



Research Article



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Folk media: Existence, forms, uses and challenges in Mende indigenous communities of Southern Sierra Leone

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Abstract

The study examined the folk media: existence, forms, uses and challenges in the Mende indigenous communities of Southern Sierra Leone. A mixed methods research design of 120 participants was developed, selected from 3 communities with 40 participants in each community. The mixed approach used both quantitative and qualitative research designs in the study. The interviews were initially conducted using interview questions related to the existence of folk media, its use and the challenges it faced in the study area. Three focus group discussions were held in 3 communities, randomly selected on the outskirts of the Southern part of Sierra Leone. A quantitative research approach helped analyse simple statistical data collected by the researchers. The findings revealed that folk media exist in the Mende communities studied; and that the use of Mende folk media is fraught with major challenges. The findings also revealed that the use of Mende folk media is rare in indigenous Mende communities which is a major challenge in preserving the practices and their uses in the selected communities. The findings also showed that Mende folk media play an important role in disseminating social, religious, and cultural information, including being used in ceremonies such, as litigation, court hearings, singing and storytelling sessions, naming, weddings and political campaigns, and funerals. The findings also revealed that traditional Mende media are mainly used by the nominees of Paramount Chiefs, the community griots, the heads of the tribal and secret societies and volunteers.

Keywords: folk media, folklore, human media, media practitioners, oral media, traditional media



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Public Interest Statement

There is evidence that Sierra Leone's folk media is at risk. It seems that traditional practitioners like the griots, village criers, and traditional chroniclers have been neglected since many people think that Western media and entertainment are elitist and loftier. Despite research proving that they are still useful, the griots and chroniclers, for instance, have not lately been used in our local communities in Sierra Leone. Although research suggests that these traditional means of communication are still in use, little is known about the folk media of the Kakua Chiefdom people. Furthermore, there is a disconnect between what is written about this subject in the literature and what Sierra Leoneans actually understand and hold to be true. This study aimed to fill this knowledge gap and lay the groundwork for further research in this field.

1. Introduction

The Mende are the largest ethnolinguistic group and the most culturally dominant tribe in Southern Sierra Leone (Taylor, 2014) that migrated west from central Liberia (Shillington, 2013). The Mende people are numerous in Bo, Kenema, Kailahun, and Moyamba and, like other tribes, the Mende rely on a system of communication in which individuals exchange feelings and thoughts to share ideas, knowledge, and customs (Koroma, 2021). Most of this has been performed through folk media, also known as oral media, traditional media, and indigenous media. Although there has been little discussion of the role that this type of media plays in Mende communities, it is impossible to overstate the impact of media on modern production and communication. This is confirmed by Liu, Chen, and Li's (2017) claim that the biggest threat to conventional media is the development of the film, radio, television, and video sectors. Liu, Chen, and Li advocate a shift from contemporary media practices to traditional or folk media, citing the rapidly disappearing Indian media as an example.

Folk media have had a significant impact on contemporary communication strategies, despite being viewed as a historical phenomenon. Because of this, Mooij (2013) emphasises that timely and accurate information dissemination is essential for successful development. African theatre productions have helped many communication channels to grow in a favourable way. Orié, Oyetade, and Laide (2019) assert that the 'Theatre for Development' movement has provided local answers to development issues as well as opened up new channels for communication and analysis in Africa during the past 25 years due to its utilisation of traditional African media. In the same way, folk media incorporates native African mass communication tools. These media outlets include traditional music, poetry, and other forms of expression that African civilizations considered to be a trustworthy and unquestionable reality in the developing world. The fact that traditional media have been most successfully incorporated into traditional dance and other traditional communication channels, according to Barz and Cohen (as cited in de-Graft Aikins, 2020), attests to this. These channels include things like poetry and music, which have been around since the beginning of communication. In light of the aforementioned argument, traditional leaders have emphasised the benefits of using traditional media in communication growth. Chiefs, for example, the senior members of the secret society, together with other tribal chiefs, frequently consulted town criers, co-chiefs, griots, and traditional trumpeters as their favourite sources of information. In traditional African civilizations, paramount chiefs and other members of powerful institutions made remarkable efforts to inform the public through folk media. When discussing Ubuntu Leadership, Matupire (2019) contends that it is difficult for all leaders to spearhead change projects and promote oral writing so that people might learn from those who came before them. Matupire continues by stating that oral tradition has been passed down orally in Africa for a very long time. Whether or not these assertions have been the case among the Mende of Southern Sierra Leone is often disputed and demands careful investigation.

The study investigates a) the existence of traditional media outlets in Southern Sierra Leone, b) the forms of media that people pick up in Southern Sierra Leone, c) the use of folk media as a means of mass communication, and d) the challenges faced by the performance and maintenance of folk media in Southern Sierra Leone.

2. Literature Review

Existence of folk media

Fiske (2010) argues that human culture, or negotiated culture, is still present despite social dispersion and a variety of modern communication techniques. Making sense of Turay (2013), folk media are present and adhere to the social and cultural norms in Southern Sierra Leone. Some of these cultural values have a strong hold on the minds and feelings of Sierra Leoneans, who regard them highly. Turay claims that it promotes discussion and respects people's individual ideas. According to Kumar (2006), India has significantly more communication needs than we are now able to meet. Given the growth of electronic media over the preceding few decades, one may anticipate that traditional media would have disappeared. However, the growing popularity of electronic media and its efforts to promote various folk arts are giving folk media a new lease on life (Rajan, 1991). The particular demands in the expansion of media have been greatly aided by folk media. Gibson (2015) cites Uboajah's description of the Oramedia model and believes that media and communication are frequently used to settle disputes in traditional African settings. By exposing Oramedia through folk media based on traditional African culture and with a valuable and significant brand, he establishes the existence of folk media. Koroma (2021), Nayak (2011), Knott and Poole (2013), among other traditional sociologists, discovered that for individuals to have a good attitude toward life, they would need to cope with the same values that are so prevalent in African societies. It is appropriate that traditional African society was strongly ingrained with its principles, which are entrenched in traditional (human) media and society as large. This claim is supported by Das' (as cited in Nayak, 2011) claim that Vedic and Buddhist traditions in India are where folk theatre originally appeared. Das (2013) also states that India has a long history of using traditional media. The purpose of this study, like previous research, is to determine whether Mende communities in southern Sierra Leone still use folk media.

The forms of folk media

According to Pavlik (2018), the media have a solid foundation in storytelling, and the audience is changing from being passive consumers of content to one who actively engages with the stories as participants. As a result, traditional media uses stories that are derived from them to alter values. Because of its diversity, Sierra Leone has a distinctive culture. Numerous of these cultural activities are integrated into people's social, economic, and political lives. The function that these cultural practices play in successful and efficient communication stands out among the significance of these activities (Koroma, 2021). According to Jethwaney (2016), one of the commission's main suggestions for traditional forms is that, despite the invasion of isolated regions by modern media, older forms still have value, particularly when used to influence people's attitudes toward taking action and fostering change. Traditional or oral media, according to Uboajah (as mentioned in Gibson, 2015), occur in a variety of forms and are rife with symbols. Both inside and outside of Sierra Leone, many other African countries are familiar with these means of communication (Koroma 2021). Koroma (2021) notes the following as traditional oral tradition-based means of communication when examining the 'Traditional methods of communication of the Malimba of Sierra Leone,' which also serves as the

traditional means of communication for the Mende tribal group in Southern Sierra Leone: Griots, drums, the sounds and gestures of humans and animals, flutes, ivory, and bull horns are examples of traditional communication tools. The utilisation of air and space, reverence for ancestors, childbirth, charms and natural remedies, solar power, and cultural symbols are some more traditional forms of communication.

According to Melkote and Steeves (2015), there are serious problems regarding the use of folk media. To relieve such a concern, they suggested the following categories for documenting all forms of human communication: (a) Form (b) Content, (c) Flexibility to adapt to developmental content and (d) Cultural context. Similarly, Krishnamacharyulu (2011) classifies traditional media into four distinct categories: traditional theatre, puppetry, news, music, and dance. Folk media forms, in the opinion of Krishnamacharyulu, are fun art forms that can take on a variety of forms and are associated with several rituals, festivals, celebrations, and other traditional activities. Sarkar (2016) classifies human media into four categories: conversational culture, human culture, material culture, and performing arts. According to Sarkar, the performing arts (and oral tradition) appear to be the primary means of communication within the aforementioned groups. Singing, storytelling, and other forms of performance, he further considers having been a part of human amusement for a very long time. According to Kumar (2006), local health and family welfare campaigns, development plans, and political awareness have all benefited from the use of local media fare, cartoon shows, traditional street theatrical songs, and ballads. In summary, Kumar (2006) proposed that traditional modes of communication can be employed successfully in community-based communication. As stated by Straubhaar, LaRose, and Davenport (2015), however, modern communication technologies have supplanted traditional media and are being turned into more specialised and targeted forms.

The study investigates whether or not these sub-forms, or their modifications, are indigenous to the Mende ethnic culture of southern Sierra Leone given the similarity of African traditional media.

Uses of folk media

The value of traditional media, according to Krishnamacharyulu (2011), Fofanah, Thulla, and Moriba (2021), and Adom, Chukwuere, Addo, Tabi-Agyei and Thulla (2021), has grown over time as a result of its continual emergence from (human) people, incorporation of their knowledge, and incorporation of modern themes. Each community in Sierra Leone has its own music, dance, theatre, culture, and traditions (Turay, 2013). There are various uses for these cultures, but communication is by far the most important one (Turay, 2013). Additionally, Dunn, Moyo, and Lesitaokana (2021) make sure that local communities produce, store, exchange, communicate, and utilise the knowledge to the best of their abilities through indigenous media by ensuring that these communities have access to well-established communication infrastructure. Koroma (2021) examined the traditional method of communication used by the Sierra Leonean tribe of Malimba, which is still used on a daily basis in terms of cultural variety, to describe the usage of folk media. Among these customs are harvest celebrations, planting festivals, cultures during stressful or tragic events, illness, war, hunting, and fishing, as well as among the important deeds of chiefs, visionary leaders, and elders. Places of communication can include houses, sanctuaries, temples, altars, trees, rivers, mountains, and any other mysterious phenomena. Additionally, politicians in Sierra Leone have utilised traditional music and dance during elections to appeal to voters' hearts and minds (Koroma, 2021). According to Thulla (2019), traditional leaders have utilised Temne folk literature for litigation.

Similarly, according to Koroma (2021) development coordinators and non-governmental organizations have also recognized the need to use these common tools, and the success they have

had in designing rural community programs has been tremendous. Even with the challenges posed by digital media, folk media, according to Prasad (2013) is an active media for communication campaigns. Many media and other forms of human communication appear to have a close relationship with innovation and improvement in developing countries. Modern media, according to Leonard (2012) has allowed the use of new means of communication. Thus, some forms of traditional media seem to borrow naturally from certain social media messages, while other social media and messaging sources are not compatible. Danielsbacka, Tammissalo, and Tanskanen (2021) discover that digital means of communication have reinforced rather than displace traditional forms of communication. This is supported by Sultana, Ahmed, and Rzeszotarski (2021) who discover how understanding traditional practices of representing information will help to develop culturally appropriate modern tools and technologies for the people of rural communities.

Challenges faced by the performance and maintenance of folk media

The proliferation of social media, including its interconnectedness and barriers that remove time, space and distance, McLuhan (as cited by Walkosz, Jolls, and Sund, 2008) predicted, would make the world a 'global village'. In line with the growing demand for multimedia in various communities throughout Sierra Leone, there has been a major challenge in social media. Wittels and Maybanks (2016) found that the end of Sierra Leone's 11-year revolutionary war marked the growth of emerging social media platforms such as mobile phones and the Internet, and the proliferation of radio and TV stations. Their research indicates that radio remains the most widely distributed media in Sierra Leone. In all, 8 out of 10 Sierra Leoneans (81%) have access to radio, and 47% listen to it regularly. Therefore, radio has become increasingly challenging for traditional forms of communication in Sierra Leone.

Similarly, Wabwire (2019) acknowledged that the way Africa continues to be a continent under oppression due to the imperialist era of exploration, slavery, slave trade, scratches and divisions, colonialism, nationalism, independence, Neo-Colonialism, and globalization is a reflection of the enduring nature of human media. According to Mare (2020), in the face of Western social norms and technologies, which significantly contribute to global political, economic, and social oppression; chaos where the traditional media is still trapped; modern means of communication pose significant challenges to the African people and their traditional means of communication. Social media is less competitive due to new media technologies, as described by Curran (as cited by Khayrallah, 2018), and cultural imperialism, in which dominant nations like the United States and the United Kingdom appear to export their culture through the media, film, and entertainment rather than through armed forces and dollar imperialism. Laakso, Sarhimaa, and Åkermark (2016) draw attention to the lack of traditional media in the media and education system. According to Liu, Chen, and Li (2017), traditional media have been employed for moral, religious, and political dimensions. Unfortunately, due to a lack of support and criticism of contemporary media, traditional forms are disappearing. In this context, Barz and Cohen (as cited in de-Graft Aikins, 2020) also stress that a further issue that conventional media must deal with is that government officials frequently disregard the information, opinions, sentiments, cultural values, and messages of locals in current social media. To strengthen or reinvigorate the traditional communication system, Wabwire (2019) came to the conclusion that development organisations, traditional mediators, and rural youth must work more closely together. If this is done, it will lessen the aforementioned issues and enhance societal involvement in human media production, consumption, and operation in Sierra Leone.

3. Research Method

A mixed-methods research design was used in the study to collect, analyse, and ‘mixed’ both quantitative and qualitative data (Bazeley, 2018; Creswell, 2012). The researchers employed a mixed-methods research design in this study to understand the existence of traditional media outlets in the south of Sierra Leone, their forms of media and use as a means of mass communication and the challenges they faced in performing and sustaining folk media. After pre-testing the research instrument in a neighbouring community to address threats to validity and reliability (Creswell, 2012, Hilton, 2015), questionnaires were administered to 120 participants in 3 communities in the Kakua Chiefdom in Bo District in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone in West Africa. In the quantitative study, participants were drawn by first clubbing the Mamboma, Bambima and Telu communities through the cluster sampling technique into clusters (Simkus, 2022). These clusters then defined the population of Kakua Chiefdom in the Bo District. Using a simple random sampling technique, 40 participants each were selected randomly from the clusters for the research study.

In the qualitative study, the researchers employed snowball and expert sampling techniques to identify and select participants for face-to-face interviews (Creswell, 2012; Kitamaya & Cohen, 2010; Sedgwick, 2013). During the snowball and expert sampling processes, chain referrals were made to identify individual participants who would serve as key informants grounded on their knowledge, experience and expertise in Mende folk media. The participants provided valuable insights regarding the existence, forms, use and challenges in performing and sustaining folk media. The researchers made observations as evidence of the live performances of traditional media to find their natural values (Bernard, 2000; Ciesielska, Bostrom & Ohlander, 2018). The researchers watched the participants, and events and noted physical characteristics in their natural setting. Because of the observations made, research participants were aware that they were being observed. Interviews and discussions were held in typical Mende tribal contexts, which was crucial to this study because it gave the researchers a deep and rich understanding of the Mende people and their culture.

4. Results and Discussion

The results are presented and discussed in the paragraphs below.

4.1 Results

Objective A: The Existence of Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone

Table 1: Existence of Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone (n=120)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	102	85
No	18	15
Total	120	100

Table 1 shows results on the existence of Mende folk media in Southern Sierra Leone. Based on the results, the majority (85%) agreed that Mende folk media still exist in the communities investigated.

Regarding the reasons Mende folk media is still used in the communities studied, 52% of the respondents said folk media could perform traditional roles modern media could not perform and 37.5% said Mende folk media were still needed to perform certain traditional functions. However, 10.8% said since they now had modern media like social media platforms, there was no need for

Mende folk media (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Reason(s) for the existence of folk media in Southern Sierra Leone (n= 120)

Reason	<i>f</i>	%
Mende media can perform traditional roles modern media could not perform	62	52
We still need our Mende folk media	45	38
Since we have modern media, we don't need traditional media	13	11
	120	101

Objective B: The Forms of Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone

Table 3 shows the forms of Mende folk media present in the communities studied. Overall, respondents selected 'Town criers' (46.6%), 'Storytelling' (45.0%), 'Fire, smoke, flames, ashes' (44.1%), 'Traditional music and dance' (43.3%) and 'Tying and knotting of ropes, grass, leaves, palm fronds, threads' (40.0%) as the main forms of Mende folk media present in the communities studied. 'Appearance' and 'Ivory/Seasons of the year' were selected the least with each having an average of 07.5%.

Table 3: Forms of folk media in Southern Sierra Leone (n=120)

Forms	<i>f</i>	%
Town criers	56	47
Storytelling/puppetry	54	45
Traditional music and dance	52	43
Age groups	40	33
Relay system	28	23
Market places/squares	37	31
The talking drums	22	18
Appearances	9	8
Human actions and sounds of animals	46	38
Flutes	32	27
Ivory tusks/Seasons of the year	9	8
Tying and knotting of ropes, grass, leaves, palm fronds, threads	48	40
Fire, smoke, flames, ashes	53	44
Placing of objects on one another	42	35
Construction of traditional means of transport and communication	44	37
Movement of the human body	46	38
Use of air and space	20	17
Dreams, ancestor veneration	46	38
The birth of a child	44	37
The seasons of the year	30	25
Use of weapons, charms, herbal traditional medicines and divination	47	39
Planetary bodies	26	22
Cultural symbols	32	27
Shaving	32	27

During the focus group interviews, it was a problem for participants to name some folk media that were still present in their communities. As time went on, the participants started naming many, but they claimed that town criers were the most common. A participant aged 66, responded as follows:

We had most of these forms in the past. Now only a handful is used in this community. Of them, the town crier is the one who passes information from the traditional leaders to us. We still have traditional songs and dances, mainly ceremonial ones like the Wonde (male secret society) or Bondo (female secret society) ceremonies. The other forms are not used much except when depicting happening in the past.

Objective C: Uses of Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone

TABLE 4: Uses of folk media in Southern Sierra Leone (n=120)

Use	F	%
Rituals/Societal ceremonies	76	63
Communicating litigation information and court hearings	83	69
Political awareness and campaigns	49	41
Festivals	36	30

The results in Table 4 show that the majority of respondents (69.1%) stated that Mende folk media were used to communicate litigation information and court hearings, 63.3% stated that Mende folk media were used during rituals and societal ceremonies, 40.8% stated that they were used for raising political awareness and campaigns, while 30% said Mende folk media were used during festivals. During the focus group interviews, a participant aged 53, revealed that:

The most common uses Mende folk media are put into are calling meetings and societal ceremonies. Songs full of information to educate the community and dances are also frequently used.

Objective D: Challenges faced by the performance and maintenance of Mende Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone

The results in Table 5 show that ‘Digital media’ (75%) and ‘Neglect’ (63.3%) were the main challenges Mende folk media faced in the communities studied. ‘Cultural imperialism’ (52.5%) and ‘Lack of support’ (51.6%) were also indicated to pose major challenges to the use of Mende folk media.

TABLE 5: Challenges the Mende folk media encountered in Southern Sierra Leone (n=120)

Challenges	f	%
Digital media	90	75
Neo-colonialism	45	38
Cultural imperialism	63	53
Lack of support	62	52
Neglect	76	63

During the focus group interviews, a participant about 60 years old reported that:

Western implements like mobile phones, films, football matches and discos are major hindrances to the use of Mende folk media. Also, the laws, radio and religion have made the young not listen to their

elders.

Another female participant, aged 55, revealed that:

The English law is another thing that is making people not use our culture in this town. We always think of the laws when we want to engage in our cultural practices.

An elderly participant stated that:

Our town crier now has a little job to do. He hardly goes out crying information to the extent that he only passes scary information like warning us of pending secret societal ceremonies or telling us a decision from the council of elders, and the like.

4.2 Discussion

Regarding the findings on the existence of Folk media in Southern Sierra Leone, 85% of respondents agreed that folk media existed in their communities. Fiske, (2010) found out that human culture or negotiated culture is still alive despite social fragmentation and many modern forms of communication.

The findings regarding the forms of Mende folk media revealed that town criers, storytelling, fire, smoke, flames, ashes, traditional music dance, and tying and knotting of ropes, grass, leaves, palm fronds and threads were the main forms of Mende folk media present in the communities studied. This finding agrees with Koroma (2021) who points out that indigenous communities use griots, drums, actions and sounds of people and animals, flutes, ivory, and bull horns, as well as traditional modes of transport and communication, use of air and space, respect for ancestors, childbirth, charms and natural remedies, solar power, and cultural symbols as means of communication.

Regarding the findings on the uses of Mende folk media, respondents revealed that a majority of Mende folk media were used to communicate litigation information and court hearings, during rituals and societal ceremonies, for raising political awareness and campaigns, and during festivals. Koroma (2021) finds out that the Sierra Leonean tribe of Malimba used their folk media in rituals, in times of crisis, and in communication. They suggested experts such as griots, fortune tellers, priests and priestesses, seers, medicine men/women, prophets and rainmakers and politicians as the main users of Mende folk media. Thulla (2019) also discovers that one of the ways the Temne people use their folk literature is in litigation.

The findings of the challenges showed that neglect and digital media were the main issues Mende folk media in the communities under investigation experienced. Cultural imperialism and a lack of support posed substantial challenges to the use of Mende folk media. Similar findings were made by Wittels and Maybanks (2016), who discovered that new social media outlets including mobile phones and the Internet, as well as radio and television stations, became widespread in Sierra Leone following the end of the civil conflict. Similar to this, Wabwire (2019) argued that human media serves as a means for the African continent to remain oppressed, explaining why most African traditions, particularly those of Sierra Leoneans, have been degraded or changed.

5. Conclusion

This study showed the existence of Mende folk media in the southern region of Sierra Leone and revealed that 'Town criers,' 'Storytelling,' and 'Traditional music and dance' continue to be the main Mende folk media forms. This implies that, even though modern media have made it possible to use new forms of communication, some traditional media appear to naturally contend with specific modern media. There are also various forms of Mende folk media, suggesting that while most indigenous Mende practices are in dire danger forms, certain forms are still in use today. Traditional means of

communication include griots, drums, the movements and sounds of people and animals, flutes, ivory, and bull horns. Other traditional means of communication include the use of air and space, respect for ancestors, childbirth, charms and natural remedies, solar power, and cultural symbols. Mende folk media may still be required to carry out some traditional tasks where electronic ones are insufficient, such as during rites and societal ceremonies, communicating litigation information, raising political awareness through campaigns, and during festivals. This means that the Mende people's sociocultural traditions still make use of folk media. The proliferation of contemporary communication channels and the lack of support from the government and other stakeholders in the communities investigated present significant challenges for the use of traditional Mende media, suggesting that upgrading Mende folk media generally could be a recommended solution to this problem, as Wittels and Maybanks (2016) discovered that new social media outlets including mobile phones and the Internet, as well as radio and television thrived in Sierra Leone following the end of the civil conflict.

6. Recommendations

The recommendations in this section are for (1) further research and (2) practice or action.

1. *Recommendation for further research*

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made to direct future research on folk media in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone. Traditional values and beliefs in Sierra Leone provide an intriguing research topic. To broaden the application of the research's findings, a similar investigation could be conducted in other regions of the country. For example, it could compare Sierra Leone's various ethnic cultures and identify the possible causes of the assimilation and acculturation of folk media genres and other traditional forms of communication. This study could also be conducted as longitudinal research that focuses on more Mende communities.

2. *Recommendation for policy and practise*

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made to direct future practice concerning Mende folk media in the South.

1. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) and other local media could adopt a policy mandating that at least 80% of the shows they screen have a distinctively Sierra Leonean flavour. Because of this, the locals might become closer to their culture and possibly discover a greater interest and enthusiasm for it.

Encourage chiefs, for instance, who are the head of the secret society and other tribal leaders, to frequently rely on town criers, co-chiefs, griots, and traditional trumpeters as communication and information channels to recall and debate the folklore of their ethnic community.

Each year, the provinces of Sierra Leone may also organise and finance national cultural events like dancing competitions so that young people will learn about their cultural traditions.

Educational programmes that are comprehensive enough to include the essential components of culture that expose students to a range of folk media issues, including their existence, forms, practices/uses, and challenges in indigenous communities of Sierra Leone, should be made available at the school level.

Government-sponsored initiatives that supply traditional folk media instruments (manufactured culturally) and other initiatives that can support the use of folk media in communities in Sierra Leone should be planned.

Better collaborations between development organisations, traditional mediators, and rural youth are required to strengthen or revitalise the traditional communication system. If this is done, public participation in the creation, use, and management of human media in Sierra Leone will be encouraged.

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Disclaimer Statement: With the exception of references to other works that have been properly credited and acknowledged, this essay is the original work of the authors.

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Authorship and Level of Contribution

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