**AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA IN LODJA: State of play, challenges and prospects**

 LOHALO LOKEMBA Anderson 1 Dr. MPANYA MPANYA Jeannot 2

**1** Research Assistant, Technical Institute of Lubumbashi

 Corespond email: **andersonlohalo@gmail.com**

 2 Professor Doctor and Director General, Higher Technical Institute of Lubumbashi

ORCID:0000-0003-0227-2387

**ABSTRACT**

This research on the media landscape of Lodja , takes stock of the strengthening of citizenship and the capacity of the population to intervene in the public debate as well as in the effective control of the action of their political representatives and the public administration. , but also on the positive and/or negative effects generated by these media on the population of Lodja . The study also presents challenges and opportunities for developing effective media management strategies for the benefit of communities. Moreover, after having surfed on the various digital platforms, the author draws the conclusion that the media landscape of Lodja remains almost unknown in the international media sphere and that its impact therefore remains limited to the population of Lodja .

Mots Cles : media, Audiovisuel, perspectives, lodja.

**Lodja audiovisual media: State of play, challenges and perspectives**

 **SUMMARY**

This research on the media landscape of Lodja, takes stock of the strengthening of citizenship and the capacity of the population to intervene in the public debate as well as in the effective control of the action of their political representatives and the public administration. , but also on the positive and/or negative effects generated by these media on the population of Lodja. The study also presents challenges and opportunities for developing effective media management strategies for the benefit of communities. Moreover, after having surfed on the various digital platforms, the author draws the conclusion that the media landscape of Lodja remains almost unknown in the international media sphere and that its impact therefore remains limited to the population of Lodja.

**Key Words:** Media, Audiovisual, Perspectives, Lodja

1. **Introduction**

The 21st century has seen the rise of an unprecedented overdose of New Information and Communication Technologies, which have come to the aid of the traditional media which have always served as mass communication channels and the dissemination of messages. ; also considered as the tools of propaganda on the world chessboard for a long time until today.

It is therefore obvious that the whole of humanity becomes aware of the role, how eminent would play within the community of the media in the formation, information, education and entertainment of the public. To this is added the exchange of political and cultural debates but also the formation of public opinion. As can be seen, the media intervenes in the socio-economic development of the community and can even consolidate peace, unity national level, social cohesion and this, thanks to the program offered by each media, of whatever nature, to its target and potential audience.

Thus, with regard to this paradigmatic analogy of the role of the media within the community, we were motivated to retrace in a succinct way, through this research article, the evolution of the audiovisual media of Lodja , Territory located in the Province of Sankuru by proceeding with an inventory, meeting the challenges related to their operations and finally projecting some perspectives, this with a view to helping the owners of these media channels to improve the management of information. and the smooth operation of their media enterprises. Lodja being an urban -rural agglomeration characterized for a long time by the multifaceted crisis more often orchestrated by opinion leaders, requires ipso facto to have media considered as "the church in the middle of the village", which will play in neutrality and complete independence. Marie-Soleil Frère, recognizes the great power of the media to enjoy an unparalleled influence on the community, through research conducted on the Congolese media since 2008, the author affirms that *"the strengthening of citizenship and the capacity Congolese to intervene in the public debate, as well as in the effective control of the action of their political representatives and the public administration, requires the existence of professional, pluralist, rigorous, reliable and balanced media* . »[[1]](#footnote-1)

This is the crux of this research which focuses on: the media landscape of Lodja : inventory, challenges and prospects.

1. **METHODOLOGY**
2. **Problem**

After having surfed on the various digital platforms, the observation was as such, the media landscape of Lodja remains almost unknown in the international media sphere, due to the various research carried out by international organizations in the matter, to this is added the research proven researchers like the case with Marie-Soleil Frère who has conducted a study since 2008 on “The Congolese media landscape. State of play, stakes and challenges” during which she drew up a synoptic table, province by province of the Congolese media with studies of audience, functioning and consorts.

Surprisingly, no Lodja media was studied in this meticulous research, yet some had already emerged even before this research was developed. Very touched by this observation, it was one of our motivations for carrying out this research on the one hand.

On the other hand, it has been observed for some time, a very negative progress of the plural evolution of sound broadcasting stations in the media space of Lodja , to describe this pitiful evolution and to propose possible solutions to the owners and facilitators is a necessary step given that the media are considered by their public as forums for civic expression and not as spaces for settling scores and political relentlessness.

To arrive at the expected result, we ask ourselves the following series of questions:

* What is the state of the audiovisual media in Lodja ?
* What are the challenges?
1. **Research hypothesis**

In order to respond to our major concern in terms of the hypothesis considered to be, a proposal for an answer to the question posed and which both forms a relationship between the observed facts and these collected, it allows them to be interpreted, to give them a meaning which, verified, will constitute a possible element[[2]](#footnote-2)

To the question of knowing the inventory of the audiovisual media of Lodja , the observation is more than bitter to describe what is of this audiovisual space, the radios work in sometimes inadmissible conditions but they do work all the same, the Throughout this study we will be able to make a general and detailed description of these media.

As for the challenges, they are technical or material, legal, human, economic and so many others. We will return to this in great detail in the following lines.

We will give some perspectives on this study at the end of this work.

1. **Methods**

In this research, we will use two methods.

**Analytical method** : It consists in breaking down the object of study by going from the most complex to the simplest. This method seeks the smallest possible component, the basic unit of phenomena. [[3]](#footnote-3)It will allow us to analyze the content broadcast by the Lodja media .

**Historical method:** It consists according to Makabu Kayembe , to trace the evolution of facts to social phenomena from the origin to the current situation.[[4]](#footnote-4)

It will help us to retrace the history of Lodja 's media in a succinct way from their evolution to the present day. In addition to these two methods, we will use the interview technique and the observation technique to be able to explore this research and make it scientific. To be circumscribed in the collection of data, this study will take into account the media space of Lodja , one of the six Territories that make up the current Province of Sankuru, ranging from the creation of the first radio station in 2004 until our days.

FIRST PART: STATE OF AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA IN LODJA

From the outset, it should be noted that the Territory of Lodja has so far only had radio as a media medium, the only means of transmitting information despite the suffixes "televisions" which are attached to certain names of these local media. .

Lodja currently has 12 sound broadcasting stations without adding those that are in the making. They are distributed as follows: 1 Congolese national radio and television substation, 1 confessional channel and 10 community channels by statute and commercial by practice. All these radio stations broadcast in frequency modulation (FM), some of which cover only part of the Territory and others, on the other hand, go beyond even the other neighboring Territories.

Due to the lack of electric current throughout the province, these radios operate half-days according to the organization of each station; more generally between 6:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. in the morning then 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Other radios, on the other hand, operate in load shedding, that is to say that they can go 1, 2 or 3 days or even weeks or months without opening for lack of fuel, except radio RNS, a confessional channel for the message of the Graal which broadcasts all day but stops at 6 p.m. because it operates on the solar system.

It should be noted that all these radio stations have no support (material, financial or logistical) from either national or international organizations in the sector; the owners take responsibility for the proper functioning of these media, which provide a public service. Not even the Congolese State takes care of it, apart from the substation of the national chain (RTNC) where a handful of money receives the remuneration which emanates from the central government, the other private chains on the other hand are neglected at their sad fate . They function with the aid of insignificant and insufficient means on board. But despite everything, they provide a public service to the Congolese State, yet Article 17 of Law 96/02 of June 22, 1996 translates as follows: "the State may grant indirect aid to private press companies under preferential tariffs in the field of imports of the materials necessary for the production and distribution of information, in particular paper, equipment and films" [[5]](#footnote-5), this for the simple reason that the private media also render a service to the State by dissemination of information that constitutes a public good.

Apart from the national channel substation (RTNC), all these radios are struggling to produce a local newspaper, that is to say, to broadcast the facts of proximity, news that occurred during the day within the local environment because of the lack of appropriate material for the production of the newspaper and also the lack of professionalism and competence on the part of the journalists.

Lodja radio stations prefer to relay the products of national channels which provide general information on the extent of the national territory. The channels most in demand for the relay of their programs are, among others, radio OKAPI, radio TOP CONGO and RTNC, yet the law of proximity to the listener seems very essential, as François Pascal Mbumba MPANZU points out here that the " law of proximity” with the listener makes it possible to situate the importance of a news item according to the interests of the target audience. [[6]](#footnote-6)The geographical proximity in question here can be summed up in: the “dead kilometer” rule, the consequence of which is the way of processing “distant” information. Jean François BEGE adds to this by saying that “To deal with what is happening 100 km away, if it seems important to us, we must seek local anchorage”.

Now, we want to briefly and synthetically highlight some facts or salient elements relating to the creation and operation of these local radio stations. However, we have the ambition here to retrace this chronologically, that is to say from the oldest radio to the most recent. This is to give an idea to readers and researchers who want to carry out investigations in the same paradigm as us, to be able to easily find their way around.

Indeed, it is judicious to specify at the beginning that, almost all these radiophonic stations of Lodja are of the prerogative of the politicians, also created in a purely political context for such a political positioning, which would imply late the presence of the political stakes in these media along our research.

1. SANKURU FREEDOM RADIO (RSL)

Emitting under the modulation frequency of 102.0 MHz, Radio Sankuru Liberté is a private commercial channel in practice, created in 2005, it emanates from the initiative of Joseph OLENGANKHOY who at that time was a candidate for the 2006 presidential election , currently President of the National Council for monitoring New Year's Eve agreements in CNSA acronym.

It is the first news channel to have been established in Lodja since 2005. It is a channel that positively marked the spirit of Lodjaciennes and Lodjaciens due to its sense of professionalism. At the outset, it took into account the 4 main functions of a serious media: Inform, train, educate and entertain. This radio has given young people a taste for journalism, of which I am a part, although it was born in a political context where its initiator had the omen of facing the first presidential elections post Mobutism which was already announced for 2006. From there, one can easily deduce that it was the principal reason by which this chain was dispatched to prepare the ground to position itself well vis-a-vis the fact previously indicated. This is explained by the fact that the radio was much more in propaganda than in its media contribution, which is to train, inform and educate. Well that, she played a very decisive role during the transitional period in Lodja . personality cult to its initiator and its political ideology.

She had a specific program even though she didn't allude much more to the differences between politics here and elsewhere.

Radio Sankuru Liberté, made the population of Lodja understand the role of a local radio within the community, its contribution was great in the holding of the general elections of 2006, thanks to the technicality and the professionalism of its first Director of the radio, Mr. Timothée SHUTSHA, first Sankurois journalist who agreed to go down to Lodja to exercise this function.

The RSL was a model and inspiring medium, today it has remained only in name, being bogged down in the practice of the medium. It no longer has professionals in the media field, most of the agents who work are sometimes state graduates from different academic fields and who do not have a mastery of information and communication sciences, press releases and entertainment are the only predominant programs on the radio

2. LOSANGANYA RADIO TELEVISION (RTL)

Transmitting under the frequency of 90.5 MHz, radio and television LOSANGANYA (RTL) is a private commercial channel in practice, belonging to the Honorable Lambert MENDE OMALANGA, Honorary Minister of Communication and Media, Government Spokesperson, currently National Deputy elected from the electoral district of Lodja and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Lignes Maritimes Congolaises.

Radio and television LOSANGANYA was born in 2005, it only broadcasts in radio format despite the attachment of the acronym Télé.

It is the second news channel to gain ground in the audiovisual space of Lodja and covers almost the entire extent of the Province of Sankuru. Like the first, LOSANGANYA also contributed effectively to raising public awareness of the various electoral deadlines during the 2006 general elections. It will stand out from its predecessor by organizing educational programs and entertainment but not too unifying like Radio Sankuru Freedom.

Born in a context of political positioning, it is essential to point out that: if this radio had also succeeded in gaining ground to be followed by a large number of listeners and reach a large evening audience, it is thanks to the organization of theatrical plays in the local language which is Otetela by the team called “ **Esaka supu** ” and it is almost all the Lodjacienne population who liked to follow this radio program. As soon as it was evening, it is almost all the parents who cling to their radio sets with their children to follow the theaters of ESAKA SUPU. In the end, the organizers always gave a lesson to be learned from it. It was among the best programs of the contents of this channel insofar as people learned too many lessons from it especially for couples households.

Since the arrival of the substation of the national channel (RTNC) in Lodja around 2010, it was difficult to distinguish it from LOSANGANYA due to the organization of the program schedule of these two channels which operated in similarity, of which many agents criss-crossed the two news outlets with the same broadcasts without any distinction, simply because it was under the tutelage of the initiator of radio and television LOSANGANYA as Minister of Communication and the Media that the deputy Rtnc station was installed in Lodja , this would explain the rapprochement between these two radio stations which shared the same editorial line with the same programs, even worse they broadcast in the same apartments with the same equipment (pounder, generator... ).

It should be noted that this identical functioning between these two press organs has become obsolete since the initiator of Radio LOSANGA was injected into his chair at the Ministry of Communication and Media, today each of these two channels has its program and its own agents although they have previously shared the same facilities.

Today this radio is treated of all the sins of Israel by its listeners. For some, it is a chain of a thousand hills (a radio station that existed in Rwanda and was the basis of the Rwandan genocide of 1994) in view of the political and partisan militancy of the person in charge, but also for the insults and the incitement to violence on the part of its presenters who are at the root of several social abuses, for the others on the other hand, it is a radio which makes it possible to dissect all current political subjects, especially with its famous program “ **Que demande le Fulani** ” led by its Director Mr. François LENDO.

3. SANKURU GRAND TAM-TAM RADIO TELEVISION (RTGTS)

Emitting under the modulation frequency of 96.8 MHz, the Tam-tam radio was created in 2005, it is the third channel to set up in the audiovisual space of Lodja .

It comes under the initiative of the Honorable Jean Charles OKOTO LOLAKOMBE, Honorary Director of MIBA (Mining of Bakwanga ) in Mbuji Mayi, former Governor of Kasai Oriental, Minister of Foreign Affairs under Kabila the father, DRC Ambassador to the Republic of China, currently elected national deputy for the electoral district of Lodja .

Tam-tam remains today (according to the estimates of some listeners interviewed for this question), the most watched channel in Lodja and having gained the confidence of the population almost in 65%. It should also be noted that it is the best equipped channel of all and has a powerful transmitter which allows it to reach a large target to expand its audience through the nooks and crannies of the villages. It covers the entire extent of the territory of Lodja . Like the two previous ones, the Tam-tam radio also played an important role in the organization of the electoral process for all the elections that took place in our country, particularly in the territory of Lodja .

Today, this radio helps the local administration a lot by relaying the various official communications of the Territorial Administration, perhaps it is because the Administrator of the Territory was former Director of the same radio and also shares the same political obedience than its initiator.

Despite its many work materials for which it is renowned, this channel is not able to produce a local newspaper, press releases and entertainment constitute the main section of its program schedule. Today this channel is reputed to be the basis for a proportional exchange of insults with other press organs. It has no media professionals, the majority of agents are state graduates or students from various school and university courses.

However, it should also be noted that the channel gained listeners with a large listening audience from the election of MUKUMADI as governor of Sankuru Province, Saturday July 20, 2019 and the fall of his challenger MENDE OMALANGA. Since the public had disgusted the old regime and the governor presented himself as a liberator; and that in tam-tam that we quoted his name and his various activities, that's what made everyone start to listen to him.

To the previous reason can be added that linked to the involuntary humorous character of its Radio Director because of the lack of correct mastery of the linguistic issues, and this becomes an object of pleasure for some.

4. STANDING RADIO SANKURU (RDS)

Emitting under the modulation frequency of 94.4 MHz, Debout Sankuru radio is a private commercial channel in practice, it is the emancipation of the honorary national deputy, Adolphe ONOSUMBA YEMBA . It was established in 2006.

Due to its program schedule, this radio has strongly contributed to the relaxation of the audiovisual space of Lodja with a maximum level of professionalism. It distinguishes itself from the other aforementioned media by the evangelical aspect where a large part of the radio program was devoted to evangelization with Pastor Martin KASONGO. Added to this is the entertainment aspect with the folk songs called “ **Toshaka** ” where the young girls went to the station, generally on Sunday evening, in turn according to the neighborhoods they belonged to go and animate with songs in the local language, at the end of the animation everyone will say their name and greet some 3 or 4 people of their choice, generally their parents, brothers and sisters. It was one of the much-followed installments of the era .

The RDS was a space for citizen debate and facilitated expression for almost all social strata, although it often encountered clashes with the other channels because of their leader, especially during the electoral phases. Today, this channel has fallen into disuse.

5. CONGOLESE NATIONAL RADIO TELEVISION (RTNC)

The Congolese National Radio and Television is a substation of the national chain which broadcasts its signals from the Territory of Lodja in the Province of Sankuru under the frequency of 98.0 Mhz. It was established in 2010 following the efforts of the Honorable Lambert MENDE OMALANGA when he was still in charge of the Ministry of Communication and Media.

It is a radio which, since its establishment until today, plays a considerable role in the retransmission of official information from the national institutions of the government of the Republic from the city of Kinshasa in good time, it relays the program of the national channel (presidential ordinances, proposals for laws by national elected officials, speeches by the Head of State, etc.), in short, the RTNC is the only public press organ that promotes the actions of the Government in the Provinces.

Like the previous ones, the RTNC station of Lodja had played a decisive role in the organization of the electoral process of 2011 and that of 2018, it was a tool par excellence which had served effectively in the information and communication deficit in Lodja , it organized the production of the newspaper in national languages (Lingala, Tshiluba, Swahili and Kikongo), and also in the local language (Otetela). It had an efficient editorial staff and a large number of people who had learned the notion of journalism either at university, as was the case with its Director of Radio, Mr. OSOMBA LOFUDU, or even through training centers approved by the State is what made it the first media power in Lodja at the time.

From its creation, this chain had distinguished itself from the others by technicality and professionalism, which is no longer the case today. She is accused of recruiting activists from the political family of the former head of Communication and Media to whom they obey his dictates, these have no mastery of the notions of Information and Communication Sciences, she is at the service of an individual than to support the power in place, yet it is the only radio in Lodja where the majority of the staff receives the remuneration of the central government but with a mitigated work, the other media only do voluntary work.

In 2020, this channel had experienced a problem with the provincial executive as indicated here by the dispatch from radio OKAPI: "The Congolese National Radio and Television (RTNC) Lodja station in the Sankuru Province was closed Thursday August 20 by the governor of this province, Joseph Stéphane MUKUMADI. The governor, who returned to his province after a year of absence following the conflict between him and certain provincial deputies, announced the closure of this public channel during his meeting at the Lodja stadium . Reason given: the refusal of this media to cover his arrival and the activities of the provincial governor”[[7]](#footnote-7)

Today, this media is ranked in the bottom ranks of other radios. Previously it operated the television only on the arrival of the PCA of the LMC or a high national authority or even exceptionally for major events, this television broke down. It is still the only radio station that produces the local newspaper daily.

6. RADIO TELEVISION THE VOICE OF SANKURU (RTVSA)

Transmitting under the frequency of 92.6 MHz, the radio television the voice of Sankuru is a private commercial channel in practice, it is the initiative of the Honorable Emmanuel OMPETA SHONDA, national deputy elected from the electoral district of Lodja in the legislative of 2018. This channel was born in 2019 assigned as a double mission:

1) Make radio an object of proximity with listeners;

Sankurois media space through the organization of interactive broadcasts.

Today the objectives pursued by this radio are mitigated because being confronted with several challenges of a material, human and financial order but also environmental which we will evoke before the end of this study. Nevertheless, it can be pointed out in passing that the agents do voluntary work like the other chains in the place and this is the basis of the demotivation for a better performance. Added to this is the low power of its transmitter which only covers a short distance.

It should be noted that the RTVSA remains today one of the unifying chains of the Sankuru and which does not make the cult of personality to its initiator. It stands out due to its neutrality and its legendary hospitality, but also a minimum level of professionalism because it is one of the rare chains in Lodja to host a fairly esteemed staff of people in the journalistic field, starting with its Director, although lacking infrastructure because its premises are under construction.

7. OTHER MEDIA

Exceptthe radios described above and considered as old audiovisual media of the Territory of Lodja , there are still six ( 6) others recently established (Radio WOOLADI, Radio UNITE DU SANKURU, Radio du PEUPLE, Radio RNS, Radio OTEMAMBOLANGA, Radio NEW WIND ) so some have only been for a year or less, which we will present in the table in the appendix at the end of this article.

However, it should be noted that apart from 2 radio stations (WOOLADI and RNS) which are denominational out of the 6 not described, the remaining 4 are the emanation of political actors created with the objective of promoting their political visibility, they do not derogate from the rule of those previously cited.

It should still be noted that there are still several other radios that are in the making to compete with existing ones.

**PART TWO: THE CHALLENGES OF LODJA MEDIA**

By continuing our research on the audiovisual media of Lodja , a good number of challenges deserve to be taken up, with a view to tracing a margin in the existing border between the real and the ideal of the practice of journalism in order to then propose a remedy in the face of the advanced deterioration of this practice in Lodja .

These challenges being plural, they will have to be grouped together in several orders:

* **TECHNICAL OR MATERIAL CHALLENGES**

Lodja 's radio stations are all struck by the glaring lack of technical means: without a vehicle, without appropriate reporting equipment, it is Android phones that are sometimes used to record sound for an interview or a report, with the consequent absence almost total production of the local newspaper.

It should be noted that apart from the RTNC sub-station which manages with the dissemination of local events, all the other radios are only used for the reading of press releases and messages, production of some programs in certain radios, entertainment as well as the relay of national channels.

Apart from the technical problem, no radio station in Lodja has an Internet connection, nor a research library, nor an editing room, nor a website for the continuous broadcasting of their programmes. Some channels do not even have their own premises, like radio LOSANGANYA which operates in the facilities of the RTNC; the RTVSA which works in a private house until then, in short there is a real problem of infrastructure on almost all these local radios.

To these challenges, it should be added that the supply of all these radios poses a serious problem because, not having electrical power throughout the province of Sankuru, all these radios operate under the generator system. Since fuel is expensive on the spot, many radio stations work in load shedding, that is to say spend several days without transmitting until the day when they will be refueled with fuel by an X or Y person outside their owner ; they also operate half-day, i.e. they open in the morning around 6:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. then resume in the evening around 6 p.m. 6 p.m. because using the solar system.

* **LEGAL CHALLENGES**

The legal framework of the media sector applicable in the Democratic Republic of Congo escapes the Territory of Lodja in the province of Sankuru, this assertion is explained by the inapplicability of the laws in force governing this sector in almost all the extent of the Province. "The press offence" has always been doing well through the radio stations of the city of Lodja .

What about press offences? Article 74 of Law No. 96-002 of June 22, 1996 establishing the modalities for the exercise of freedom of the press in the DRC stipulates: "By press offense is meant any offense committed by means of the written press or audiovisual. In Congolese law, the term “offence” is an essentially civil concept, which sanctions any prejudicial act committed intentionally. It is found in article 258 of the Civil Code, Book III.

This offense is becoming commonplace among media professionals in Lodja , the majority of whom do not have a good understanding of the notion of ethics and journalistic ethics, because they do not even have the basics of the profession: public insult, incitement to violence and tribal hatred, non-respect of the right to privacy…are anti-values that clutter the programs of Lodja radios , except for a few that derogate from the rule.

When the President of the Republic arrived in Lodja , the director of radio TAM-TAM had worn the effigies of the political party of the initiator of his channel to go to the reception of the Head of State and that is seen and known by everyone, that's how it goes with all the other journalists hired by politicians within their channels. Ethically speaking this is inadmissible, the journalist cannot be a member of a political body. He must remain independent vis-à-vis those of whom he speaks.

Article 69 of Law 96-02 of June 22, 1996 establishing the procedures for exercising freedom of the press stipulates that "Private operators who operate a sound or television broadcasting service are required to broadcast at least 50% (fifty percent) of local programs”. This present article ridicules through the radiophonic space of Lodja insofar as these radios do not even have the grids of the programs to estimate the percentage which they grant to the local programs; as Tonton WEMBONYAMA points out here: "All the Lodja channels broadcast without any elaborate program schedule, it is difficult to specify that at such a time there will be such and such a program in X or Y channel, each manager broadcasts any program to any sequence of the airtime”[[8]](#footnote-8)

By program schedule, we mean the table indicating the day and time of the broadcast of all the programs offered by a radio station or a television channel.

In addition, article 62 of the law of 96 indicates that: “Any company of sound broadcasting and television must have a program director. He must be a professional in audiovisual communication . It should be noted here that like the RTNC sub-station, no other channel in Lodja has a director of programs specializing in communication as required by the text. This has serious repercussions on all the programs which have to go on the air because the Program Director considered as the conductor is not in a better position to carry out his tasks in good and due form.

* **HUMAN CHALLENGES**

It is indeed at this level that the big problem arises. Knowing that the Human resource is at the forefront of all the resources within a company insofar as it is she who coordinates the other resources supposed to be in interaction in a given organization.

It is then up to us to ask ourselves what quality of journalist, for a landlocked environment like the territory of Lodja ? The answer to this question would be that it will take professional, neutral, biased journalism to deal with the multifaceted challenges of Lodja , the most recurrent of which remain insecurity and tribal conflict.

Given that the economic context is not favorable to the development of the media sector in Lodja , specialists in the field find it better to work elsewhere than to go to work in Lodja . This is what leaves room for anyone to call themselves a journalist just because they read press releases and messages on the air very well.

Since the staff of these local radios is not up to scratch, we are witnessing a form of amateurism and tinkering with the profession through the newsrooms, which is germinating very considerable negative fallout through the radiophonic sphere of Lodja as underlined here Mr. Médard ELONGE: “these radios are today at the base of several abuses related to ethics and journalistic deontology, there are many amateurs who do not have the notion of media. Our radios today resemble the chain of a thousand hills, more than even the latter”[[9]](#footnote-9)

From this previous idea, a form of explanatory analogy follows which supports the above-mentioned arguments for the correlation of statements. It is in particular the fact of detecting a form of amateurism in our field of study.

For François LENDO: “There is amateurism in the media of Lodja because the managers of the channels recruit the militants, the atalaku journalists and these are today at the base of the conflicts, division and unprecedented crisis. »[[10]](#footnote-10)

From there, one would understand that the question related to the operation of the radios of Lodja faces several controversies of which the majority of the local population calls into question the work that "the journalists" are doing within these radiophonic structures.

In order to situate the level of professionalism of these local channels, several researchers try to make an objective reading of what these media are; the case with Valéry OLAMBA who castigates the following: “There is nothing professional about these media. This is explained by the fact that each radio station and all the presenters are subject to the sometimes blind will of the promoters of the media. Here is the glaring index of the gaping and characteristic amateurism of our so-called journalists who populate the universe of local radio stations. We must deplore in this same vein, the commitment of non-specialists in journalism by the promoters, a determining factor of stupidity. Few journalists deviate from the stride, like Tonton WEMBONYAMA and Chrispin OSOMBA, respectively DG of RTVSA and RTNC”[[11]](#footnote-11)

All in all, the human challenge poses a serious problem in the practice of journalism in Lodja . as John DJOWA WEMAMBOLO points out here “The level of professionalism is falling in our Lodja media . In the sense that responsibilities are given to people who don't even have the notion of radio. What they don't know they make. The attributions within these radios are not attributed on the basis of competence. »[[12]](#footnote-12)

* **ECONOMIC CHALLENGE**

The economic context of Lodja is unfavorable for the development of the media, especially knowing well that these are "advertising revenues" that will live the private channels. In Lodja unfortunately, there are no large companies or companies, both public and private, from which the media could seek partnership agreements for their survival by marketing their spaces but also by promoting their products and services.

Only press releases and messages constitute the main income of our local radio stations. This does not cover the real needs of the radio even at 30%, especially since it is in this same money that the radios charge for their fuel to supply the generator, of which 1 liter is sometimes negotiated between 3500Fc and 4000Fc to be able to operate half-day system. Some groups consume around 6 liters or more.

To send a private press release, the price is 5000Fc, and that of an institution, establishment or company is 10,000Fc. In terms of contract, only air aviation agencies which sometimes grant this privilege to the media, the most expensive of which come back to 50,000Fc or 60,000F per month, other contracts sometimes can be negotiated around 20,000F, 30,000Fc… at the above 60,000Fc per month.

In such an environment, it is difficult to speak of staff motivation in the truest sense of the word, it is a real waste and a distortion of the exercise of the profession of journalism.

**THIRD PART: SOME PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE**

Far be it from us to claim to have approached in a global way, all the aspects related to the functioning of the audiovisual media of Lodja , especially since the field is quite enormous. This research is only the beginning of such an investigation. We dare to believe that in future research, we will take our time to be able to develop this theme further.

We have drawn up here a short retrospective by sorting out some salient elements in relation to the current evolution of these radios, which we envisage in the few lines which follow, to make the proposal of some future prospects in order to save the image of this noble profession long tarnished by the amateurs who clutter the media space of Lodja ..

As a researcher in Information and Communication Sciences, we believe that the following tips can help overcome some challenges related to the functioning of media diversity in Lodja :

* **FROM A LEGAL POINT OF VIEW**

To dislodge the "crime of press" which becomes commonplace through the radios of Lodja , it is necessary to apply the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo to its article 212 which stipulates that: "A Superior council of the audio-visual and communication endowed with legal personality. Its mission is to guarantee and ensure the freedom and protection of the press, as well as all means of mass communication in compliance with the law. It ensures compliance with ethics in matters of information and equitable access of political parties, associations and citizens to official means of information and communication”.[[13]](#footnote-13)

It will therefore be necessary to send a provincial coordination of the CSAC to Sankuru as recognized in article 49 of the organic law n°11/01 of January 10, 2011 on the composition, attribution and functioning of the CSAC [[14]](#footnote-14). This provincial coordination is responsible for carrying out the Council's missions in the provinces, in which we will find **the Congolese media monitoring center** which is responsible for observing, listening to, viewing and analyzing the content published. by the media as indicated in article 45 of the aforementioned organic law. It should be noted that the problem of provincial coordination of the CSAC arises through all the new dismembered provinces in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It is also necessary to enforce Article 62 of Law No. 96-002 of June 22, 1996 establishing the terms and conditions for the exercise of freedom of the press, which stipulates that: "any sound broadcasting and television company must have a director programs. This one must be a professional of the audio-visual communication” [[15]](#footnote-15)but also to fill the required conditions appearing in article 57 of the aforementioned organic law.

However, compliance with article 57 is very essential insofar as it will make it possible to ensure compliance with the specifications and the schedule of programs subscribed to by each radio station when the frequency is granted, because it is almost the majority of the media of Lodja which claim today to be “community” while not having this statute, that causes prejudice for the harvest of the royalty of the State. In short, to check if all these radios have all the documents fixed by the law on the matter being able to allow them to emit.

* **FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE**
* Lodja radio managers campaign for the “retraining” of their personnel through accelerated and appropriate training through training centers approved by the Congolese State, or let the trainers move to the local level.
* That the owners of the radio stations seek to establish partnerships with both national and international organizations in the sector, which will allow their money to often benefit from the training organized by these organizations through this partnership;
* That the owners of the media of Lodja depoliticize this sector of vital interest for the society, even if they are initiators but they must leave a certain editorial independence; by dismissing all those who practice amateurism while hiring professionals on the basis of contract as required by law;
* That the persons in charge of these radios always make a serious competition in the recruitment of their personnel and that they allot the stations of responsibilities to people of the field especially of the competent people.
* **FROM A MATERIAL POINT OF VIEW**
* That the owners of the Lodja media fight to develop their media infrastructure by providing them with appropriate premises and working equipment;
* Since generator power is expensive and problematic, media managers can advocate for solar-powered radios;
* That the owners of Lodja radio stations ask the Congolese State to come to their aid, through subsidies, since their media provide a public service as required by law.
* **FROM THE ECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW**

Although the environment is unfavorable for the emergence of the media, the managers of the radios can create money within them, through their creativity.

They can design a schedule of programs by offering spaces to economic operators, public and private companies, telecommunications companies, civil aviation companies, religious denominations, political parties, women, athletes, local musicians...to show these different categories of individuals the role that these radios can play in the development of their business.

Organize Magazines, cultural and interactive programs that can capture the attention of listeners well and have a large audience in order to market the space at a high price to advertisers. Produce the local newspaper in order to market the sound elements.

May local radios be inspired by channels such as Radio OKAPI, Top Congo, RFI and so many other professional channels in the way they organize the program of their media.

In short, it is the technicality, creativity and professionalism of the radio managers that will generate revenue for the company.

**CONCLUSION**

Describing the situation, identifying the challenges while proposing future prospects for the audiovisual media of the Territory of Lodja in the Province of Sankuru, such was the main approach undertaken in this scientific research. After several investigations, we can therefore conclude by saying that the economic context of Lodja is unfavorable for the emergence of the media sector; There is also a problem of ethics and deontology by local presenters, the blatant absence of program schedules and editorial lines. Lack of innovation, lack of appropriate materials, demotivation of agent staff, incompetence of facilitators.

We can still emphasize that the typology of media in Lodja is porous (community media do commercial advertising, denominational media support politicians, etc.)

To remedy this disastrous situation, it will be necessary to provide these media with professional, creative, ambitious and passionate journalists with independent, neutral, pluralistic, rigorous, reliable and balanced media to meet a large number of challenges posed from the point of technical, legal, human, material, economic view and so many others.

Finally, install a provincial station of the Superior Council for Audiovisual and Communication in acronym CSAC, media regulatory body, which will ensure respect for ethics and journalistic deontology through the media space of Sankuru, such as recognized by the legal framework governing this sector, would be a priority aspect.

**REFERENCES.**

1. Marie- Soleil Frère., *The Congolese Media Landscape. State of play, issues and challenges* , Edition De Boeck, Brussels, 2008,. 14-29.
2. François - Pacal MBUMBA MPANZU, *Radio journalism, Advice for practice in Sub-Saharan Africa* , Edition du GRET, Paris, 2015,18-37.
3. MADELEINE, G. *, Research methods in social sciences,* DALLOZ Ed. Campus
4. AKTOUF., *Method of social sciences and quantitative approach of Organizations* , Quebec, university press of Quebec, 198, 213-245.

**Legal documents and internet.**

1. Law No. 96-002 of June 22, 1996 establishing the modalities for the exercise of freedom of the press
2. Organic Law No. 11/01 of January 10, 2011 on the composition, attribution and functioning of the Superior Council for Audiovisual and Communication
3. Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo of February 18, 2006.
4. [www.radiookapi.net](http://www.radiookapi.net)

**Course notes**

1. MAKABU KAYEMBE., *Notes by* *multidisciplinary project course I* , Bac II geology, UNILU, 2016-2017,10-15.
1. Marie- Soleil Frère., *The Congolese Media Landscape. State of play, issues and challenges* , Se, Brussels, 2008, p.14 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. MADELEINE, G. *, Research methods in social sciences,* DALLOZ Ed. Campus [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. AKTOUF., *Social Science Method and Quantitative Approach to Organizations* , Quebec, Quebec University Press [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. MAKABU KAYEMBE., *Notes by* *multidisciplinary project course I* , Bac II geology, UNILU, 2016-2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. LAW N° 96-002 OF JUNE 22, 1996 FIXING THE MODALITIES FOR THE EXERCISE OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, p.11 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Mbumba Mpanzu F. *, Radio journalism, Advice for practice in Sub-Saharan Africa* , Edition du GRET, Paris, 2015, p.107. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. www.radiookapi.net [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Interview of September 10, 2022 with Tonton WEMBONYAMA, Director of La Voix du Sankuru radio and television. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Interview of December 10, 2021 with Médard ELONGE, Administrator of the Territory of Lodja and Honorary President of the Sankuru Media Forum (FOMESA) 2006-2014, a corporation of journalists existing in Sankuru. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Interview of February 15, 2022 with François LENDO, Director of Radio and Television LOSANGANYA and President of Journalist in Danger (JED) Sankuru. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Interview of December 09, 2022 with Valéry OLAMBA, Head of Works in Educational Sciences at the University of Lodja. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Interview of December 13, 2021 with John DJOWA WEMAMBOLO, Program Director of the Rtnc station of Lodja. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo of February 18, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Organic law n°11/01 of January 10, 2011 on the composition, attribution and functioning of the High Council for Audiovisual and Communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Law No. 96-002 of June 22, 1996 establishing the modalities for the exercise of freedom of the press* [↑](#footnote-ref-15)