic and cultural preservation in Mali highlights several critical themes that resonate with previous research on language policy, community involvement, and the effects of globalization. These themes also address resource constraints and the need for public awareness. Each theme reflects the ongoing challenges faced by many nations in balancing modernity with cultural heritage.

The findings illustrate a significant gap between the ambitious objectives outlined in the National Policy for the Promotion of Malian Languages and the Cultural Policy of Mali and their actual implementation. Despite these policies advocating for the integration of local languages into education, French remains dominant in classrooms, echoing concerns raised by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) about the disconnect between policy formulation and execution in multilingual contexts. This disconnect undermines cultural transmission between generations, as noted by the UNESCO (2003) report, which emphasizes the importance of mother tongue instruction in promoting cultural continuity. The lack of trained teachers proficient in local languages further complicates policy implementation, aligning with findings from May (2001), who argues that effective language policy requires adequate teacher training and resources.

The emphasis on community involvement in language and cultural preservation reflects research on the vital role of grassroots initiatives. According to Grin (2003), local community engagement is crucial for the success of language policies, as it fosters ownership and participation in preservation efforts. However, the findings also highlight the limitations faced by grassroots initiatives due to inadequate government support and resources, which resonate with Heller's (2007) work on language policies that often fail to align with community needs and priorities. This disconnect calls for stronger collaboration between local entities and the government to enhance the effectiveness of cultural preservation efforts, as emphasized by Hornberger (2006) in her framework for sustainable language development.

The impact of globalization on Mali's linguistic and cultural identity is a prominent theme in the findings. The overwhelming presence of foreign cultural influences, particularly among younger generations, threatens traditional practices and linguistic diversity. This observation aligns with Appadurai's (1996) discussion of globalization as a double-edged sword, where the influx of global

trends can lead to both cultural exchange and cultural erosion. Additionally, the UNESCO (2005) report underscores the need for local cultures to adapt to globalization without losing their essential characteristics, highlighting the challenges faced by policymakers in mitigating the negative effects of globalization while promoting local languages and cultures.

The recurring theme of resource constraints affecting the implementation of linguistic and cultural policies is well documented in the literature. Lack of financial and material resources significantly hampers educational initiatives that promote multilingualism. Cummins (2000) emphasizes that adequate funding and resources are crucial for effective language education programs. Furthermore, the dependency of cultural initiatives on unpredictable external funding, as noted in the findings, reflects the concerns raised by Wright (2004) about the sustainability of language and cultural programs in the absence of stable financial support.

The findings highlight a critical need for public awareness regarding linguistic and cultural preservation. Many individuals remain unaware of existing policies and opportunities for involvement, underscoring the importance of education in fostering community engagement. Research by Shohamy (2006) indicates that public awareness campaigns are essential in promoting understanding of linguistic rights and the importance of cultural preservation. Furthermore, establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as suggested in the findings, is crucial for assessing policy effectiveness, aligning with Klein (2013), who argues that effective policy implementation must be accompanied by continuous evaluation and adaptation.

In short, the survey findings indicate that globalization brings both challenges and opportunities for language use and cultural preservation in Mali. Despite global pressures, there is a strong commitment to maintaining local languages and cultural practices, suggesting a potential way to reconcile these influences with local traditions. Interviews reveal a complex relationship between globalization and Mali's cultural sovereignty, highlighting language shifts and cultural erosion alongside a determination to preserve local customs. Additionally, focus group discussions reflect concerns about cultural erosion and language shift while emphasizing community resilience and empowerment. Participants express a desire to address globalization's challenges while safeguarding Mali's cultural heritage, underscoring the need for balanced language policies that support both local languages and global engagement. Finally, the document analysis points to significant gaps between policy intentions and actual practices, particularly in education, necessitating collaborative efforts from the government, local communities, and civil society to foster a supportive environment for linguistic and cultural preservation. This is crucial for protecting Mali's rich diversity for future generations and maintaining the country's identity and heritage.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the intricate relationship between globalization and the linguistic and cultural sovereignty of Mali, revealing both challenges and opportunities for the preservation of local languages and traditions. The findings from surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and document analyses collectively underscore a pressing concern regarding language shift and cultural erosion. The younger generation's increasing adoption of global languages, such as French and English, alongside their exposure to foreign cultural influences, raises alarms about the potential decline of indigenous languages and cultural practices.

Despite these challenges, there is a strong sentiment among respondents regarding the importance of maintaining local languages, particularly Bamanankan. A significant majority supports integrating these languages into educational curricula, reflecting a desire for a balanced approach that honors both local traditions and global realities. The study reveals a critical tension between the need for global languages

to access opportunities and the commitment to preserving cultural identity through indigenous languages.

The resilience of local traditions is evident, as many community members actively engage in efforts to preserve their heritage through music, storytelling, and community-driven initiatives. However, systemic barriers such as resource constraints, inadequate teacher training and insufficient governmental support for linguistic and cultural policies often undermine this resilience. These challenges highlight the need for comprehensive strategies to strengthen the preservation of cultural heritage in the face of modern pressures.

The analysis of relevant documents reveals a disparity between policy objectives and their implementation, underscoring the need for stronger collaboration between local communities and government entities. Policymakers are urged to develop comprehensive strategies that promote multilingual education and empower local initiatives. Additionally, raising public awareness about the significance of linguistic and cultural preservation is essential for effective policy implementation.

At last, this study emphasizes the necessity of fostering a supportive environment for the promotion of Mali's rich linguistic and cultural diversity. By addressing the identified gaps and leveraging community engagement, there is potential to navigate the complexities of globalization. This approach can help safeguard Mali's unique identity for future generations. The findings call for a concerted effort among all stakeholders to create a balanced framework for preserving local languages and cultural heritage. This framework is essential to ensure that these aspects thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

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