

INCORPORATING AFRICAN INDIGENOUS EPISTEMOLOGY INTO HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM: A REMEDY FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT

¹TOLUWALASE AJAYI*, OYENUGA OLUKAYODE FELIX¹

ABSTRACT

This research explores the significance of incorporating African indigenous epistemology systems for lasting educational growth; it contends that, following many years of development, research, and practices, educational institutions in Africa have failed to implement the essential foundational alterations needed in the educational curriculum. This article posits that there is a gap between the educational curriculum in Africa and African indigenous epistemology. African indigenous epistemology is based on the philosophical ideals and values of traditional African communities. It expresses understanding and concepts that link communities and their traditions with the land, forming part of the ongoing connection between individuals and their social, natural, and physical surroundings. The article contends that we should pursue an African perspective on the challenges facing Africa. Our educational framework needs to be oriented towards education, integrating and connecting people into recognized modes of conduct while affirming organizations, viewpoints, and convictions. This research employs a qualitative methodology through a literature review to examine the notion of African indigenous epistemology and its relevance to sustainable educational advancement in Africa. This paper concludes that the thorough integration of African indigenous epistemology into the curriculum can enhance teaching practices. It can foster more autonomous and analytical individuals, ultimately elevating the standard of education in Africa.

Keywords: African Indigenous Epistemology, Curriculum, Culture, Decolonization, Higher Education

¹ **Toluwalase Ajayi*** (Corresponding Author) Ph.D Senior Lecturer at the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. NIGERIA. West Africa. Email: toluwalaseabiodunajayi@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng, **Oyenuga Olukayode Felix** Ph.D, Associate Professor at the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. NIGERIA. West Africa. Email: Oyenuga.olukayode@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng

INTRODUCTION

African indigenous epistemology addresses what the African perceives and comprehends when stating a knowledge assertion. This involves the way the African perceives or discusses reality. Regarding how the African perceives or articulates reality. Ashante (2000) noted that there are several elements in the thought of Africa that determine human conduct in relation to reality: the practicality of wholism, the dominance of poly-consciousness, the concept of inclusiveness, the unity of realms, and the significance of personal connections. African traditional epistemology is fundamentally grounded in African ontology.

African countries, like any others across the globe, have their own systems of knowledge that are indigenous to them, but what raises alarm is why Africa continues to fall behind scientifically and technologically in comparison to the so-called countries. The knowledge perspective of the traditional Africans understand, interpret, and perceive reality through the lens of African culture or shared experiences. African indigenous epistemology focus on the practices and traditions, spirituality, languages, belief frameworks, values, priorities, and favored professions of the community. African indigenous epistemology is an epistemology intentionally positioned within a specific cultural framework. When we discuss a phenomenon in relation to a cultural context, we are referring to placing it within the logical structure of the mentioned cultural environment, specifically African culture.

Ruch and Anyanwu (1984), observed that we need to understand the fundamental assumptions, ideas, theories, and perspectives through which the culture's owners interpret their experiences. Lacking insight into the African mental framework and the worldview in which experiences are contextualized, both African and European researchers would simply ascribe

emotional interpretations to cultural expressions and behaviors indicated by some unfamiliar context.

This article focuses on the following areas, African indigenous epistemology and the curriculum, African indigenous epistemology and its manifestation in oral narratives, folk tales, and proverbs, Social and Cultural African indigenous epistemology, and the difficulties related to incorporating African indigenous epistemology into the curriculum. This research does not seek to diminish the significance and value of Western education within the curriculum, but rather supports the incorporation of African indigenous epistemology into the curriculum for beneficial effects for African communities.

By highlighting the significance of Indigenous epistemology in civic, moral, and character education, this paper aims to inspire critical reflection on the mission of schooling and education in modern contexts. For instance, how do we [as educators and administrators] deliver education to young learners in methods that enable them to cultivate a robust sense of identity, individual and collective respect, and the empowerment necessary for community development? How do we enable young learners to transform their schools into more welcoming environments? In what ways do students in schools foster an appreciation of ‘schooling as a community’ or strive to transform schools into “healthy, functioning communities”? How do we collectively undermine colonial relationships, hierarchies, and educational agendas that extend beyond issues of “controlling [school] discipline” and enable the learner of today to be socially responsible to their communities? These are not inquiries that can be readily addressed. Nevertheless, by thoroughly examining the relationships between culture, pedagogy, and classroom teaching, the paper will establish the endeavor of forming schools as collaborative communities while fundamentally urging us to

reconsider the frameworks of educational delivery (i.e., frameworks for instruction, education, and management of learning).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The particular aims of the research were to:

- i. Uncover the teaching methods of African indigenous epistemology, detailing how it is obtained, shared, and enacted.
- ii. Determine the significance of practical knowledge, oral customs, and the wisdom of elders as knowledge sources in African traditional ways of knowing
- iii. Uncover the special framework for comprehending knowledge, truth, validity, and rationality in a distinct African context
- iv. Examine how African indigenous epistemology influences everyday practices, social relationships, and the broader perspective of the individual.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the aforementioned aim of the research, the subsequent inquiries were formulated:

- i. What is the teaching methodology of African indigenous epistemology?
- ii. What is the significance of experiential knowledge, oral traditions, and the wisdom of elders as reservoirs of knowledge within African traditional epistemology?
- iii. What is the distinctive framework for comprehending knowledge, truth, validity, and rationality in a particular African setting?
- iv. In what ways can African indigenous knowledge influence everyday practices, social relationships, and the general perspective of a person?

LITERATURE REVIEW

African Indigenous Epistemology and the Curriculum

Incorporating African indigenous epistemology into the education curriculum is the most reliable remedy for enduring educational progress in Africa, as it maintains principles like affection, honesty, compassion, understanding, generosity, truthfulness, self-control, and acceptance among other priceless values.

Ewane and Ajagbe (2018:10) observed that the predominance of western knowledge in the scientific trajectory of non-western societies has not fulfilled its promise of being able to uplift these societies from their developmental challenges. Indigenous knowledge suggests the concept of local stewardship in development as a cultural and symbolic asset in the development sector, where the interaction between indigenous perspectives and donor insights yields results. Chivaura (2006) noted that a nexus exist between African indigenous epistemology and development, which accounts for the developmental disparities between Africa and the West. Incorporating African indigenous epistemology into the education curriculum ensures and guarantees tranquility, accord, camaraderie, collaboration, esteem, support, cooperation, togetherness, restoration and diligence among other significant principles.

These values originated from the customary lifestyle in Africa, characterized by peace and harmony. In this context, respect was demonstrated not only towards other individuals beings but also to the collective surroundings, wildlife, the natural world, and the metaphysical. The essence of camaraderie and sisterhood fosters a sense of 'we' that is beneficial for unity and motivates each individual in the community, whether in any nation, village, or workplace, to fully connect with their immediate family or extended family, society, or community. Indigenous epistemology is culturally informed understanding inculcated into individuals from birth onward, structuring how they interfere with their environment. It is also informed continually by outside intelligence

Freire (1968) noted that the major aim of education should be to achieve critical consciousness, for both teachers and learners to be able to question assumed realities, for “teachers and students co-intent on reality, are both subjects not only in the task of unveiling that reality and coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge.

Highlighting the necessity for Africa’s native wisdom to be prioritized into the education curriculum it is necessary that the peoples of Africa gain the conviction that they are not and must not be wards of kind guardians, but tools for their own continual betterment. Essential to this is the awareness among these communities that they possess a distinct and significant contribution to offer for the progress of human civilization, that Africa holds a crucial position within the international community. Epistemology has been defined as the recognition, consciousness, or comprehension of an individual or an entity, encompassing elements like facts, data, explanations, or abilities. Knowledge is obtained through experience or education by observing, uncovering, or studying. It can also indicate a theoretical or practical comprehension of a topic. The concept of knowledge holds significant importance for humanity. But the truth of the matter is that colonial education focuses on producing people for British styled living and does not encourage the building of an authentic progressive African society.

Ezeanya-Esiobu (2019:329) observed that education should assist individuals within a society to understand their lived reality. Individuals must learn from experiencing real life in order to develop freely and be able to contribute to the development of society. In African indigenous epistemology, knowledge is viewed as a commodity that can be possessed by both an individual

and a collective or community. African indigenous epistemology encompasses both personal and societal aspects.

Zageye and Vambe (2006) conceived indigenous epistemology as the specific knowledge that is distinct to a particular culture or community. Flavier (1995) observed that indigenous epistemology constitutes the information foundation of society, aiding in communication and decision-making processes. kok (2005:10) noted that knowledge systems are frameworks that enable individuals to interpret and assign significance to their surroundings. Traditional knowledge is regarded as the essential and foundational resource of the community.

Warren (1991) observed that African indigenous epistemology serves as the groundwork for local decision-making in education, health, natural resource management, and various other undertakings in rural areas. In addition to being the cornerstone of a nation's knowledge framework, African indigenous epistemology encompasses the skills, perceptions, and experiences of the populace employed to enhance their livelihoods. Viewed in this light, it is essential to incorporate African indigenous epistemology into higher education curriculum. Chivaura (2006) noted that the African perspective states that our reality comprises two dimensions: the physical and the spiritual. The distinctions between African and European viewpoints regarding earth and heaven stem from their differing approaches to the material and the spiritual.

African indigenous knowledge can be woven into the higher education syllabus by proactively discovering and merging local narratives, customs, and embracing principles such as harmony, reverence for elders, shifting from Eurocentric views on integrating African perspectives into education to empower learners and develop a more inclusive curriculum. Acknowledging the detrimental effects of colonial education on African epistemology systems and values is crucial for decolonizing the curriculum to aid in sustainable development and problem-solving.

Oguamanam (2006) noted that western science conveys information via written communication. Indigenous knowledge is acquired through observation and participating in simulations, real-life experiences and trial and error, western in abstraction. Indigenous wisdom is rooted in the spiritual realm; the belief that the universe and its elements possess a life force and are imbued with spirit, encompassing both living and non-living things like fire and trees.

Western knowledge separates the living from the non-living and considers everything as mere physical entities. Indigenous wisdom perceives the world as interconnected; it does not inherently elevate all other life forms below humanity since they are all interconnected, and interdependent parts of one ecosystem. Western science views mankind as superior to nature and “authorized” to exploit it maximally. Indigenous epistemology is integrative and holistic in nature, rooted in a culture of kinship between the natural and supernatural.

Western science is reductionist and fragmentary, reducing and delineating boundaries to the extent that every relationship is treated as a distinct whole. African indigenous epistemology values intuition, emphasizes emotional involvement, and subjective certainty in perception. Western science thrives on reasoning and evaluation, detached from the observer, and the duplication of metrics to ascertain outcomes. Indigenous wisdom is founded on an extended duration of intimate engagement with the natural world and its occurrences. Western knowledge flourishes through mathematical and quantitative methods.

Through education, colonialism ingrained unusual behavior and thought patterns in Africans, to the extent that, even after achieving political independence from the former colonial nations, there has been little progress made in the realm of educational transformation. Except for minor and largely structural modifications, the current situation is that African nations have not tackled the essence of the educational curricula to embody mental and psychological autonomy.

The effects of colonial education continue to lead Africans to identify with external ideas, expertise from so-called foreign specialists and advisers, while undermining the indigenous, home grown knowledge and more qualified experts on the continent. The essential gap between the curriculum and actual circumstances, which is typical of today's education in Africa, is not without context. Precolonial African communities were recognized for creating educational systems that mirror the realities and hopes of their experiences of learners.

African indigenous epistemology and its manifestation in oral narratives, folk tales, and proverbs

This culture of oral tradition through which African indigenous epistemology is preserved includes the following dynamics: moral values, imitation, recitation, demonstration, epic, poetry, reasoning, riddles, praise, songs, story-telling, proverbs, folktales, dance, music, environmental education. (Itibari, 2006:325).

African indigenous epistemology represents the African perspective on comprehending and perceiving the world, significantly anchored in African customs and heritage. It highlights, oral tradition, community principles, and a relational worldview, where success is often passed down through generations. key aspects of African indigenous epistemology are oral traditions: stories, proverbs, songs and other forms of oral communication are vital for transmitting knowledge and cultural values. In the African indigenous epistemology, knowledge is often seen as belonging to the community and is shared collectively, rather than being individualistic. Learning is often through practical experience and observation, rather than solely through formal instruction. Education rooted in indigenous epistemology is essential and possesses the potential to pave the way for Africa's progress across all areas and industries. Incorporating African folk

tales and sayings into higher education programs can offer valuable insights into African values and worldviews.

African indigenous epistemology, the method of understanding within African societies, is profoundly anchored in their ontology, or perception of reality and its elements. This way of knowing is conveyed through oral traditions such as folk tales and proverbs, which share insights and cultural principles through the ages. Proverbs, for example, provide succinct representations of ethical teachings and social standards, whereas folk tales and myths elaborate on the genesis of the universe, and human beings.

Oral traditional knowledge is primarily transmitted through stories, songs, and proverbs. The conversation is guided by a fundamental inquiry: What is the significance and position of indigenous epistemology (e.g., proverbs) in seeking educational transformation for society? There are evolving and newly developing trends in the study of proverbs that are significantly influencing how African proverbs are viewed within the Western academic realm and the broader community. For instance, proverbs embody Indigenous wisdom that offers insights for multi-centric and polycentric approaches to understanding. In essence, proverbs question prevailing Eurocentric narrative approaches to knowledge creation by engaging with concepts of wholeness and holistic learning, the significance of emotions in intellectual processes, spiritual understandings, and the influence of the learner's connection to the land where they pursue their studies. Knowledge is not just theoretical but is also intended for practical application in everyday life and problem solving.

Bascom, (1965:3) observed that proverbs and riddles are indigenous ways of knowing, that presents a philosophy of life, sayings, used in teaching about life, constitute indigenous knowledge with lessons for multi-centric and polycentric ways of knowing. The incorporation of African indigenous epistemology: cultural narratives, songs, riddles, folktales, myths, and mythologies can

assist in educating young learners to value themselves and to promote social responsibility, ethics, and a sense of community. Proverbs demonstrate the strength of learning communities defined by resilience, resistance, creativity, resourcefulness, accountability, stewardship, and vulnerability. Proverbs form a crucial element of Indigenous social learning, emphasizing critical education and self-awareness,

Indigenous proverbs engaging in narratives, melodies, puzzles, traditional tales, etc., is not merely an act of individual and communal affirmation, but significantly, it also serves as a cultural expression for Indigenous peoples, uncovering profound worries about and valuing knowledge, conversation, representation, issues of legitimacy, validation, appropriation, reciprocity, and social responsibility.

Proverbs, as a component of the cultural knowledge framework, encapsulate the cultural memory of a people. In a specific community, people and groups utilize culture and cultural instruments to navigate the intricate relationships between themselves and their social, cultural, and historical surroundings. Since proverbs impart lessons on ethics and character, they function to govern social behavior, action and human conduct in communities. Therefore, culture serves as the foundation for dialogue concerning knowledge generation, identity, and growth.

African proverbs convey timeless lessons that can benefit young learners worldwide. Indeed, the same holds true for proverbs from various cultures around the globe. This wisdom can be disseminated, and tailored teaching methods can be established to help youth utilize these proverbs to enhance their learning and social interactions. Although this wisdom stems from specific cultural settings, their teachings offer insights that can be broadly applied across different situations and environments, as long as the educator is capable of extracting the educational elements for students in schools. Indigenous narratives, songs, proverbs, and folktales represent

Indigenous ways of understanding. They encompass knowledge that offers a worldview, imparting valuable lessons to educate young individuals about life, enabling them to develop mentally, spiritually, and morally into maturity. An individual matures responsibly through the wisdom found in proverbs and riddles. As a means of expression, proverbs offer platforms for the social interaction of young people across different genders, ethnic groups, ages, and other connections.

Proverbs contribute to the cohesion of communities and populations. Proverbs act as a catalyst for understanding, wisdom, and ethical behavior. They can foretell and question beliefs to motivate additional contemplation. The majority of Africans employ proverbs and sayings daily and widely in every form of communication and to clarify the meaning of unclear aspects in discussions or as a catalyst for conversation. Proverbs encapsulate the cultural truths of native lifestyles that were utilized to cultivate cognitive skills in the youth and also to encourage the values of loyalty, collaboration among individuals, and mutual respect within the community. (Aboluwadi, 2014:2224). Proverbs advocate for positive actions while deterring negative conduct; they foster the transmission of recognized social values, ethical principles, and non-conformity to unconventional behaviors. They can be seen as reflections that uncover the life-principles and values of a particular society, along with their perspective on their surroundings.

Social and Cultural African indigenous Epistemology

Social and cultural understanding is essential for sustainable educational development. It aids in comprehending how cultural values and beliefs influence our perception of environmental challenges, resource management, and environmental needs. Culture and knowledge transform our comprehension of the world and the way we engage with it. It affects our convictions and actions.

It is social epistemology that investigates how knowledge is generated and shared among social groups. It emphasizes the role of power relations, prejudices, and societal standards in the formation and spread of knowledge.

Grasping how culture and social structures shape our understanding about sustainable educational advancement is essential for formulating successful policies. Comprehending the contexts of social and cultural knowledge guarantees that development initiative is pertinent and enduring in the long run. Cultural perceptions regarding nature, resource consumption, and sustainability can affect how communities address environmental obstacles. Informing individuals about sustainable development necessitates taking into account cultural contexts and values to ensuring that messages are grasped, while disregarding indigenous wisdom and cultural principles can result in opposition and unsustainable progress.

The cultural legacy of Africa culture of taboo handed down through the ages, has served as a beacon of direction for African communities during periods of tranquility, uncertainty, birth, existence, and passing. It has served as a cornerstone of their self-identity, self-esteem, and self-assurance. It has allowed them to coexist harmoniously with their physical, social, and spiritual surroundings. This legacy offers a base for leadership, direction, conflict resolution, decision-making, self-sufficiency, and progress. (Haverkort, and Reijntjes, 2011).

The Western world has no interest in granting the status of science in relation to African indigenous epistemology systems because it still seeks to maintain dominance over the power of knowledge, which is aptly illustrated by the advanced technology products emerging in the global framework he aims to portray when he implies that the spread of cultures worldwide mirrors the distribution of power. The argument here is that as the western world aims to retain global authority, it must assert the supremacy of its knowledge by denying others access cultural

frameworks of understanding as a cultural occurrence, and to the extent that this is true, scientific understanding does not dismiss the societal backdrop of knowledge as the western world would have us think. (Haverkort, and Reijntjes, 2011).

This aligns with the reality that the notable distinction between the extended histories of various peoples. The disparities among continents can be attributed not to inherent variations among the people, but rather to the differences in their surroundings. However, the response by Africans to the ethnocentric challenge has resulted in what Hountondji described as a culture of extravertism in epistemology, leading to the unjust imitation of African indigenous knowledge systems after western frameworks. In this context, scientific and technological endeavors in Africa currently exhibit a similar outward focus as economic activities. Many of the deficiencies that can be recognized ought to be perceived, therefore, as natural and inevitable. They should be returned, in contrast to the history of the incorporation and subjugation of our traditional, to the global system of knowledge, similarly, the overall underdevelopment arises, mainly, not due to any inherent backwardness, but from the incorporation of our subsistence economies into the global capitalist market (Hountondji, 1995).

Culture represents a community's manifestation of their tangible, intangible, and conceptual belief systems. Culture pertains to the structuring of societies and the specific social configurations that enable the daily realization of a community's aspirations, visions, and experiences. The tangible and intangible facets of culture collaborate to foster social unity among communities in terms of the foundational concepts, notions, and convictions that influence daily practices and societal actions.

Difficulties Related to Incorporating African Indigenous Epistemology into the Curriculum

There are relevant inquiries and matters regarding African indigenous epistemology and the significance of local cultural understandings, including indigenous sayings, traditional stories, and music in informing and shaping curriculum, instructional, and educational methods centered on moral and civic education. These issues also carry implications for educational policy as educators, and administrators seek strategies to foster inclusive learning environments that ensure young people cultivate a sense of community and responsibility.

If knowledge that lacks a foundation is spread throughout African academia, resulting in African graduates who have disconnected from their roots and their African context. These graduates may be more adept at addressing Euro-American issues than their own. This occurs because these graduates possess knowledge and resources that cannot assist them in addressing African issues. Dimmock and Goh (2011:215) Along with Almazroa and Alotaibi (2023:7365) noted that resources rich in cultural content related to oral traditions can improve critical thinking and cultural understanding; nonetheless, specific strategies for using these resources are frequently lacking. Nevertheless, thorough empirical studies can offer the essential proof needed to advocate for the incorporation of African indigenous epistemology into the curriculum.

Numerous Africans, regardless of whether they are educated locally or internationally, receive an education that detaches them from their own cultural roots. This occurs through the devaluation of native African wisdom. Educational establishments, acting as vehicles of socialization and cultural adaptation, have excelled in instilling a sense of inferiority in Africans who are educated in the West.

Africa's indigenous epistemology was intentionally sidelined to a subordinate role on report of being unscientific, barbaric, and primitive (Mapara, 2009). The continent's uniqueness and genuine experiences, encompassing cultural values, beliefs, and knowledge systems, have

been dismissed. This misunderstanding resulted in African indigenous epistemology loose its place and role in the higher education curriculum. African indigenous epistemology traces its roots to the colonial period; it is a framework of knowledge aimed at ensuring that individuals are aware of events occurring both within and outside their communities.

Before colonization in Africa, structured and unstructured forms of transferring indigenous wisdom occurred among families, tribes, and communities through social agreements, oral histories, ceremonial rituals, and various practices. Africa's originality and authentic indigenous knowledge are reflected in cultural beliefs, traditional stories, and sayings, as well as in practical and technical skills.(Mapara, 2009).

Indigenous epistemology represents a collection, or collections, of insights held by the indigenous communities of specific regions that have persisted over an extensive period. There is Knowledge that has managed to survive despite the racial and colonial assaults it has endured due to Western imperialism and hubris. Some understandings were disregarded, belittled by the colonizers and their sciences as factual and superstitious, while they aimed to validate themselves in some manner of justification for why they needed to conquer other nations' territories.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a qualitative approach via a literature review to explore the concept of African indigenous epistemology and its significance for sustainable educational progress in Africa. The research focuses on the fact that in African indigenous epistemology, colonialism caused the colonized to not only forfeit their territory but also to relinquish their culture, mindset, ways of knowing, dignity, and autonomy..

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

African indigenous epistemology understands, defines, and grasps reality through the lens of African cultural and traditional experiences. This notion is founded on the belief that ideas like knowledge, truth, validity, and rationality can be understood using African categories and concepts derived from African cultural and traditional backgrounds, independent of Western conceptual frameworks.

The findings reveal the need to incorporate African indigenous epistemology into the curriculum in analytical reasoning and cross-cultural skills for enduring educational advancement. Higher education is seen as a cornerstone that drives national progress because it is the foundation where future leaders and policymakers are trained and groomed. However, as Odora (2009:601) aptly noted, the educational programs in the majority of African universities are structured to acclimate students to Western culture, serving as foundational narratives for Eurocentric imperial objectives. Although different approaches to decolonizing higher education have been suggested, there has been little genuine attempt to examine student growth and the necessity of decolonizing its epistemological framework. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021:2), observed that colonialism did not conclude with the achievement of political independence from European imperial powers but instead reemerged through a phenomenon known as coloniality. He articulates coloniality as a form of epistemic control that manifests as Eurocentric dominance over culture, languages, and the processes of knowledge creation and endorsement. In numerous African nations, higher education was established as a direct transplant from the system of higher education in the colonial power.

Consequently, the frameworks of higher education, subjects and educational programs were created utilizing models from the West. Higher education was established to prepare African

elites to support colonial governance. The academic framework and curriculum were structured to advance Western civilization at the detriment of African culture and native knowledge systems. This led to the demise of African epistemology, values, and cultural identity.

DISCUSSION

This research supports the integration of African indigenous epistemology into higher education as an effort to maintain African indigenous knowledge systems. It is anticipated that its incorporation will promote inclusive education practices. In this way, non-indigenous Africans will also be introduced to innovative learning methods, and help restore dignity and mutual respect among Africans. This research examines how the emergence of colonialism threatened indigenous wisdom.

Despite Africans striving for their liberation and autonomy, within the supposed freedom and independence, the education systems established during colonial times persist, and the constitution both directly and indirectly influences African values and the principles of Africans. Consequently, African indigenous knowledge is now sidelined and nearing extinction due to the socio-economic changes implemented under the guise of democracy (Pietersen and Plaatjies, 2023:122, Samkange et. al. 2021:11049).

Incorporating African indigenous epistemology within the curriculum assists Africans in devising effective solutions to our challenges that are most suitable for our situations to enhance our quality of life. African indigenous epistemology can be viewed as an understanding about the community, created by the community, and intended for the community. This implies that educational advancement is more likely to take place in societies that manage to connect their knowledge foundation to innovation frameworks. Additionally, teaching methods should

transition from single-loop learning, where the premises of Western theories and concepts remain unchallenged, to double-loop learning.

African academics must be informed about the importance of utilizing critical theory to screen imported knowledge. We cannot expect to advance if we solely rely on knowledge cultivated in other places. In *Yoruba* tradition, for instance, sayings are utilized to recognize and honor culture. For instance, a *Yoruba* saying indicates that achievement comes from continuous endeavors: *ikoko to ma je ata, idi re a gbona*. Another saying states that all lizards rest flat on the earth, and it is unknown which of them is in pain: *gbogbo Alangba lo da inu dele ako mo eyiti inu nrun*. The simple explanation for this is that no one can discern a person's intention, motive, purpose, and similar aspects merely from their facial expressions.

This research advocates for the inclusion of proverbs in the curriculum of higher education. We have pedagogic value of African indigenous epistemology that relates to the notion of individuality and collective accountability, esteem for oneself, colleagues, and leadership, along with shared reliance and the development of community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

African indigenous epistemology captures the shared understanding and insights of community values. This research advocated for joint endeavors aimed at revitalizing, embracing, and integrating African indigenous knowledge systems without perceiving them as subordinate.

African traditional epistemology is suggested to educators and organizations to be incorporated into the curriculum to improve critical thinking and cultural understanding, enabling

students to connect with intricate ideas through familiar, culturally relatable expressions. Education is a lifelong process, it is an act or experience that has an integrative and developmental impact on the intellect, personality, competencies, physical capabilities, and spiritual strengths of a person to empower them to function efficiently and with accountability within the community.

Students should be educated on the merits of Indigenous African epistemology pertaining to the notion of self and the community, accountability, regard for oneself, contemporaries, and leadership as well as shared reliance and community development, and their role in educational programs. Elders, parents, and cultural custodians need to utilize proverbs, fables, cultural narratives, songs, and folktales as a means to revive African indigenous epistemology.

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