

THE ROLE OF RADIO MEDIA IN THE ANGOLAN CONTEXT

O PAPEL DA COMUNICAÇÃO SOCIAL RÁDIOFÔNICA NO CONTEXTO ANGOLANO

EL PAPEL DE LA COMUNICACIÓN SOCIAL RÁDIOFÓNICA EN EL CONTEXTO ANGOLÉN



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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the role of radio broadcasting in Angolan society, highlighting the lack of knowledge, on the part of many citizens, of the principles governing media outlets. The research involved listeners of the radio stations Malanje, RNA, Eclésia, Despertar, Ouvinte, Correio da Kianda, Luanda, Uíge, and Rede Girassol, in five provinces: Malanje, Kwanza Norte, Uíge, Kwanza Sul, and Luanda. Methodologically, it is a descriptive-explanatory study of a mixed nature, with a sample of 75 listeners, corresponding to the entirety of the studied universe, using statistics and content analysis. The theoretical foundation is based on Talcott Parsons' structural-functional perspective. The results indicate that social problems are rarely reported: 32% said yes, 28% said no, and 40% said only sometimes. It is concluded that radio informs, educates, and strengthens democracy, highlighting the need for continuous programmatic innovation and analytical diversification.

KEYWORDS: Structural functionalist. Social Communication. Radio Communication. Historical evolution.

RESUMO: O artigo analisa o papel da comunicação social radiofônica na sociedade angolana, destacando o desconhecimento, por parte de muitos cidadãos, dos princípios que regem os órgãos de comunicação social. A pesquisa envolveu ouvintes das rádios Malanje, RNA, Eclésia, Despertar, Ouvinte, Correio da Kianda, Luanda, Uíge e Rede Girassol, em cinco províncias: Malanje, Kwanza Norte, Uíge, Kwanza Sul e Luanda. Metodologicamente, trata-se de um estudo descritivo-explicativo, de natureza mista, com uma amostra de 75 ouvintes, correspondente à totalidade do universo estudado, recorrendo à estatística e à análise de conteúdo. A fundamentação teórica baseia-se na perspectiva estrutural-funcionalista de Talcott Parsons. Os resultados indicam que os problemas sociais são pouco noticiados: 32% afirmaram que sim, 28% que não, e 40% que apenas algumas vezes. Conclui-se que a rádio informa, educa e fortalece a democracia, ressaltando-se a necessidade de inovação programática e de diversificação analítica contínua.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Estrutural-funcionalista. Comunicação social. Comunicação radiofônica. Evolução histórica.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analiza el papel de la radiodifusión en la sociedad angoleña, destacando el desconocimiento, por parte de muchos ciudadanos, de los principios que rigen los medios de comunicación. La investigación involucró a oyentes de las radios Malanje, RNA, Eclésia, Despertar, Ouvinte, Correio da Kianda, Luanda, Uíge y Rede Girassol, en cinco provincias: Malanje, Kwanza Norte, Uíge, Kwanza Sul y Luanda. Metodológicamente, se trata de un estudio descriptivo-explicativo de naturaleza mixta, con una muestra de 75 oyentes, correspondiente a la totalidad del universo estudiado, utilizando estadística y análisis de contenido. La fundamentación teórica se basa en la perspectiva estructural-funcionalista de Talcott Parsons. Los resultados indican que los problemas sociales rara vez se informan: el 32% dijo que sí, el 28% dijo que no y el 40% dijo que solo a veces. Se concluye que la radio informa, educa y fortalece la democracia, destacando la necesidad de una continua innovación programática y diversificación analítica.

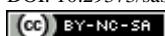
PALABRAS CLAVE: Estructural-funcionalista. Comunicación social. Comunicación radial. Evolución histórica.

Introduction

The article made available is framed within the scope of the development of a research culture in the field of the Social Sciences, particularly within the sociology of communication, and is grounded in the following theme: the role of radio mass communication in the Angolan context. The motivation for choosing this research topic stems from a set of observations, information, and experiences acquired throughout life as a member of this social structure. In everyday life, one frequently observes diverse positions held by individuals regarding the usefulness of radio mass communication: some are unaware of its relevance, while others are not, thereby polarizing the debate around its role. This concern with what defines us gives rise to a series of reflections that, in one way or another, require attention, to the extent that action is taken to understand, in detail, this problematized situation.

Moreover, in Angola, this theme has generally and rapidly revealed itself as a fundamental tool for achieving objectives defined by the social fabric, across various social spheres, whether political, cultural, or educational. On the other hand, it is observed that a significant portion of the mass media in Angola—particularly in the provinces where the study was conducted—constitutes an obstacle to sustainable development and access to information, further polarizing the debate around the true role played by media institutions. These institutions bear the responsibility of reporting events that resonate within society with impartiality, without engaging in discourses that imply value judgments. In contemporary times, it is indeed striking to observe numerous social problems, such as extreme poverty, acts of violence, corruption, deteriorated road infrastructure, lack of access to water, inadequate basic sanitation, among others.

However, radio mass media institutions, whose mission is to report such issues, either fail to do so or do so at such minimal levels that they suggest certain forms of censorship. Unfortunately, the role of radio mass communication in this context is unknown to many, as a considerable number of professionals in this field tend to minimize these problems, and many editorial lines are subject to criticism. This situation requires investigative engagement from the researcher in order to obtain tangible data that can be documented and reported to families, young people, schools, and other social spaces. In other words, the results obtained clearly substantiate the arguments presented above. It is true that throughout Angola's history, radio mass media have not remained detached from the various processes of change



experienced by the country; rather, they have accompanied major transformations across diverse social contexts—historical, cultural, political, and economic.

In recent years, as the world has entered a globalization process aligned with the accelerated emergence of new information technologies, the role played by radio mass communication has become increasingly demanding and comprehensive. With due consideration, it was deemed appropriate to formulate the following scientific question: what role is played by radio mass media institutions in the Angolan context? As guiding objectives, the following are proposed: (1) to understand the role played by radio mass media institutions in the Angolan context; (2) to identify the roles played by radio mass communication in the Angolan context; (3) to describe the roles played by radio mass communication in Angola; and (4) to analyze the roles played by radio mass communication in Angola.

To support the study, the structural-functional theory of mass communication, formulated within the Sociology of Communication by Parsons (1991), was adopted. This approach essentially provides a global view of mass media as an integrated whole, with symbolic articulations aimed at explaining the functions performed by the mass communication system within society, understood as a complex formed by social structures. With regard to the methodological procedures employed in this study, it is first necessary to define what is meant by scientific research methodology, also referred to as the scientific method.

According to Pereira *et al.* (2018, p. 32, our translation), methodology is defined as “the set of rules useful for research; it is a carefully modified procedure aimed at eliciting responses from nature and society and, gradually, uncovering their logic and laws.” Methodology is essential when studying specific aspects of social reality, such as radio mass communication. Thus, focusing on the research problem and the proposed objectives, this study adopted an explanatory descriptive research design, based on a quantitative and qualitative (mixed) approach, whose methodological perspective is substantiated in subsequent sections.

Theoretical Review

The present study is grounded in the structural-functional theory of social communication. Initially, this theory is presented in detail; subsequently, a discussion is



developed around key terms and concepts related to the theme, as well as other relevant theoretical foundations pertinent to the issue under analysis.

Supporting Theories

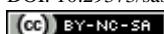
This study is based on the functionalist theory of social communication, developed by scholars such as Émile Durkheim, Charles Horton Cooley, and Robert King Merton, with particular emphasis on Talcott Parsons. Concerned with understanding the role of social communication in society, the theory is first presented in detail; subsequently, an effort is made to establish connections between theory and key concepts. The presentation of this supporting theory serves as a foundation to enhance the analytical robustness and explanatory capacity of the study.

Structural-Functional Theory of Social Communication

Social communication may be understood as a set of technological media whose mission is to disseminate content in the form of symbols to the public sphere, where receivers interpret them in different ways. The information, symbols, and content produced and disseminated by these institutions are rigorously referred to as social communication or mass communication, fulfilling an indispensable role in social life, as outlined in the theoretical foundations discussed above.

The literature consulted indicates that this theoretical model originates from a sociological foundation developed by Talcott Parsons, who stands as the most significant reference within this paradigm. Holding a doctorate from the University of Heidelberg (Germany) in 1927—the same institution attended by Max Weber as a student and later as a professor—this theory is also referred to as systems theory or structural-functionalism. It represents a conceptual framework aimed at analyzing and explaining the role of social communication, as well as social reality itself, based on the functioning of social, economic, political, and cultural life in human society (Bittencourt, 2014, p. 28, our translation).

From this perspective, the development of the structural-functional theory of communication begins with functionalist studies within Sociology, drawing attention to the social role played by mass media institutions. The parts constitute the basis for the functioning of the whole; therefore, the ways in which content is reported by the media may be functional or dysfunctional. In many cases, they trigger rapid social change, given the power inherent in information. Within this theoretical paradigm, the role of social



communication is primarily conceived as the transmission of information and the maintenance of social cohesion.

Nevertheless, functionalist analysis of mass media focuses on identifying the degree of functional elaboration of social phenomena, particularly with regard to the functions performed by media institutions such as radio, television, newspapers, and the internet, among other communicative social institutions. In this sense, functionalism demonstrates a clear affinity with the concept of system, which implies a different way of understanding social structure as a living organism in which each part of the whole performs a specific function (França; Simões, 2017, p. 40-41, our translation).

Accordingly, França and Simões (2017, p. 53, our translation) argue that “within the framework of functionalism, communication comes to be viewed in terms of the functions it performs within the social body: it exists and is justified from a functional perspective.” Similarly, functionalist analysis within the field of social communication, as articulated by Klapper (2015), focuses on examining the consequences of social phenomena that affect the normal functioning, adaptation, and adjustment of a system, whether at the individual, group, or broader social and cultural system levels. Mass communication, as an anticipated and institutionalized social process, therefore constitutes an appropriate object for functional analysis (Gottfried, 2001).

For this reason, Lasswell (1978) identifies three basic functions of communication: surveillance of the environment; the correlation of the parts of society; and the transmission of social heritage from one generation to another. A fourth function was later added by Wright—entertainment—thereby completing what came to be regarded as the main functions performed by mass media.

From this standpoint, functionalist communication theory offers an in-depth reading of the social functions of mass media institutions, seeking to link content analysis to the framework of needs of a given society or audience group, as is the case in Malanje. Within this perspective, *functions are understood as positive consequences for the normal functioning of a social system, while dysfunctions are seen as negative consequences that compromise the proper functioning of the media system within society*. It is in this sense that the role of mass communication demands careful and sustained attention from researchers, given its social functions, which may manifest as either functional or dysfunctional.



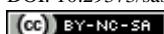
Concept of Social Communication versus Radio Communication

In line with the theoretical foundations outlined above, the concept of social communication presented here is rooted in the development of industrial capitalism, which fundamentally shaped modern societies. Social communication is defined by Thompson (*apud* Serra, 2007, p. 143-144) based on four core characteristics:

- a) The production and dissemination of symbolic goods, involving the encoding and fixation of symbolic goods as information that is stored, distributed, and decoded by potential recipients. This transformation of symbolic goods into information allows them to become indefinitely reproducible and thus made available as commodities to an indeterminate mass of receivers.
- b) The separation between the production and reception of symbolic goods. Mass media generalize a process that had already occurred with writing: the mediation of symbolic goods by technical means through which they are fixed and transmitted. This process, which fundamentally flows from producers to receivers, entails indeterminacy regarding the responses of the latter.
- c) The extension of the availability of symbolic forms across time and space. In this respect, mass communication extends what had already occurred with writing, as all forms of cultural transmission involve a distancing in space and time.
- d) The public circulation of symbolic forms. Unlike media such as the telephone, symbolic forms transmitted through mass communication are intended for an indeterminate plurality of receivers and are available to all individuals who possess the technical means, skills, and resources to access them; they therefore circulate within what is referred to as the public sphere.

In this context, the Angolan legal framework establishes that social communication is the vehicle through which information is transmitted to the public, while defining a Media Organization as a public or private entity whose corporate purpose is the production, transmission, or retransmission of information intended for the public, through telecommunications media or written publications (Angola, 2017).

Accordingly, social communication concerns the development of media such as cinema, radio, and television in relation to the public sphere. The combination of communication and these media enables information, news, and even entertainment to potentially reach people of all places and conditions, fostering their integration into the social whole. From this perspective, and in light of information theory, mass media have attained a level of importance that is central to modern societies. As Luhmann (*apud* Serra, 2007, p. 148, our translation) asserts, “everything we know about society, and indeed about the world,



we know through mass communication.” Furthermore, mass communication has not replaced direct, face-to-face personal interaction characteristic of the lifeworld; rather, it has, to some extent, created new opportunities for such interaction. This occurs, for example, when a group of friends gathers for dinner to watch a televised football match or when colleagues discuss a radio debate previously broadcast (Serra, 2007; Franquina; Nelson, 2019).

It is thus understood that social communication comprises a set of technological media whose mission is to disseminate content in the form of symbols to the public sphere, where receivers interpret them in different ways. The information, symbols, and content produced and disseminated by these institutions are rigorously referred to as social communication or mass communication, fulfilling an indispensable role in social life, as previously established.

From a historical standpoint, the idea of mass communication emerged alongside the creation of a large-scale market. Initially, books and newspapers proliferated in tandem with the Industrial Revolution. As a result, mass demand for printed media increased, even though the population’s purchasing power did not grow at the same rate, nor did illiteracy decline as quickly as expected. At the beginning of the twentieth century, this same scenario was observed in several countries, including the United States. Over time, other media, such as cinema and radio, emerged to compensate for these factors, contributing decisively to the expansion of the concept of social communication, mass communication, and/or mass media (Alves; Fontoura; Antoniutti, 2011).

Under the Angolan legal framework, social communication is understood as mass communication directed at a large, heterogeneous, and anonymous audience, originating from media companies or organizations that organize and interconnect information from diverse sources and disseminate it through distribution channels supported by the written press or telecommunications media, which may include voice and image signals (Angola, 2017). Nevertheless, Caetano *et al.* (2011, p. 197, our translation) define communication as “the mechanism through which human relationships exist and develop, in which the simple act of communicating is one of the fundamental forms of existence.”

Historical Evolution of the Angolan Media System

The historicity of the Angolan press unfolds across three major periods: the colonial, the post-colonial, and the contemporary. Throughout these phases, a transition from a socialist political regime to a democratic-liberal one can be observed. According to the studies



consulted, the Angolan press originated in 1836, when Angola was still an overseas province of Portugal (colonial period), with the publication of the *Boletim do Governo-Geral da Província de Angola*.

In this regard, based on the studies of researcher Lopo (apud Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012), the history of the Angolan press is divided into three phases:

a) The phase of independent press, beginning in 1852, marked by the single edition of the *Almanak Estatístico da Província de Angola e suas Dependências*, followed by the literary journal *Aurora* in 1856, and later by the first political newspaper openly opposing colonialism, *A Civilização da África Portuguesa*, founded by lawyers António Urbano Monteiro de Castro and Alfredo Júlio Côrtes Mântua. This newspaper inaugurated a series of explicitly political periodicals; this type of press is referred to by some scholars as the free press (Cruz; Silva, 2010 apud Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012, p. 24);

b) The phase of industrial or professional press, beginning on August 16, 1923, with the circulation of the newspaper *Província de Angola*, founded by Adolfo Pina, although the first newspaper with such characteristics was *Jornal de Benguela* (1912), created by Manuel Mesquita and the first to possess its own printing press. Also noteworthy in this phase is the contribution of Alfredo Troni, who successively edited three periodicals—*Jornal de Luanda* (1878), *Mukuarimi* (1888), and *Conselhos de Leste* (1891). *Mukuarimi* was notable for using an Angolan expression meaning “the slanderer” or “the gossip”;

c) On the other hand, Hohlfeldt and Carvalho (2012, p. 25, our translation) argue that “a fourth stage is necessary, subsequent to the events of April 25, 1974, which unfolded and materialized into independence projects for the colonies, with consequences that were more than evident.”

Nevertheless, following independence, several prominent figures in Angolan journalism chose to emigrate to Portugal, and only a few remained in Angola, as they did not belong to the agents of change shaping the new media landscape. Those who stayed were individuals with ideological alignment with the ruling party and active defenders of the independence cause (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012; Vunge, 2006).

According to journalist Mateus (2003, p. 2, our translation), “the first years of independence were fertile ground for the emergence of the first generation of future journalists—individuals who had come out of secondary schools and were swept up by the great nationalist wave.” Unlike what occurred in almost all other sectors of national activity,

Angolan mass communication enjoyed relatively favorable conditions for the transfer of responsibilities from an experienced generation of professionals to young revolutionary amateurs who “invaded the National Radio (formerly the Official Broadcasting Service), Rádio Clube (RC) (a Catholic broadcaster), the newspaper *A Província de Angola* (later converted into *Jornal de Angola*), and *Diário Popular*” (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012, p. 26, our translation).

It was only in the early 1980s that editorial guidelines began to distance themselves from party directives and from the notion of the press as an extension of government. Some media outlets, such as *Jornal de Angola*, published daily columns addressing everyday issues and offered cautious moral critiques. In radio broadcasting, specialized programs also multiplied, including those focused on economics, the promotion of national identity, women’s empowerment and gender equality, and sports. The Union of Angolan Journalists was also established during this period, which became marked by a highly interactive journalistic engagement with social issues (Castells, 2016).

The Angolan civil war began shortly after independence, driven by disputes among liberation movements over who should govern the country, and ended in 2002. It went through periods of greater and lesser intensity, during which the press was characterized by an almost total restriction of pluralistic information and near-absolute control of editorial lines by the ruling party (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012).

At present, Angolan mass communication has once again been called upon to assume a more interactive role. This time, however, it is not at the service of the ruling party, as in the early years of independence, but rather oriented toward the defense of public interest and of fundamental rights, freedoms, and guarantees. With more than twelve print newspapers, nine digital newspapers, over four television channels, and more than thirteen local and national radio stations, the current press regulatory system appears significantly more developed and increasingly consolidated (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012).

Nevertheless, these studies indicate that the relationship between journalism, literature, and independence militancy vis-à-vis Portugal developed in tandem throughout the historical trajectory of the Angolan press. Given that communication is defined by multiple interfaces, the population historically developed different modes of communication, in accordance with their customs, through signs, chants, and cries. From the perspective of functionalist communication theory, it becomes evident that the channels through which information



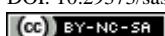
circulated enabled the emancipation of peoples, ultimately culminating in the fall of the colonial regime in Angola.

In the same line of reasoning, Manera (2007, p. 32-34) proposes a different approach to the historical evolution of Angolan mass communication, identifying four distinct periods: the colonial period, the post-independence period, the period of state monopoly, and the period of media liberalization.

With regard to the colonial period, the author highlights the emergence and early development of radio, the improvement of broadcasting techniques, the expansion of radio clubs, the rise of professional broadcasting, and the creation of the state's official broadcaster. The Movement for the Liberation of Angola also fought the colonial government through its radio broadcasts transmitted from neighboring Zambia and Congo-Brazzaville. The program *Angola Combatente* was aired on shortwave frequencies. While some broadcasters advocated decolonization, others defended its continuation. The Portuguese government operated radio stations to disseminate messages aimed at discouraging public opinion regarding independence. Variety programs also emerged on radio clubs, initially in an amateur form and later in a professionalized manner, featuring music and live performances (Manera, 2007).

Regarding the post-independence period, the same author emphasizes that, even after the end of colonial rule, remnants of the previous structure remained, and several private broadcasters—namely radio clubs—continued to operate. However, due to the instability generated by the struggle for independence and uncertainty about the future, many professionals, mostly Portuguese or of Portuguese descent, fled Angola, leaving numerous governmental bodies and companies, including those in the mass communication sector, non-operational (Manera, 2007). As Vunge (2006) notes, this historical perspective is evident in the early years of one-party rule, national independence, and a press environment suffocated by strict control, largely due to the role played by mass media in mobilizing the population around the defense of national sovereignty and the freedom of the Angolan people.

During the period of state monopoly, Manera (2007) notes that, in the first years following independence, all mass media outlets were either nationalized or shut down, with the exception of Rádio Eclésia. The population relied on the services of Rádio Nacional de Angola (RNA), present in all 18 provinces, *Jornal de Angola*, and the National Press Agency (ANGOP), created after independence. In 1973, still under colonial rule, Radiotelevisão Portuguesa de Angola (RTA) was established and later nationalized in 1976, becoming Televisão Popular de Angola (TPA). Until then, radio had been the only mass communication



medium. In 1997, TPA, the sole television broadcaster in the country, was renamed Televisão Pública de Angola. In addition to state media, only UNITA-affiliated outlets circulated in the country, such as Rádio VORGAN (Voice of the Resistance of the Black Rooster), which broadcast from neighboring countries, and the newspaper *Terra Angolana*, which was published irregularly. Despite editorial and journalistic ideological alignment being used to maintain newsroom control, censorship and later self-censorship remained recurring practices in the daily routines of media professionals (Manera, 2007).

Finally, the period of media liberalization is grounded in the opening to multiparty democracy and the approval of Angola's first Press Law. The state monopoly over print publications and radio broadcasting was dismantled, and the sector was opened to private initiative. Currently, nine print outlets circulate in Luanda, with the state-owned *Jornal de Angola* being the only daily newspaper. In 1991, the first Press Law was enacted, guaranteeing freedom of expression and freedom of the press, as well as opening radio broadcasting and the print media market to private capital (Manera, 2007).

Nevertheless, the path forward remains long and challenging, as private media outlets remain largely concentrated in Luanda, while in most inland regions only the signal of public broadcasters is available. It is important to note that Angola is currently experiencing a period of media transformation, driven by the establishment of new media organizations, such as the Girassol Network.

The Constitution and Angolan Mass Communication

There is a long constitutional trajectory that began in 1974, passed through the constitutional revision of 2010, and has continued to be strengthened to the present day. History records that, following the signing of the Alvor Accords and the transfer of power, the first fundamental law came into force on June 30, 1975. This law remained in effect until the approval and promulgation of the Political Constitution of the Republic and the inauguration of the organs of sovereignty, which took place on November 11, 1975 (Feijó, 2015).

In these terms, "in 1991, following the peace agreements, the People's Assembly authorized the President of the Republic to sign several documents forming part of those same agreements, including the document on the fundamental principles for the establishment of peace in Angola" (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012, p. 27, our translation).

According to the authors consulted, several laws were approved on the basis of this document, including legal instruments specifically related to mass communication: the law on



the National Council for Social Communication (Law No. 7/92 of April 16), the Law on the Right of Reply, Right of Response, and Political Rejoinder of Political Parties (Law No. 8/92 of April 16), and the Law Regulating the Exercise of Broadcasting Activity (Law No. 9/92 of April 16) (Feijó, 2015).

In 1992, the Constitutional Law was revised, resulting in significant improvements with regard to respect for the principle of separation of powers, constitutional supremacy, and, in particular, provisions related to mass communication. This revision represented the highest point of innovation within the 1992 Constitutional Law—elements that continue to shape the 2010 Constitution of the Republic of Angola (CRA²). Among the most notable provisions are the enshrinement of freedom of the press, which guarantees a press free from any form of censorship, without prejudice to regulation by law (Article 35 of the Constitutional Law), and the recognition of freedom of expression, which simultaneously establishes freedom of information, assembly, demonstration, association, and all forms of expression (Article 32 of the Constitutional Law) (Luacuti, 2014).

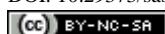
In turn, Article 3 of Law No. 1/17 of January 23 establishes the media through which companies or mass communication organizations disseminate content, including newspapers, both print and electronic; magazines, including electronic editions; all other periodical publications; sound broadcasting; television; news agencies; online media; cinema; and public spaces where documentaries and news are exhibited. Article 5 sets out the content of freedom of the press, stating that freedom of the press is expressed in the right to inform, to seek information, and to be informed through the free exercise of journalistic activity, without impediments or discrimination. Freedom of the press must not be subject to any prior censorship, particularly of a political, ideological, or artistic nature (Angola, 2017, p. 167, our translation).

The discussion surrounding the role of mass communication is therefore grounded in legal foundations enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Angola. Historically, however, it is understood that this is a field that has undergone gradual constitutional adjustments, reflecting parliamentary perspectives on legal instruments that assign social responsibilities to mass media organizations.

Angolan Mass Communication in Light of International Norms

The discussion on mass communication is not limited to the Angolan legal framework; it is also addressed in several international instruments that must be observed by Member

² Constitution of the Republic of Angola.



States, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

The UDHR was proclaimed in 1948 with the purpose of recognizing human dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all individuals, supporting social progress and establishing improved living conditions within a context of expanded freedom. This declaration enshrines several provisions directly related to mass communication, including:

The free communication of thoughts and opinions (UDHR, 1948, Article 19), regarded as one of the most precious human rights. This provision underpins freedom of expression, freedom of information, and freedom of thought.

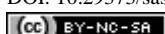
- The prohibition of arbitrary interference with private life, family, and home, as well as attacks on honor and reputation, subject to legal sanction, as established in Article 15. This provision protects the rights to identity, privacy, and intimacy (Castells, 2016);

- Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, enshrined in Article 18, is complemented by the right of all individuals to freedom of opinion and expression without constraint, which includes the right to seek, receive, and impart information and opinions across borders, as provided in Article 19 (Castells, 2016).

Likewise, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, approved by the Organization of African Unity on June 26, 1981, in Nairobi, Kenya, takes into account human dignity, the recognition of human rights, and the unity of African peoples (Hohlfeldt; Carvalho, 2012).

The same document enshrines the right to information and the right to express and disseminate opinions by stating that “every individual shall have the right to information” and that “every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law” (ACHPR, 1981, Article 9). Hohlfeldt and Carvalho (2012) further add the freedom of cultural and scientific creation, ensuring the preservation and strengthening of positive African cultural values in a spirit of tolerance and dialogue, while contributing to the promotion of the moral well-being of society.

Therefore, Angolan legal norms, constitutionally enshrined and aimed at defending and promoting the duties and obligations of mass media organizations, are inherently aligned with and implemented on the basis of international instruments that uphold and promote human rights and human dignity.



Pillars and Principles Guiding Radio Mass Communication

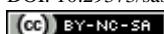
First, the pillars guiding the operation of radio mass communication—and mass communication more broadly—are presented and may be summarized into three core elements: (1) credibility, understood as the assurance of information reliability before diverse audiences through the use of trustworthy sources; (2) transparency, expressed in respect for the constitutional right that allows public access to information, in compliance with information security guidelines; and (3) timeliness, defined as the initiation of actions at the appropriate moment, synchronized in time and space.

In turn, in line with the values outlined above, the principles governing mass communication are as follows. Truth is the essence of mass communication activity, as the reliability of facts as they occur must be conveyed with coherence, credibility, and trust. Accordingly, the guiding principles include: (1) proactivity, a stance to be adopted whenever possible by anticipating future events; (2) reliability, the maintenance of information credibility before diverse audiences through the use of trustworthy sources; (3) continuity, ensuring the sustained operation of mass communication activities and the constant updating of information and products; (4) impersonality, the absence of any intent of personal or group promotion, with a focus on the values and traditions of media institutions; (5) impartiality, the maintenance of equal treatment of diverse audiences and media outlets, without distinction, privilege, or exclusivity—an indispensable mindset across all institutional levels; (7) legitimacy, respect for national institutions, the prevailing legal order, legal precepts, and the moral foundations of nationality in any situation or activity; and (8) unity of message or discourse, the use of the same core ideas in messages or speeches, coordinated across all institutional levels (Silva, 2017).

In this way, the pillars and principles of mass communication, in light of information theory, play a crucial role in the social integration of actions developed within media organizations and in the achievement of institutional objectives.

Research Methodology

Considering the objectives pursued by this study, a descriptive-explanatory field research design was adopted, supported by a mixed (quantitative-qualitative) approach. To



this end, the use of both data modalities collected in the field served a descriptive purpose. According to the classification proposed by Zassala (2012, p. 42, our translation), descriptive research “is an investigation that seeks to determine the nature and degree of existing conditions.” This study combines quantifiable and non-quantifiable data, with the primary goal of seeking truth and validating the research process.

The mixed-methods approach made it possible to incorporate information structured along both quantitative and qualitative axes, as well as to apply inductive–deductive logical reasoning, thereby enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. By opting for a mixed approach, the study integrates data collection through both statistical procedures and non-numerical techniques, ensuring responses to the research question. It is, therefore, an investigation that encompasses two complementary perspectives on the topic: one quantifiable and the other interpretive and comprehensive. For this reason, multiple data collection techniques and instruments were employed, including questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, simple observations, notebooks, mobile phones, computers, and interview guides.

Population and Sample and Sociodemographic Characteristics

The theoretical framework adopted defines the population as a universe of individuals or elements that share common characteristics and are the object of study, while the sample is understood as a representative subset of the population under investigation. Such representativeness, which is a highly desirable property in statistics, is achieved when the sample presents the same general characteristics as the population from which it was drawn.

Accordingly, a non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique was employed, in which participant selection criteria are not defined by statistical or mathematical parameters, but rather by intentionality. According to Danton (2018) and Simões (2023, p. 33 *apud* Freitas; Golambole, 2024, p. 108, our translation), purposive sampling “is not restricted to qualitative studies, as it is closely linked to the accessibility of participants, that is, individuals are selected based on ease of access.” Table 1 and the subsequent charts provide a clearer illustration of the population and sample.



Table 1 – Population and Sample

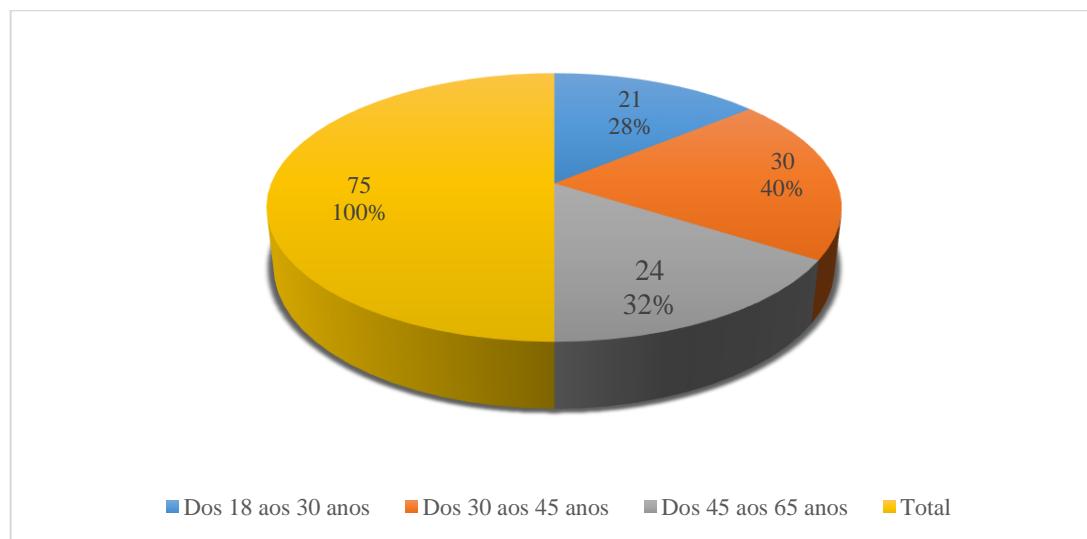
| Sex | Population | Sample | Identify column |
|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| Male | 69 | Male | 45 |
| Female | 51 | Female | 30 |
| Total | 120 | Total | 75 |
| Percentage | 100% | Percentage | 63% |

Source: Research data (2024–2025).

The data presented in this study were collected in the provinces of Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Luanda, Malanje, and Uíge, between February 2024 and January 2025. A total of 120 individuals (100%) participated in the research, all of whom were listeners of Rádio Malanje, Rádio Nacional de Angola, Rádio Eclésia, Rádio Ouvinte, Rádio Correio da Kianda, Rádio Luanda, Rádio Despertar, Rádio Uíge, and Rádio Rede Girassol.

Within this universe, the non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique included 75 participants, corresponding to 63% of the listeners who responded positively to the questions posed. This finding reinforces the notion that purposive sampling “is a very common technique and consists of selecting a sample of the population that is accessible. That is, the individuals included in the research are selected because they are readily available, rather than through statistical criteria” (Freitas; Golambole, 2024, p. 108, our translation).

Graphs 1, 2, and 3 present the sociodemographic data and the profile of the research participants.

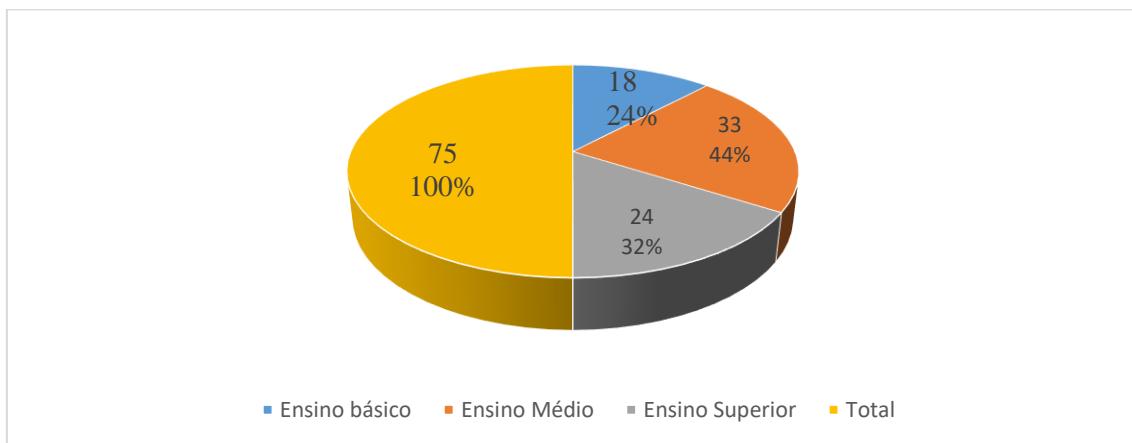
Graph 1 – Age Group³

Source: Research data (2024–2025).

³ From left to right: 18 to 30 years old; 30 to 45 years old; 45 to 65 years old; Total.

With regard to the participants' age, it was observed that the 30–45 age group showed the highest response rate to the questionnaire. Out of a total of 75 participants, this group accounted for 40% of the sample. Next, the 45–65 age group comprised 24 respondents, corresponding to 32%. Finally, participants aged between 18 and 30 represented 21%.

Graph 2 – Level of Education⁴

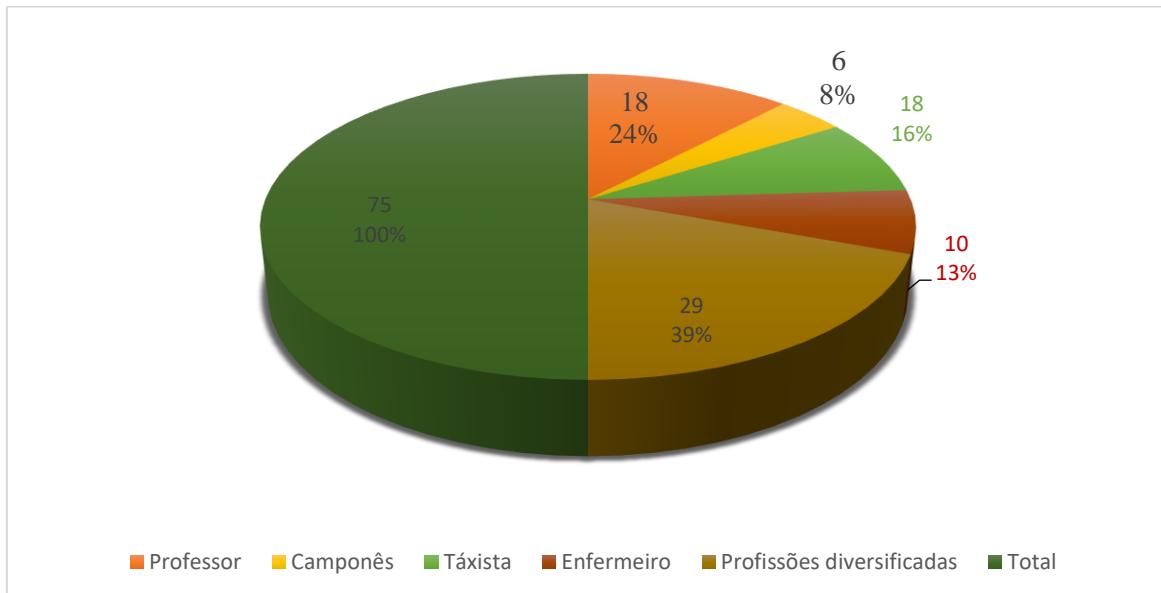


Source: Research data (2024–2025).

Regarding educational qualifications, the data indicate that, out of 100% of the respondents, 18 had completed Basic Education, representing 24%; 33 had completed Secondary Education, corresponding to 44%; and 24 had completed Higher Education, accounting for 32% of the study participants.

⁴ From left to right: Primary education; Secondary education; Higher education; Total.

Graph 3 – Professions⁵



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

With respect to the collection of empirical data, it is also important to highlight that, concerning professions, it was found that within the sample corresponding to 100% of the participants in the study, 18 were teachers, representing 24%; 6 were farmers (8%); 18 were taxi drivers (16%); 10 were nurses (13%); while 29 held diverse professions (police officers, bankers, sociologists, among others), corresponding to 39%.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used included simple observation. According to Severino (2014), this technique allows the researcher, even while remaining external to the community, group, or situation under study, to observe events spontaneously, as the researcher acts more as a spectator than as an active participant. Simple observation presented several advantages, such as the collection of essential elements for defining the research problem and the gathering of data without raising suspicion among members of the scientific community. The recording of observations often depends on the researcher's memory and, consequently, allows a wide margin for subjective interpretation of the phenomenon under study.

⁵ From left to right: Teacher; Farm worker; Taxi driver; Nurse; Various professions; Total.

The questionnaire, according to Aragão and Neta (2017), consists of a set of questions specifically prepared for collecting information to be subjected to statistical analysis, as it is useful for generating evidence regarding groups of individuals and organizations. One of its main advantages lies in enabling the conscious and comparable collection of information. Research is understood as an activity oriented toward problem-solving; therefore, for this technique, the questionnaire survey was applied as the instrument.

Furthermore, the semi-structured interview is understood as a data collection technique in which the researcher interacts directly with the interviewee, asking questions with the aim of obtaining information relevant to the investigation. In this regard, Severino (2014) argues that the semi-structured interview is minimally structured and differs from simple conversation due to its fundamental objective of data collection. This technique made it possible to gather data related to the understanding of the role of mass communication. The author further notes that semi-structured interviews “combine open and closed questions, allowing the informant to elaborate on the proposed topic” (Severino, 2014, p. 19, our translation). The interview guide and a notebook were used as instruments for this technique.

For data analysis, quantitative data were presented using statistical methods, with Excel software employed to compile all quantifiable data. For qualitative interpretations, the data were aligned with the content analysis technique, which was developed in three phases: the first phase involved pre-analysis, during which contact was made with the interviews, they were presented, and a preliminary reading was conducted; the second phase concerned the exploration of the material, in which verbal statements were grouped into categories; and the third phase consisted of data treatment based on inferences.

In this final phase, the interviewees’ statements were interpreted based on the supporting theoretical framework and other relevant authors. The use of content analysis in this study facilitated the examination of information presented below in the form of discourses, expressed in a written linguistic style related to the phenomenon of radio mass communication. Its analytical framing focused on the implicit aspects of the role of mass communication in the Angolan context, allowing for the analysis of message content and the identification of the meaning of each message within a linguistic and communicational interpretive framework. Finally, thematic units were adopted as the main analytical instrument.



Results and Discussion

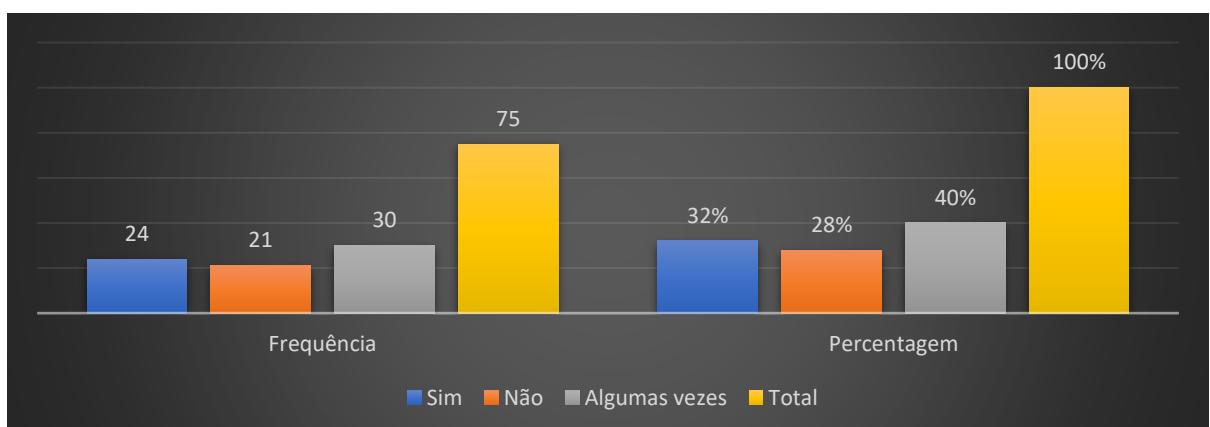
In this chapter, given the mixed-methods nature of the study, quantitative data were first analyzed and interpreted using statistical methods, applying descriptive analysis techniques. Data processed using Excel software were presented in the form of graphs. The questions were analyzed and represented through statistical and descriptive parameters, namely frequency graphs, grouped according to the respective response variables.

In addition, among the respondents, interaction was sought with individuals from different social strata, with the primary objective of understanding the role played by radio mass communication organizations in the Angolan context. Subsequently, qualitative results are presented, grouped into categories and analyzed using the content analysis technique.

News on the Problems Affecting Angolan Society

Initially, the study sought to ascertain from the respondents whether the problems affecting Angolan society are effectively reported by the radio broadcasting organizations selected as the object of analysis. The focus was to understand the role played by radio mass communication organizations in the Angolan context. Accordingly, Graph 4 illustrates the results of this first inquiry more clearly.

Graph 4 – News on the Problems Affecting Angolan Society⁶



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

With regard to the question posed, based on the data illustrated in the graph, it can be observed that out of a total of 75 participants, corresponding to 100% of the sample, 24 respondents answered “yes,” representing 32%; 21 answered “no,” corresponding to 28%; and

⁶ From left to right: Yes; No; Sometimes; Total.

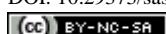
30 answered “sometimes,” representing 40%. From these results, it can be inferred that radio mass communication organizations in Angola have, to some extent, fulfilled their informative function, since the combined percentage of those who answered “yes” and “sometimes” is higher than that of those who answered “no.” Nevertheless, given the relatively high percentage of negative and moderate responses to this question, it is essential that radio mass communication organizations in the Angolan context intensify their efforts to make information about the main events occurring across the national territory more accessible.

Since communication is an activity that involves the mutual construction of meaning and, insofar as it consists of the human capacity to transmit ideas, it is closely linked to human evolution and the enduring concern with transmitting knowledge over time. As highlighted in the foundations of several scholars in this field, the nature of the mass communication process presupposes a source or sender (the encoder of the message), a channel or medium (through which the message is transmitted), and a receiver (the decoder of the message). It is important to note that, in two-way communication, both the source and the receiver play active roles in the exchange of information, and the message flow is necessarily continuous, occurring point to point. Direct communication between two or more individuals is an illustrative example (Alves; Fontoura; Antoniutti, 2011).

In radio mass communication, however, the flow of information follows a single direction, from the source to the receiver. In this point-to-multipoint form of communication, the active role in the process belongs exclusively to the sender. The advantage lies in the fact that a single source can communicate simultaneously with a large number of receivers, which requires, therefore, reporting on the main problems affecting Angolan society, under the risk of overlooking them or socially romanticizing them.

In general terms, mass communication, according to Alves, Fontoura, and Antoniutti (2011, p. 101, our translation), refers to “thousands of heterogeneous people, from different social strata, with distinct cultural levels, varied ages, religions, and professions, forming a single group that is simultaneously reached by a message.” In turn, social problems, from the perspective of Rubington and Weinberg (2008, our translation), are understood as alleged situations incompatible with the values of a significant number of people who agree that action is necessary to change them. They are also perceived as violations of the moral expectations of a given community (Santos; Baloi, 1999).

Nevertheless, based on the significant representations reflected in the participants’ responses regarding news about the problems affecting Angolan society, it can be analytically



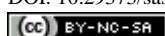
argued that this category is grounded in the relationship between reality, image, and representation. The manner in which problems affecting Angolan society are reported by radio stations often reveals the existence of a substantial dispute between what exists as reality and what does not exist, that is, what is not real. This assertion is based on the separation between observed problems and those that are reported, which frequently generate dichotomous and unilinear perspectives, to the point of calling into question plurality and impartiality in the act of communicating and informing public opinion.

Thus, reporting on the problems affecting Angolan society, in light of the sociological theory applied, contributes to a more objective understanding of social reality and to a broader perception of the urgent need for their feasible and targeted resolution by the relevant institutions. It also serves as a means of denouncing any act—governmental, collective, or individual—that undermines the common good or social expectations, thereby distorting collective morality. However, the limited reporting or non-reporting of the structural problems that afflict Angolan society—such as the politicization of public institutions, the subversion of professional excellence by partisan affiliation, poverty, among others—by many high-audience radio stations leads society from balance toward imbalance. Broadly speaking, as noted by sociologist Gottfried Stockinger (2001, p. 16, our translation):

Everyday reality shows systems that they are compared to environments in which energy and information are unevenly distributed, with non-linear and interdependent flows. Ultimately, it is revealed that imbalance, for some, is a fundamental condition for any stability, and for others, it is a weapon of oppression.

Given this significant discrepancy between social reality and the news disseminated by radio mass communication organizations, listeners often perceive such reporting as limited in terms of factual objectivity. Strictly speaking, this situation contributes to the domination of the social sphere by a political elite oriented toward possession rather than being. Those who are informed understand this dynamic; those who are not are easily dominated and simultaneously harmed. The triad of concepts introduced by Luhmann (2000)—production, reproduction, and self-production—helps to clarify that comprehensive reporting of the problems affecting a given society by radio stations enables the emancipation of those excluded from national income and demands continuous adjustment of social coordination policies.

In summary, given the broad reach of mass communication produced by radio organizations, the structural-functional theory of mass communication draws attention to

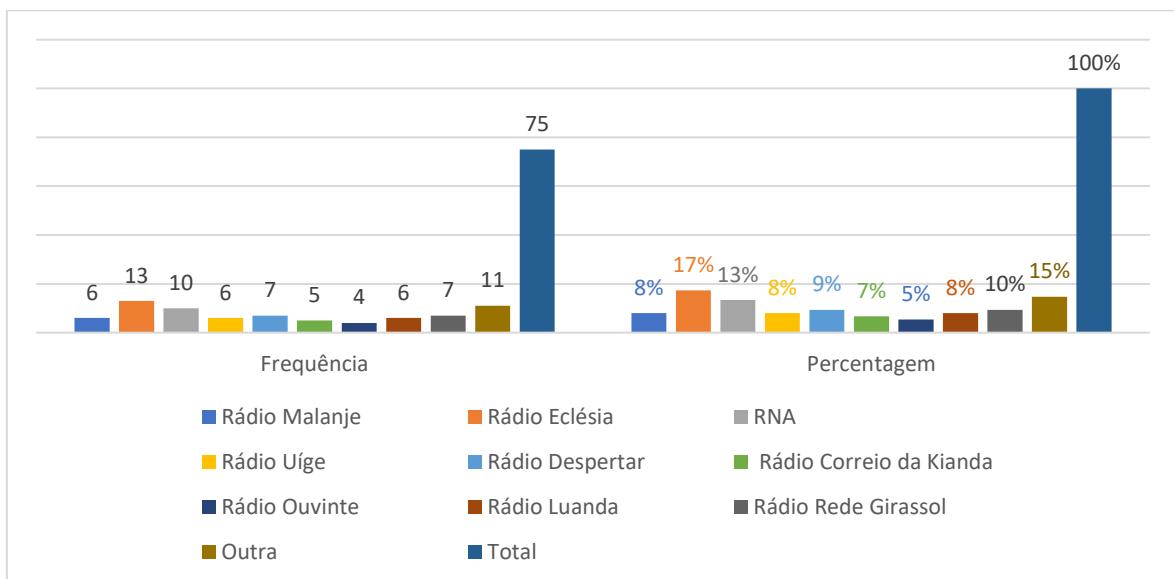


the social roles played by the media. These roles are, a priori, relevant to social justice content but may, to some extent, be perceived as promoters of social inequalities when media content is produced without opposing viewpoints and without sufficiently rigorous grounding of the social problems affecting Angolan society, such as corruption, poverty, unemployment, high infant mortality rates, inadequate basic sanitation, inflation, among others.

Radio Broadcaster Most Concerned with Reporting Social Problems

In light of this theme, a question was formulated with the aim of identifying the radio broadcaster that most frequently reports on a wide range of social problems. Accordingly, Graph 5 more clearly illustrates the opinions of the participants.

Graph 5 – Radio broadcaster that most reports on Angolan and local social problems



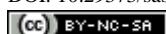
Source: Research data (2024–2025).

Based on the data illustrated in the graph, it can be observed that Rádio Eclésia, compared to the other radio stations included in this study, is perceived by respondents as the broadcaster most concerned with reporting social problems. For this reason, it is preferred by many listeners in Angola. In this regard, of the 75 respondents, representing 100% of the sample, 13 indicated Rádio Eclésia as the radio media outlet that most reports on social problems at both national and local levels, corresponding to 17%. Meanwhile, 10 respondents indicated Rádio Nacional de Angola, representing 13%, and 11 respondents pointed to another radio station, corresponding to 15%.

Some regular listeners from the city of Uíge—specifically six—were unanimous in indicating the local station (Rádio Uíge), representing a subtotal of 8%, although some also mentioned a nationally broadcast radio station. In Malanje, six listeners identified Rádio Malanje, also representing 8%. Other listeners indicated different radio stations in a similar manner in Uíge, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, and Luanda. Rádio Ouvinte was selected by four respondents, corresponding to 4%. Rádio Despertar was identified by seven listeners as the station that most reports on local problems—particularly by taxi drivers and passengers in Luanda—representing 9%. Rádio Luanda appears as one of the broadcasters that most frequently reports facts in Luanda, with six participants expressing a favorable opinion, corresponding to 8%. Rádio Correio da Kianda was also selected by five listeners, representing approximately 7%. Rede Girassol was likewise favored by seven respondents, who rated it positively in terms of disseminating information about the problems affecting Angolan society, representing 10%.

In this context, the results presented above pose several challenges to the radio stations that make up the Angolan radio broadcasting landscape. Many of these challenges are primarily related to the continuous modernization of their editorial lines and the dissemination of their services through online platforms, given that many of these stations do not have national coverage, which hinders the expansion of their audience. However, by investing in online dissemination, their potential audience would certainly increase. For example, it was observed that Rádio Nacional enjoys greater acceptance in the interior of the country than in urban centers. It is in remote areas, rather than in cities, that most listeners indicated it as the station that most reports on the country's social problems. This acceptance can be explained along two parallel lines: one related to its signal coverage across the entire national territory, and another linked to the loss of urban audiences due to its dissemination of predominantly unilinear content, in some cases excluding the principle of plurality in the context of democracy. Urban listeners frequently identify it as a radio station serving political interests and, to some extent, instrumentalizing and romanticizing many of the social problems faced by the country.

It is important to note that Rádio Correio da Kianda and Rede Girassol are accessed by many listeners via online platforms, which explains why even those residing outside Luanda considered them among the stations that most report on national problems, particularly those affecting Luanda. By contrast, Rádio Despertar is perceived as being tied to a specific ideological line. For this reason, many listeners who do not favor it disregard the station, to



the point of arguing that it needs to respect the democratic process. As is the case with Rádio Eclésia in certain situations, a radio station that claims to be impartial should not operate in favor of a specific political faction. It should not disseminate only content that highlights social hardships aligned with particular interests, but should also report on the significant efforts of the Angolan government and respect listeners with differing political convictions.

The dissemination of information about major social problems, as an autonomous object in relation to the structural-functional theory of mass communication, has become particularly prominent with the advent of new digital technologies and the emergence of the knowledge society and the network society. In this context, all social problems require impartial dissemination by radio broadcasters. Those that ignore them risk losing their audience, given the multiple impacts of the technological revolution—political, cultural, economic, among others—which has gained prominence in digital communication. As a result, many listeners turn to digital platforms as an alternative to what is not adequately addressed by institutions traditionally responsible for this role.

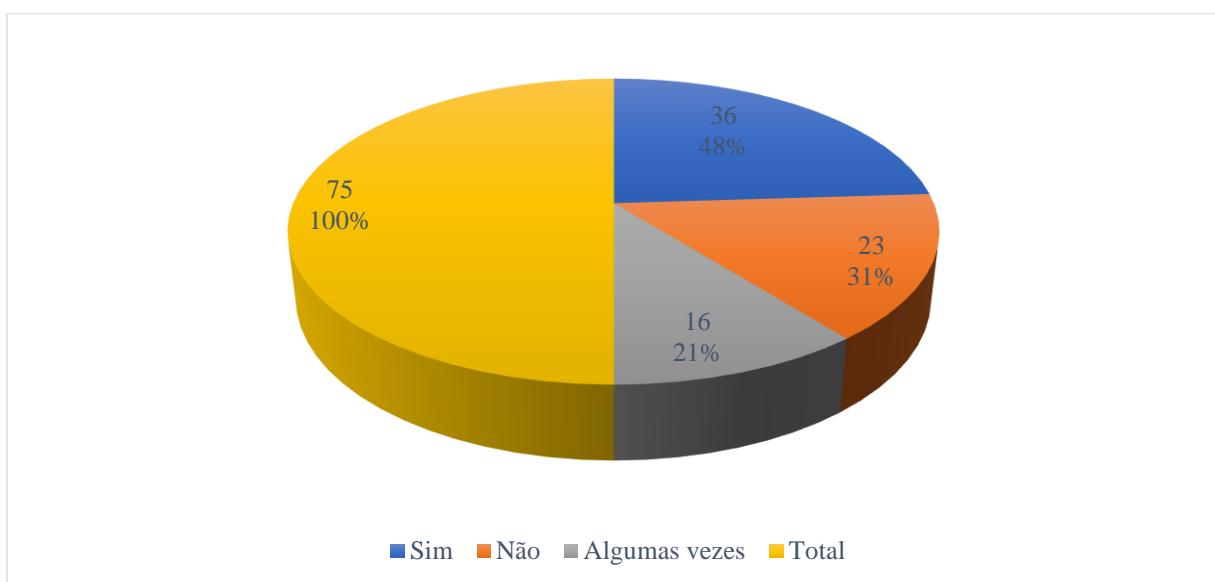
However, another analytical line emerges from the perspective of alerting radio broadcasters not to overlook the fact that we live in the information society era, in which events are disseminated within fractions of a second. As clarified by the studies consulted, the expression *information society* is excessively used in the media and in political discourse. It is associated with other notions that are not always precise, yet always suggestive, such as globalization, with which it converges in many aspects of its content. In general terms, the concept of the information society is used to identify a new reality and a new social order grounded in information as a central value and a driving force for societal progress in its multiple dimensions. Some of the positive ideas associated with the information society, from which radio broadcasters can clearly benefit in terms of innovation, are highlighted by Cardoso (2006): informing, educating, generating profit, strengthening democracy, and developing electronic commerce. The idea of a universal library made possible by the internet, as a driver of information sharing on both national and global scales, is a widely cited example of the information society as a generator of positive expectations aimed at attracting new audiences.



Local radio press and its contribution to the construction of a participatory democracy

Democracy is the cornerstone of modern societies, around which political and social administrative processes revolve. Radio, in turn, plays an indispensable role in the maturation and strengthening of democracy in any State. For this reason, the inquiry surrounding this issue, as presented in Graph 6, proves fundamental for understanding the work of the Angolan radio press in this domain.

Graph 6 – Construction of a participatory democracy through the Angolan press⁷



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

It is clearly evident that radio media outlets in the Angolan context play specific roles, one of which is contributing to the maturation and construction of a participatory democracy, as demonstrated by the data obtained. Of the 75 participants, representing 100% of the sample, 36 respondents (48%) stated that radio media outlets in Angola have contributed to the construction of a participatory democracy; 23 respondents (31%) indicated that radio media outlets have not contributed to this process. Equally relevant, 16 participants emphasized that such contributions occur occasionally, corresponding to 21%. It is worth noting that, according to these results, radio stations in Angola contribute in an incipient manner to the construction of a participatory democracy, despite this being a fundamental role of such media. Therefore, they need to become more open in order to enable the construction

⁷ From left to right: Yes; No; Sometimes; Total.

of a more inclusive society capable of coexisting with diversity of opinion and choice, particularly in the political sphere.

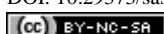
From a social science perspective, drawing on the structural-functional theory of mass communication, it is important to emphasize that the power of radio lies in sound, in inclusion, and in respect for the plurality of voices that constitute society, as a means of mobilizing listeners to connect with it. This functions as an antidote to the migration of audiences to other platforms, particularly digital ones, where image tends to outweigh sound, often produced with limited refinement and tolerance.

The ongoing pursuit of building a participatory democracy through the Angolan press is one of the fundamental roles performed by radio, given that radio was the first medium to reach the masses, even becoming the primary means of cultural integration in Angola. Historically, radio has accompanied—and continues to accompany—the country's historical phases that have enabled it to become more inclusive and competitive within the communication landscape. Informing with impartiality is the foundation for the consolidation of democracy in Angola, especially in an era in which Angolan history is highly politicized.

It is the mission of radio to deconstruct the narratives projected by political actors. The bibliographic archive stored in audio formats available in several radio stations, such as RNA and Rádio Eclésia—which were among the first to accompany the country's entire historical trajectory—should be made available to listeners as a way of contributing to the democratization of the country. A careful examination of Graph 6 reveals that the percentage of negative and moderate responses exceeds the satisfactory responses marked as affirmative, indicating that radio broadcasters need to intensify their efforts regarding issues related to the country's democratization. Ultimately, Angola's development necessarily depends on the democratization of the country; without it, it will not be possible to build a fully developed nation.

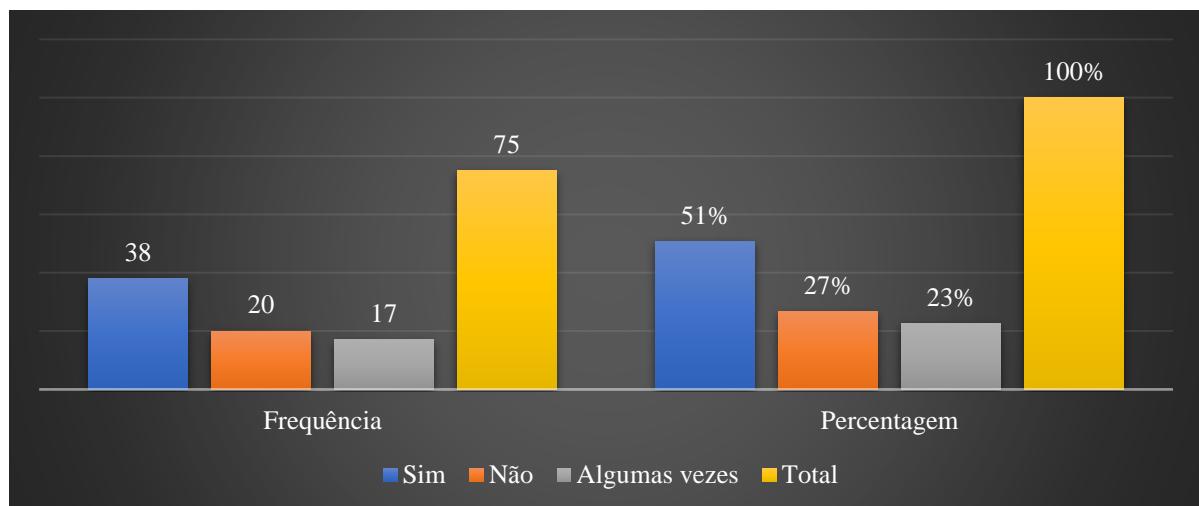
Contribution of radio stations in Angola to social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights

Social moralization is a highly relevant contemporary issue in Angola and is debated across various spheres of social life. Nevertheless, radio media outlets are called upon to contribute in this domain, as educating a people constitutes an act of liberation of the oppressed. For this reason, this study sought to determine whether radio stations in the



country have contributed to social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights. The responses obtained are presented in Graph 7, as follows.

Graph 7 – Social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights⁸



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

When asked whether radio stations in Angola have contributed to social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights, among the respondents representing 100% of the participants (75), 38 answered yes (51%), 20 answered no (27%), and only 17 answered sometimes (23%). These data prompt an analysis of the role played by radio media outlets in the Angolan social context. Beyond informing and strengthening democracy, radio stations also contribute to social moralization, promote civic participation, and reinforce citizenship rights, with education of the human being as their central focus. Graph 7 shows that radio media operating in Angola—particularly those included in this study—are not poorly represented statistically in terms of promoting these social values, which are considered indispensable to social life.

According to Costa (2006) and Endier and Espindola (2014), radio is an exceptional means of communication. It is the only medium that engages just one of the five human senses, allowing listeners to perform multiple activities simultaneously. Often described as a companion, radio has become, with increasing globalization, the most widely used medium among the population, regardless of age or social class. It is the only medium capable of constantly activating imagination, stimulating sensitivity, and enabling each individual to create unique and personal images. It is also regarded as a catalyst for new forms of

⁸ From left to right: Yes; No; Sometimes; Total.

sociability and, consequently, as an agent of social, linguistic, and aesthetic change. Cultural change must also be added, as culture represents a complex of a people's identity values and beliefs; moreover, a people without culture is a people without a soul.

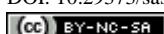
In this sense, the content disseminated by radio stations should promote the preservation of a people's habits and customs as a way of supporting the recovery of cultural values that younger generations may no longer recognize in relation to older generations. Through cultural appreciation, it becomes possible to ensure the existence of individuals committed to human well-being, whereby the struggle for social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights is understood as a set of principles aimed at guaranteeing social stability and requiring the involvement of all, especially social institutions such as radio stations, whose mission is to inform large audiences.

Based on the literature consulted, particularly from the perspective of the structural-functional theory of mass communication, it is essential to emphasize that the concept of function, from a social standpoint, helps to better understand the modus operandi of social institutions and the organization of society, including radio media outlets. The concept of the social is fundamentally oriented toward the behavior of members of a given society in relation to the social functions performed by each structure. Thus, radio media outlets perform crucial functions of social construction, interaction, integration, civic participation, and the promotion of citizenship rights. In many cases, these functions are specifically associated with the characteristic social roles of a particular organization or collectivity.

Within this framework, the work of Wezman (2008, p. 156, our translation) makes a significant contribution to this understanding. The author states that the notion of the social "presupposes an organizational mission for which its creation was designed; the categorization of group membership."

According to sociological knowledge, the promotion of civic participation and citizenship rights occurs because both a social institution (radio media outlets) and individuals belong to a specific social context, within which they assume the obligations associated with their roles. In this view, the social is constituted by people who together form society, while radio media outlets can play a role in redefining social culture, since society is composed of cultural diversity manifested through distinct behaviors resulting from social relations.

For Fichter (1973, p. 166, *apud* Lakatos; Marconi, 2013, p. 148, our translation) society consists of a "structure formed by the principal groups, interconnected, considered as a unit, and all participating in a common culture."

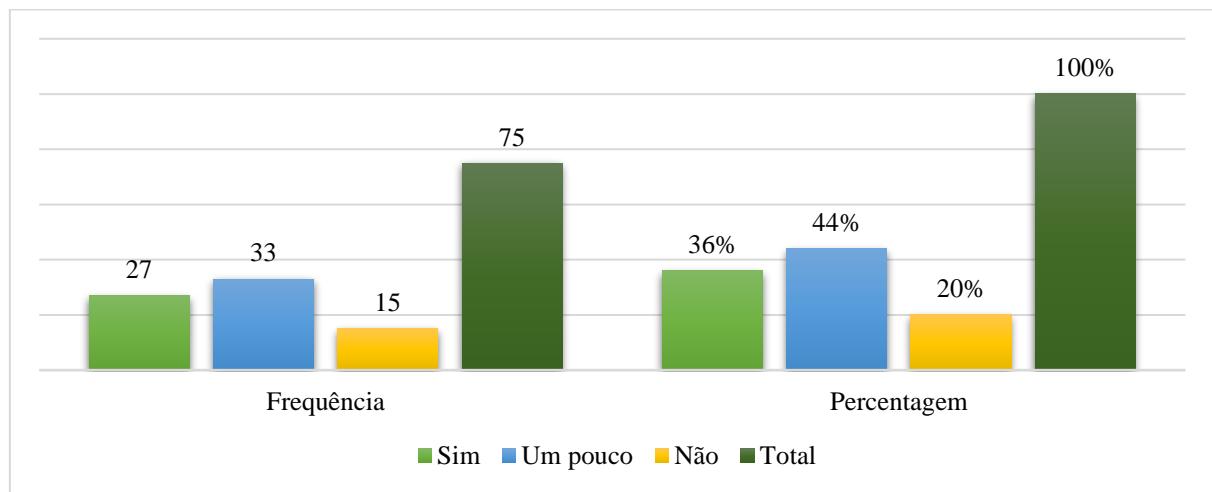


The perception of radio mass media with regard to social moralization, civic participation, and citizenship rights stems from the fact that mass communication is part of everyday life. Radio media are perceived in terms of the maximization of human rights, the expansion of social choices within the current debate on social moralization that is widely discussed in the public sphere, as well as social obligations and duties. Expectations are thus formed accordingly, whether positive or negative. It can also be noted that the role of a given social institution may be relevant in a specific social context but not in another, which therefore requires the continuous promotion of social values linked to citizens' civic participation, with the aim of reversing the escalating scenario of social problems that have profoundly affected social life.

Programs broadcast by radio media outlets

It is important to note that many people stop following certain programs because they do not align with their expectations or with the various social problems affecting society, limiting themselves to communicating information that represents the interests of a specific social segment, thereby reducing the audience that is so highly sought. This phenomenon can be observed in Graph 8, presented below.

Graph 8 – Programs broadcast by radio media outlets⁹



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

⁹ From left to right: Yes; Somewhat; No; Total.

The results presented above regarding programs broadcast by radio media outlets in the current Angolan context suggest that many listeners identify with these programs only to a limited extent, compared to those who do not identify with them due to the nature of the content disseminated. As a result, many listeners turn to digital communication, which poses a significant challenge for radio media outlets in this context, namely aligning their programming with the real problems facing the country. In recent years, the cost of living in Angola has increased substantially, and the continuous financial strain on families is a tangible reality. However, many of these issues, which could form the basis of specific programs, are not adequately addressed. Some radio stations stigmatize these topics and treat them superficially, as if poverty were the inevitable destiny of a people born on extremely resource-rich land, which geologists have described as a “geological scandal.” As a consequence, radio communication loses audience share due to the broadcast of programs that highlight the gap between social reality and information. With the advent of the information society supported by digital communication, this trend tends to become even more pronounced. Evidence of this is found in the results, which clearly illustrate how society perceives the traditional programs created by radio stations, programs that ultimately generate an “army” of emigrants to other media platforms.

In these terms, among the 100% of respondents (75), 27 (36%) stated that they do identify with the programs, 33 (44%) stated that they identify only somewhat or do not identify with the programs, and 15 participants (20%) stated that they do not identify with them at all. The intermediate and negative responses clearly indicate inefficiencies in the production and broadcasting of radio programs in Angola.

In line with sociological parameters, and strictly grounded in the structural-functional theory of mass communication, the analysis of programs broadcast by radio media outlets focuses on the benefits and drawbacks generated by the content disseminated. First, with regard to their positive effects, when radio programs are aligned with social demands, they tend to increase audience levels and play indispensable roles in restoring moral and civic values. This process is grounded in the promotion of civic education that fosters critical and ethical individuals, while also contributing to the dissemination of the real problems experienced by society. Such dissemination serves as a reference for those in positions of power to address these issues comprehensively. In this sense, radio programs help cultivate a culture of respect and tolerance, while also supporting broader development agendas.

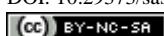


Second, the analysis addresses the effects observed when programs fail to meet society's informational needs. In such cases, they lose credibility among a broad audience, thereby requiring contextual adjustment. As noted above, when structural and functional effects are properly articulated, listeners' aspirations positively influence audience reach. This is considered a positive outcome. However, when these elements are poorly aligned with social demands, they produce serious consequences, such as the distortion of reality by portraying the abnormal as normal. When such approaches are encountered by a more discerning audience, programs tend to lose listeners.

Historically, these issues have been debated by scholars across multiple fields, given that the role of radio mass communication in social life is complex and requires more concise analytical approaches, primarily through the programs broadcast by radio stations. However, due to the difficulty of quantifying the impacts these programs may have on human behavior—since attention is often limited to the observable effects of communication tools—the role of communication as a source of individual empowerment and social mobility is frequently overlooked. Consequently, treating radio mass communication solely as a development tool may appear utopian, considering both its positive and negative effects.

For Heberlê (2013) and Wolf (2002), communication for development constitutes a distinct sphere of information flows designed to promote and accelerate processes of knowledge generation and social appropriation, with the aim of improving individuals' living conditions. According to these authors, the concepts of exchange and interaction are particularly relevant to this study, as they anticipate the manner in which action is developed and individuals are engaged.

For radio programs to effectively contribute to development, several core values must be observed: interaction (dialogue and knowledge exchange); otherness (placing oneself in the position of others); proactivity (acting in advance and identifying key issues); creativity (recognizing differences and improving practices); objectivity (acknowledging the public's need for practical information); timeliness (recognizing that development and people require continuous access to new knowledge); simplicity (as knowledge exchange does not require sophistication); professionalism (journalistic commitments function as symbolic contracts); reciprocity (providing continuous feedback to sustain these contracts); and identity (recognizing that each case is unique and should be treated as such, without fanaticism or excessive formalism) (Heberlê, 2013).



One of the initial steps toward leveraging radio mass communication programs for sustainable development is the creation of strategies aimed at observing social reality. Following this initial stage, communicators can then design ways to interact with individuals and communities. This approach makes it possible to identify necessary actions from the perspective of those who directly experience social problems. After this identification, it is essential to establish relationships of trust with the individuals involved and to demonstrate commitment to providing responses to the issues they raise (McLuhan, 2005; Heberlê, 2013).

Accordingly, radio mass communication programs should prioritize human development. Development should not be treated as something done *for* others, but rather as an opportunity to integrate individuals into the development process, making them part of a complex communicative and informational system. In this context, adherence to a communication ethics code grounded in tolerance, respect, plurality, and the principle of counterargument within broader social structures constitutes the key determinant of a program's potential to achieve audience leadership.

Preferred Radio Station

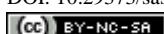
When asked about the radio station they prefer most and the reasons for this preference, participants presented convergent views in some cases and divergent views in others, as evidenced in the following statements:

“The Malanje Radio and the National Radio are my favorites because they broadcast programs that provide what we need to hear, know, enjoy, and learn” (Interviewee A, 29 years old, 12th grade).

“My preferred radio station is Eclésia because it provides many opportunities for young people who are not part of the regime” (Interviewee B, 31 years old, bachelor's degree).

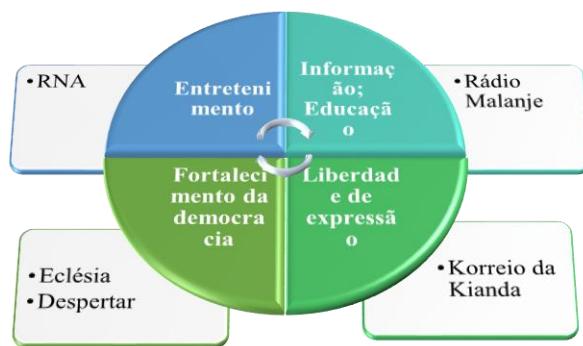
“My preferred radio stations are Despertar and Eclésia because they broadcast many social problems and often free us from the domination imposed by the regime” (Interviewee C, 40 years old, bachelor's degree).

“I prefer Eclésia Radio and Rádio Correio da Kianda (whenever I go to Luanda) because they broadcast the real problems of the people and listen to all sides, unlike others that only claim everything is fine and give voice mainly to those favored by RNA” (Interviewee D, 57 years old, technical secondary education).



In general terms, multiple interpretations can be drawn from these statements. A relative balance is observed among the preferred radio stations cited by the interviewees, along with varied justifications supporting their choices. Nevertheless, these narratives make it possible to identify the roles played by radio mass communication in the Angolan context. Figure 1 below provides a clearer illustration of the preferred radio stations and the reasons underlying these choices, which are understood, on the one hand, as the core roles performed by radio media outlets and, on the other hand, as the foundations for attracting new audiences.

Figure 1 – Preferred radio station and reasons



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

The analysis of Figure 1 indicates that it captures the underlying logic of the participants' discourses. It is evident that Rádio Eclésia, Rádio Despertar, RNA, Rádio Malanje (in the specific case of Rádio Malanje, this preference is justified by the expansion of its signal across the province), and Rádio Correio da Kianda are the most preferred stations among the listeners involved in the study. This preference is attributed to their promotion of freedom of expression, coverage of major social problems as concrete facts, contribution to democratic strengthening, and role in social education, particularly in the teaching of national languages to young people, as well as in enriching public entertainment in Angola.

For some respondents, Rádio Eclésia and Rádio Despertar are perceived as offering greater openness to young people who are not affiliated with the ruling party. This perception reinforces the need to depoliticize radio media outlets, so as to avoid audience loss among young listeners and other social groups. From the perspective of the structural-functionalism theory of mass communication, it can be inferred that radio stations perform social cohesion functions through processes of social moralization and the transmission of cultural and

scientific knowledge, insofar as their programs are aligned with social reality. Furthermore, the expansion of signal coverage throughout the national territory and the modernization of radio services aligned with digital communication contribute to reaching broader audiences across different social strata and regions, thereby strengthening program preference.

Programs That Radio Stations Should Broadcast to Contribute to the Country's Sustainable Development

When asked about the types of programs radio stations should broadcast in order to contribute to the country's sustainable development, participants expressed the following views:

“The programs that local radio stations should broadcast to contribute to national development are those that involve young opinion leaders and apply the principle of counterargument” (Interviewee A, 29 years old, 12th grade).

“Programs that address youth behavior, sexual abuse of minors, and that discourage corruption and nepotism” (Interviewee B, 37 years old, bachelor's degree).

“To contribute to the country's social development, local radio stations need to broadcast programs led by young people that address adolescent prostitution, excessive alcohol and drug use, and theft” (Interviewee C, 31 years old, bachelor's degree).

“Local radio stations need to broadcast more programs that promote love for the homeland, environmental protection, and encourage young people to work the land, among other initiatives” (Interviewee D, 60 years old, technical secondary education).

The interviewees were unanimous in stating that radio stations need to broadcast diverse programs that engage different social groups and serve as vehicles for transmitting ethical, moral, and civic values. Above all, they emphasized the importance of programs that promote environmental protection and guarantee fundamental social rights, thereby fostering democratic maturity, active citizen participation in public life, and the fight against corruption and nepotism, which have significantly undermined the country's development. Figure 2 provides a clearer illustration of the programs that radio stations should broadcast.

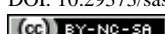
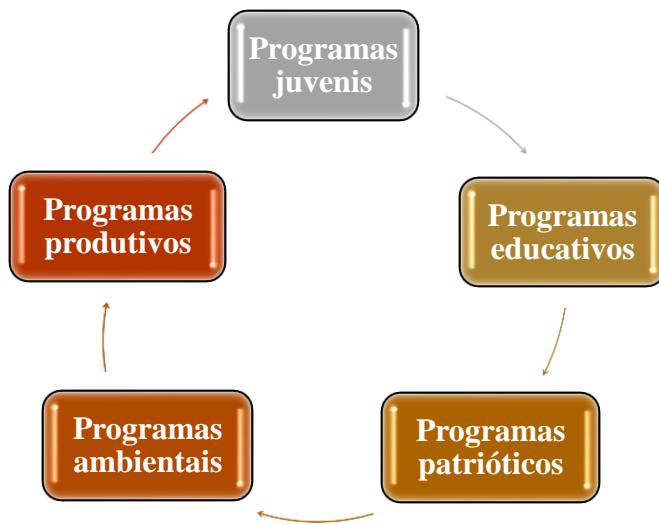


Figure 2 – Programs that radio stations need to broadcast¹⁰



Source: Research data (2024–2025).

The analysis of the programs that radio stations need to broadcast in order to contribute to the country's sustainable development clearly corresponds to those illustrated in the figure, as reported by the study participants. Regarding youth-oriented programs, based on the first interviewee's statements, there is an evident urgency for their implementation, since it is common in the country to hear radio programs in which analyses are produced without the principle of contradiction. There is therefore a clear need to involve young analysts with divergent lines of thought, as well as journalists committed to presenting opposing viewpoints, in order to produce cross-cutting analyses of the main events that shape social life, including political, economic, cultural, and environmental issues, among others.

With regard to the need for educational programs, their purpose is to incorporate stronger ethical and moral values, as we live in a context in which the behavior displayed by young people, and society at large, has become increasingly deviant. Thus, educational programs should address contemporary issues such as sexual abuse, prostitution, delinquency, the use of psychotropic substances, the valorization of national languages, and the fight against corruption, nepotism, and youth idleness, among others.

Patriotic programs are also necessary in order to cultivate among younger generations the concept of love for the homeland. Currently, patriotism is a topic of public debate that has raised many voices, given the frequent vandalism of public property. Environmental programs aim to raise awareness about the need to preserve the environment, as daily behaviors

¹⁰ From top right: Youth programs; Educational programs; Patriotic programs; Environmental programs; Productive programs.

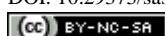
increasingly put at risk the survival of human, animal, and plant species. Evidence of this includes, for example, the disposal of solid waste in open land by individuals with limited environmental awareness, as well as the practice of setting fires due to certain cultural activities such as hunting and agriculture. Nevertheless, local radio stations need to disseminate more programs that stimulate national production. Today, many young people remain idle due to a lack of productive incentives. Given the country's fertile soils, if properly utilized, hunger—which has claimed many lives—could be eradicated, while simultaneously fostering employability.

From this perspective, drawing on the structural-functional theory of mass communication, it becomes clear that information conveyed through the media—particularly radio in Angola—being transmitted from a single source to a broad audience, can produce diverse effects depending on the symbolic representations of facts. This is because the manner in which information is transmitted reflects differing interests among social agents (Nascimento, 1999). As previously stated, radio communication symbolizes a process that involves the exchange of information among individuals, using symbolic systems as support for this purpose. Consequently, it constitutes an important tool in the planning of communication and marketing strategies aimed at achieving socially justified objectives, with a view to consolidating the social credibility of all information produced and disseminated through radio programming.

Final Considerations

It is always necessary to consider that any scientific work brought to publication is the result of a mixed-method investigation, grounded both methodologically and conceptually. Following an exhaustive reflection on *the role of radio mass communication in the Angolan context*, we are pleased to draw the following conclusions.

We are convinced that this topic is highly relevant and requires greater investigative attention from other specialists, particularly those trained in journalism, so that the significant factors opposing the inclusion of contradictory voices in Angolan radio journalism may be discouraged. Such factors catalyze the exclusion of many listeners in matters of pluralism and journalistic impartiality, thereby undermining the true role of radio mass communication. From the perspective of listeners' expectations of radio, respondents presented multiple views regarding the programs that should be broadcast more frequently, with particular emphasis on environmental education, patriotic, productive, and civic education programs.

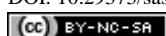


In this sense, the research objectives were effectively achieved, as evidenced by the results presented above, which substantiate the role played by radio mass media institutions. The objectives were met across the three main dimensions addressed by the study. Based on the findings, it is considered that this scientific production offers valuable knowledge aimed at deepening the understanding and awareness of communication professionals and the wider public regarding this social issue affecting Angolan radio communication. It highlights that the primary role of radio is the dissemination of information and social education, which are produced and regulated by these institutions.

The analyses further revealed that listeners constitute the most vulnerable group with respect to information conveyed by radio media, influenced by both visible and invisible actions of individuals in their surroundings. Nevertheless, the high levels of information currently produced within existing programs require continuous improvement in order to align with listeners' preferences. Otherwise, audiences may gradually abandon programs that fail to provide the values demanded by the information society in the era of modernity and knowledge, in which digital communication increasingly serves as an alternative channel for comparing images and discourses.

In other words, the writings of Angolan journalist Ismael Mateus (2003) allow us to infer that radio mass media are a crucial audience to consider in communication strategies aimed at promoting change, particularly among large numbers of people who would otherwise be difficult to reach, whether in terms of knowledge or behavior change. The choice of the most appropriate program and radio outlet, in light of the data presented, largely depends on communication strategies aligned with the target audiences, since each radio station has a distinct audience profile. This explains the imbalance observed among the radio stations investigated with regard to listener preference.

Therefore, the importance of radio communication in the Angolan context appears unquestionable, especially within society, given its role in disseminating information and promoting social values such as respect and tolerance. It can also be concluded that the power of the communication process, and advertising in particular, lies at the core of contemporary social change. For this reason, radio programs must be of high quality in order to compete with other national radio outlets operating in Angola; otherwise, the risk of losing listeners and audience share becomes both imminent and factual.



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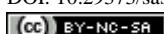
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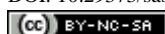
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