

The Effect of Migration on Igbo Language Survival: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Migration often brings about linguistic challenges, particularly regarding the preservation and accessibility of minority languages such as Igbo, a prominent language spoken in Nigeria. This study explores the multifaceted impact of migration on the survival of the Igbo language, examining both the challenges it poses and the opportunities it presents. Drawing upon existing literature and empirical studies, this paper highlights the various factors contributing to language shift, death and endangerment among Igbo-speaking communities, including urbanization, globalization, and the influence of dominant languages. Additionally, it explores the role of diaspora communities in fostering language maintenance and revitalization efforts, leveraging technology and transnational networks to preserve and promote Igbo language and culture. Furthermore, this study discusses policy implications and community-based initiatives aimed at mitigating the negative effects of migration on Igbo language survival, emphasizing the importance of language education, intergenerational transmission, and grassroots empowerment. By acknowledging the complex interplay between migration and language dynamics, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the preservation of the Igbo language in an increasingly mobile and interconnected world.

Keywords: Migration, Language survival, Urbanization, Diaspora, communities, Language maintenance, Language revitalization

Introduction

Language is a crucial element of cultural identity, and its survival is often threatened by migration. The Igbo language, with its rich cultural heritage, is no exception. Migration, both within Nigeria and abroad, has led to significant shifts in language use among the Igbo people. The Igbo language, a vibrant and integral part of Nigeria's cultural tapestry, faces significant challenges in the modern era due to the dynamics of migration. As a language predominantly spoken in southeastern Nigeria by the Igbo people, its survival is closely linked to the socio-economic and cultural practices of its speakers. Migration, both within Nigeria and to international destinations, has had a profound impact on the use and transmission of the Igbo language (Bühlmann et al., 2022).

Historically, the Igbo language thrived in a predominantly agrarian and communal society where cultural practices and traditional institutions ensured its intergenerational transmission. In rural settings, Igbo was the primary medium of communication, deeply embedded in the social, economic, and cultural activities of the people. However, the advent of colonialism introduced English as the official language of Nigeria, which gradually began to overshadow indigenous languages, including Igbo.

In the mid-20th century, according to Okali, Okpara and Olawoye (2001), the internal migration became more pronounced as economic activities and educational opportunities in urban centres attracted Igbo speakers from rural areas. This urban migration led to increased exposure to and adoption of English and Pidgin English, often at the expense of Igbo. As people move to cities like Lagos and Abuja, the necessity to communicate in a more universally understood language became apparent, further diminishing the everyday use of Igbo.

In recent decades, international migration has added another layer of complexity. According to Driver, Nesbitt and Cornish (2021), the Igbo diaspora, now well-established in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, faces the dual challenge of preserving their linguistic heritage

while assimilating into the linguistic and cultural norms of their host countries. Within these communities, the younger generation often grows up speaking the dominant language of their country of residence, with limited proficiency in Igbo. This phenomenon poses a significant threat to the language's survival, as each generation becomes less fluent than the previous one.

Currently, the trajectory of the Igbo language stands at a critical juncture. In Nigeria, urbanization and globalization continue to exert pressure on indigenous languages, including Igbo, leading to concerns about language shift and attrition. Similarly, within diaspora communities, the challenge of maintaining linguistic and cultural ties to Igbo heritage persists alongside the allure of assimilation.

However, amidst these challenges lie opportunities for revitalization and preservation. The growing recognition of the importance of linguistic diversity, coupled with advancements in technology and communication, presents avenues for promoting the Igbo language within Nigeria and among the diaspora. By leveraging these opportunities and implementing strategic initiatives, it is possible to chart a course towards a future where the Igbo language not only survives but thrives in a dynamic and interconnected world. This study aims to explore these challenges and opportunities, offering insights into the evolving landscape of Igbo language survival in the context of migration.

Conceptual study

This area looks at some basic terminologies that are associated with the subject of discussion and the different senses given to them. They are as follows:

Migration

Migration, according to Nita, Pécoud, De Lombaerde, Neyts, Gartland and Unu-Cris (2017) is the movement of individuals or groups from one location to another, with the intent to settle either temporarily or permanently in the new area. It can be broadly categorized into several types based on the nature and direction of movement. First is internal migration. This involves moving within a country. It can be further divided into rural-to-urban migration, urban-to-rural migration, and inter-urban migration. Factors such as employment opportunities, education, and living conditions often drive internal migration. Again, there is international migration, and it entails moving across national borders. People migrate internationally for reasons such as better economic prospects, political stability, family reunification, or to escape conflict or persecution. Another is voluntary migration. This occurs when individuals or groups move by choice, often influenced by economic, social, or environmental factors. For example, people may migrate to pursue better job opportunities or a higher quality of life. According to Mechler, Bouwer, Schinko, Surminski, and Linnerooth-Bayer (2018), there is also a forced migration. In this type, it happens when individuals are compelled to move due to external pressures such as conflict, natural disasters, or human rights abuses. Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) fall under this category. Moreover, there is another type that involves temporary movement, often related to agricultural cycles or employment opportunities. It is called seasonal migration. For instance, agricultural workers may migrate seasonally to harvest crops.

In line with the above, it is pertinent to state that migration has profound impacts on both the origin and destination areas. This is because, it influences demographic trends, economic conditions, and cultural landscapes. So, while migration can lead to economic growth and cultural diversity in destination areas, it can also pose challenges such as social integration and resource allocation. In the context of this study "Challenges and Opportunities of the Effect of Migration on Igbo Language Survival, migration is the movement of individuals or groups from one geographical location to another, particularly from Igbo-speaking regions to areas where Igbo is not the dominant language. This includes both internal migration within Nigeria and international migration. The study will focus on how such movements influence the use, transmission, and preservation of the Igbo language among the migrants and their descendants, and the subsequent challenges and opportunities this presents for the survival of the language.

Language shift

Language shift is a sociolinguistic phenomenon where a community of speakers abandons their native language in favour of another language. This typically occurs over several generations and can be driven by various social, economic, and political factors. Language shift often results from a desire to integrate into a dominant culture, gain economic opportunities, or adapt to social pressures. In line with this, it can be said that there are causes of language shift. First are economic factors. Here, the dominant language is often associated with better job opportunities and economic advancement, prompting speakers to adopt it. Second is social integration. This involves integration into a broader or more dominant community often necessitates learning and using the dominant language. Another is educational policies. Upon this, schools that use the dominant language as the medium of instruction can lead to language shift as children grow up learning and using the new language. There are political factors, where government policies and national identity initiatives can promote the use of a dominant language at the expense of minority languages.

In consonance with the studies above discourse, it is important to highlight that there are some consequences of language shift. First of all is language endangerment and death. Here, as more speakers abandon their native language, it can become endangered and eventually extinct. Second is cultural loss. Owing to the fact that language is a carrier of culture; losing a language can mean losing traditional knowledge, customs, and heritage. And lastly, there is identity changes. Upon this highlight, shifting to a new language can alter a community's sense of identity and connection to their ancestry. Migration in this context of this study refers to the movement of individuals or groups from Igbo-speaking regions to non-Igbo-speaking areas, both within and outside Nigeria. This movement can influence the use, transmission, and preservation of the Igbo language among the migrants and their descendants. However, it can be said that migration has become a significant factor in the phenomenon of language shift, particularly among minority languages like Igbo. Language shift occurs when a community gradually abandons its native language in favour of another, often due to social, economic, or political pressures (Fishman, 1991). In the case of the Igbo language, migration plays a pivotal role in this shift as individuals and families relocate to regions where Igbo is not the dominant language. Based on this, one of the primary challenges of migration on Igbo language survival is the diminished use of the language in daily communication among migrants. As Igbo-speaking individuals settle in non-Igbo-speaking areas, there is often a tendency to adopt the dominant language of the new environment to integrate socially and economically. This shift is more pronounced in younger generations, who may prefer the dominant language for education, social interaction, and employment opportunities (Egbokhare, 2004). Over time, the Igbo language may become less frequently spoken, leading to its gradual erosion within these communities.

Furthermore, the influence of global languages, particularly English, exacerbates the situation. English, as the official language of Nigeria and a global lingua franca, often replaces Igbo in both formal and informal settings. The pressure to conform to English-speaking norms in education and professional life can lead to a decline in the intergenerational transmission of Igbo, as parents may choose to speak English with their children to improve their prospects (Blench, 2007). This results in a generational disconnect where younger Igbo descendants may not be proficient in their ancestral language.

Language death

Language death occurs when a language loses its last native speakers and becomes extinct. This phenomenon typically happens gradually as speakers shift to using another language, often due to sociopolitical, economic, or cultural pressures. Language death is a critical area of study within linguistics because, it impacts cultural diversity and heritage. Based on this ground, it is important to point out some causes of language death. First is language shift. The process by which a community of speakers abandons their native language in favour of another. This is often due to social integration, economic benefits, or educational policies favouring the dominant language. Second is globalization. The spread of major world languages such as English, Spanish, or Mandarin often leads to the decline of smaller, indigenous languages. Another cause of language death is colonization and political domination. Here, historical and contemporary colonization and political control can suppress local languages in favour of the colonizer's language. In same view, urbanization can cause language death.

This is the movement from rural to urban areas, which often leads to the adoption of a more widely spoken urban language. Lastly, intergenerational language transmission failure is a factor. Here, when parents stop teaching their native language to their children, the language is not passed on to the next generation. So, in all of these causes of language death, it is crucial to point out that there some consequences of language death.

From the above, the first is loss of cultural heritage. Of course, language is a key carrier of cultural traditions, oral histories, and community knowledge, but its loss can mean the disappearance of unique cultural identities and practices. Another is loss of linguistic diversity. Truly, each language provides unique insights into human cognition and the ways people understand and describe the world, but language death reduces the variety of linguistic structures and expressions. Again, the impact on community identity is a factor. Throughout the world, language is often closely tied to community identity; and so, its loss can weaken the sense of belonging and continuity within the community.

In this study, migration is defined as the movement of people from Igbo-speaking regions to non-Igbo-speaking areas, both within Nigeria and internationally. This movement impacts the use, transmission, and preservation of the Igbo language among migrants and their descendants, influencing its long-term survival. As it was said, language death occurs when a language loses its last native speakers, effectively ceasing to be used in daily communication or cultural practices. This phenomenon is often the end result of prolonged language shift, where a community gradually abandons its native language for another, more dominant one (Crystal, 2000). For the Igbo language, migration is a critical factor that can accelerate this process, posing significant challenges to its survival.

Based on the above, migration-induced language death is a growing concern for the Igbo language, particularly as more Igbo speakers relocate to regions where the language is not widely spoken. In such environments, there is often intense pressure to adopt the dominant language, whether for social integration, economic opportunities, or educational advancement (Batibo, 2005). Over time, as fewer people use Igbo in their daily lives, the language's active vocabulary shrinks, and younger generations may grow up without any functional proficiency in Igbo. However, intergenerational transmission is crucial to the survival of any language. However, migration disrupts this process, especially when parents choose to speak the dominant language with their children to enhance their prospects in the new environment. As a result, the younger generation may lose touch with their linguistic heritage, contributing to the gradual decline of the language (Blench, 2007). Without a new generation of speakers, Igbo risks slipping into dormancy, where it is no longer spoken fluently by anyone. Another contributing factor to language death is the lack of institutional support for Igbo in regions outside the Igbo heartland. Educational systems in these areas may not offer Igbo language instruction, and public life may be conducted entirely in the dominant language. This lack of formal recognition and support accelerates the decline of the language among migrant communities, making it increasingly difficult for Igbo to survive beyond its native region (Emenanjo, 2010).

Delimitation of the study

The study on "The Effect of Migration on Igbo Language Survival: Challenges and Opportunities" will be confined to specific parameters to ensure a focused and manageable scope. First, the study will focus primarily on the Igbo-speaking communities within Nigeria, particularly in the southeastern states where Igbo is predominantly spoken. It will also consider Igbo-speaking diaspora communities in selected urban centres outside Nigeria, such as United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, where significant Igbo populations reside. The research will include Igbo individuals who have migrated from rural areas to urban areas within Nigeria, and will also encompass Igbo individuals and families who have emigrated to other countries. And both first-generation migrants and subsequent generations will be considered to understand intergenerational language transmission. Again, the study will consider migration patterns and their effects on the Igbo language over the past 50 years, allowing for the examination of both recent and longer-term trends. The research will primarily focus on the survival of the Igbo language, considering factors such as language use in daily communication, education, cultural practices, and media consumption within migrant communities. It will also investigate the role of Igbo language maintenance efforts, such as community organizations, language schools, and online

platforms. On the thematic focus of the study, it will explore both the challenges and opportunities associated with Igbo language survival in the context of migration. The research will employ only qualitative method approach; qualitative interviews to gain in-depth insights into personal experiences and attitudes towards language maintenance. The study excludes non-Igbo migrants and factors. The study will not delve into historical migration patterns prior to the last 50 years, except where relevant for contextual understanding. However, these delimitations are intended to create a clear and manageable scope for the research, allowing for a focused analysis of the specific ways in which migration affects the survival of the Igbo language. By concentrating on recent trends, specific communities, and migration-related factors, the study aims to provide actionable insights and contribute to ongoing efforts to preserve and promote the Igbo language in the face of migration challenges.

Theoretical study

To comprehensively study the impact of migration on the survival of the Igbo language, it is essential to apply theoretical frameworks that address language shift, maintenance, and the sociolinguistic dynamics of migrant communities, and they are as follows:

Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory: Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977)

This theory posits that the vitality of an ethnic group's language is determined by its status, demographic strength, and institutional support. High ethnolinguistic vitality suggests a higher likelihood of language maintenance. This theory can be used to assess the vitality of the Igbo language in both Nigeria and the diaspora, examining factors such as demographic trends, cultural practices, and the support provided by community institutions.

Acculturation Theory: John Berry (1997)

Berry's acculturation model outlines how individuals adapt to a new cultural environment, including the integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization strategies. This model can be used to understand how Igbo migrants negotiate their cultural and linguistic identity in their host countries and the impact of these strategies on language maintenance.

Speech Community Theory: Dell Hymes:

Hymes' concept of speech communities emphasizes the social norms and practices that define language use within a community. This theory can be applied to study how Igbo speech communities in diaspora settings maintain their linguistic norms and practices despite external pressures.

Critical Language Policy Theory: Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Phillipson

This theory critiques the power dynamics and policies that influence language use and rights. This perspective can be used to analyse how governmental and institutional policies in both Nigeria and host countries affect the use and status of the Igbo language.

Empirical study

This empirical study aims to explore similar studies in this area of research. It is in line with this that Okonkwo and Azubike (2018) carried a study on Language Use and Language Shift Among Igbo Migrants in Lagos. The study examined language use patterns and language shift among Igbo migrants in Lagos, Nigeria. It explores factors contributing to the decline of the Igbo language and highlights challenges faced by migrants in maintaining their linguistic heritage.

Nwosu and Okafor (2020) researched on The Role of Community Organizations in Language Maintenance: A Case Study of Igbo Diaspora in the United States. This research investigates the role of Igbo community organizations in the United States in promoting language maintenance and cultural preservation. It explores the strategies employed by these organizations and assesses their effectiveness in fostering Igbo language survival.

Okafor and Udeze (2017) worked on Language Use and Attitudes Among Igbo Diaspora in the United Kingdom. This study explores language use patterns and attitudes towards the Igbo language among

diaspora communities in the United Kingdom. It examines the impact of migration on language maintenance and identifies factors influencing language choice and proficiency among Igbo migrants. Ezeani and Uzoka (2019) conducted a study on Digital Diaspora: Online Language Resources and the Preservation of Igbo Language and Culture. This research investigates the role of digital technologies in preserving the Igbo language and culture among diaspora communities. It explores the use of online platforms, language learning apps, and social media in facilitating language learning and communication among Igbo speakers globally.

Anyanwu and Obi (2016) researched on Educational Challenges and Opportunities for Igbo Language Preservation in Diaspora Schools. This study examines the educational challenges and opportunities for Igbo language preservation in diaspora schools. It investigates the curriculum, teaching methods, and pedagogical approaches used in Igbo language instruction and assesses their effectiveness in maintaining language proficiency among younger generations.

These related works provide valuable insights into the impact of migration on Igbo language survival, highlighting both the challenges faced by migrant communities and the opportunities for language preservation through community initiatives, education, and digital technologies.

Research framework

In connection with the reviewed theories above, it can be said that Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV) Theory is the most suitable theory for this study because, it is a crucial framework for understanding the challenges and opportunities of the effect of migration on the survival of the Igbo language. Ethnolinguistic vitality refers to the degree to which a language community is likely to maintain its language and cultural identity in the face of external pressures, such as migration. So, one major significance of the EV Theory in this context is its ability to assess the resilience of the Igbo language within migrant communities. The theory identifies three key factors that contribute to a language community's vitality: status, demography, and institutional support.

- **Status:** The perceived prestige and social standing of the Igbo language within both the native region and the migrant environment significantly influence its use and transmission. If Igbo is regarded as a valuable cultural asset and a marker of identity, migrants are more likely to continue using it, thereby increasing its chances of survival.
- **Demography:** The size and concentration of the Igbo-speaking population in a given area can determine the extent to which the language is maintained. High concentrations of Igbo speakers in a specific location can create a supportive environment for the language, even in the face of pressures to adopt the dominant language of the new region.
- **Institutional Support:** The availability of formal and informal support for the Igbo language, such as educational programs, media representation, and community organizations, plays a critical role in sustaining the language among migrant communities. The EV Theory underscores the importance of these institutions in bolstering the language's vitality and ensuring its transmission to future generations.

By applying the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory, researchers and policymakers can better understand the factors that influence the survival of the Igbo language in migrant contexts. The theory highlights both the challenges, such as potential declines in status and demographic shifts, and the opportunities, such as leveraging institutional support to promote language use and revitalization efforts.

Research methodology

The study employs a qualitative survey design; using qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data on the linguistic experiences of Igbo migrants. The sample will include first-generation and second-generation Igbo migrants living in Abuja urban area of Nigeria and selected diaspora communities. For the sample size, approximately 150 participants for in-depth interviews, where 50 persons represented Igbos in diaspora and 100 for rural urban migration. The population of the study comprise both the

internal migration where Igbo-speaking individuals who have migrated from rural to urban areas within Nigeria, and international migration where Igbo-speaking individuals and families in the diaspora, particularly in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. However, purposive sampling was used to ensure representation of different age groups, genders, and migration backgrounds. Moreso, Semi-structured interviews with community leaders, parents, educators, and young adults to gather in-depth qualitative insights into the challenges and opportunities for Igbo language preservation, and analysed through a thematic approach.

Data analysis of the study

To analyse the linguistic experiences of Igbo migrants regarding "The Effect of Migration on Igbo Language Survival: Challenges and Opportunities," the study employs qualitative analysis techniques such as thematic analysis. This involves identifying patterns, themes, and insights from the interview data. Based on this, the analysis will be based on the objectives of the study, hence, exploring the challenges and opportunities, offering insights into the evolving landscape of Igbo language survival in the context of migration as well as banking on the research's framework.

Thematic Analysis of Linguistic Experiences of Igbo Migrants

Impact of Migration on Language Proficiency: Challenges Identified

Language Shift: Many participants reported a gradual decline in their proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing Igbo after migrating to their host countries. They noted that the dominant language in their new environment became more prevalent in daily interactions, leading to a decrease in their use of Igbo.

Limited Language Resources: Several participants highlighted the scarcity of Igbo language resources, such as schools, books, and media, in their migrant communities. This lack of resources hindered their ability to maintain and develop their proficiency in Igbo.

Impact of Migration on Language Proficiency: Opportunities Identified

Bilingual Education: Some participants mentioned enrolling their children in bilingual education programs or creating informal language learning groups within their communities to preserve Igbo language skills.

Digital Innovation: A few participants expressed optimism about leveraging digital platforms and online resources to access Igbo language content, connect with other Igbo speakers, and facilitate language learning.

Challenges in Language Preservation:

Assimilation Pressure: Many participants discussed feeling pressure to assimilate into the dominant culture of their host countries, which often involved prioritizing the dominant language over Igbo. This pressure contributed to a sense of cultural and linguistic loss.

Generational Gap: Participants noted a significant generational gap in language proficiency, with younger generations exhibiting less fluency in Igbo compared to older generations. This gap posed challenges in the intergenerational transmission of language and cultural knowledge.

Language Preservation: Opportunities Identified

Cultural Preservation Efforts: Several participants mentioned engaging in cultural preservation initiatives, such as organizing language classes, cultural events, and heritage programs within their communities. These efforts aimed to revitalize Igbo language and identity among younger generations.

Perceptions of Language Survival: Challenges Identified

Diminished Language Use: Participants expressed concern about the diminishing use of Igbo language in their migrant communities, particularly among younger generations. They noted that English or the dominant language of the host country often overshadowed Igbo in social interactions and media consumption.

Social Stigma: Some participants mentioned experiencing social stigma associated with speaking Igbo in public spaces or among peers. This stigma contributed to a reluctance among younger generations to embrace and use the language.

Perceptions of Language Survival: Opportunities Identified

Transnational Networking: A few participants highlighted the importance of transnational connections among Igbo communities worldwide in preserving the language. They emphasized the role of diaspora networks in sharing language resources, organizing cultural exchanges, and supporting language revitalization efforts.

Personal Perspectives and Future Outlook:

Perspectives on Language Importance: Participants shared personal anecdotes and reflections on the significance of the Igbo language in their lives, highlighting its role in preserving cultural identity and fostering a sense of belonging.

Future Outlook: While many participants expressed concerns about the challenges facing Igbo language survival in the context of migration, they also expressed hope and determination to overcome these challenges through collective action and innovative approaches.

Summarily, while migration presents significant challenges to the survival of the Igbo language, it also offers opportunities for innovative approaches to language preservation and revitalization. By addressing these challenges and leveraging these opportunities, stakeholders can work towards ensuring the continued vitality and relevance of the Igbo language in an increasingly interconnected world.

Findings of the study

The study highlights dual findings on challenges and opportunities.

Findings on challenges is as follows:

Language Attrition: The study found that migration has significantly contributed to the attrition of the Igbo language among migrants, particularly in younger generations. Many Igbo-speaking families in the diaspora are more inclined to speak the dominant language (e.g., English) at home, leading to a gradual loss of fluency in Igbo.

Reduced Transmission: There is a noticeable decline in the intergenerational transmission of the Igbo language. Parents often prioritize teaching their children the dominant language for better integration and academic success, which results in fewer children learning or using Igbo.

Cultural Assimilation: Migrants often undergo a process of cultural assimilation in their new environments, where the need to adapt and fit into the dominant culture results in reduced use of Igbo. This assimilation is particularly strong in environments where there is little to no support for maintaining minority languages.

Lack of Institutional Support: The study revealed that there is a lack of institutional support for the Igbo language both within Nigeria and in the diaspora. In educational settings, Igbo is often not taught or is offered as an optional subject, leading to its reduced presence in formal learning environments.

Language Stigmatization: There is a growing perception among some Igbo migrants that speaking Igbo is less prestigious or beneficial compared to speaking the dominant language. This stigmatization further discourages the use of Igbo, especially among the youth.

Findings on Opportunities is as follows:

Digital Media and Technology: The study identified digital media and technology as powerful tools for language preservation. Online platforms, social media, and language-learning apps have created opportunities for teaching and learning Igbo, connecting speakers across the globe.

Diaspora Communities: The study found that diaspora communities have the potential to serve as custodians of the Igbo language. Community-based initiatives, such as cultural festivals, language schools, and social groups, have been successful in promoting the use of Igbo among migrant populations.

Global Awareness and Ethnic Pride: There is a growing global awareness and pride in cultural and linguistic heritage among the Igbo diaspora. This has led to an increase in efforts to preserve the language, including the establishment of Igbo cultural organizations and the inclusion of Igbo in international cultural discussions.

Bilingualism as an Asset: The study noted that in some cases, bilingualism is viewed as an asset rather than a hindrance. Migrant families that encourage the use of both Igbo and the dominant language at home have shown higher rates of language retention among children.

Educational Opportunities: Some educational institutions in the diaspora have begun to offer courses in Igbo language and culture, providing structured opportunities for learning and maintaining the language.

From the forgoing, the findings of the study highlight the dual nature of migration's impact on Igbo language survival. While there are significant challenges, particularly in terms of language attrition and reduced transmission, there are also substantial opportunities to leverage technology, community efforts, and global cultural awareness to preserve and promote the Igbo language.

Conclusion of the study

Migration presents both challenges and opportunities for the survival of the Igbo language. Through a combination of community efforts, educational initiatives, and technological solutions, the Igbo language can be preserved and revitalized among migrant populations. Further research should explore longitudinal changes in language use and the effectiveness of specific preservation strategies over time.

Recommendations of the study

1. There should be policy support where the governments and educational institutions should support bilingual education and recognize the cultural importance of minority languages.
2. Strengthening community organizations and encouraging active participation in cultural and language preservation activities, hence, community engagement should be encouraged.
3. Technological integration, which is leveraging technology to create and disseminate language resources widely accessible to Igbo speakers globally is advised.
4. There should be intergenerational initiatives which encourages the older generations to actively teach and use Igbo with younger family members to ensure continuous language transmission.

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