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Research Article

African Indigenous Knowledge, Epistemic Reliabilism, and Environmental Conservation: A Feyerabendian Defense

Afrykańska wiedza rdzennych społeczności, reliabilizm epistemiczny oraz ochrona środowiska. Obrona inspirowana filozofią Feyerabenda

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Abstract

This article argues for the epistemic reliability of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) as a viable framework for environmental conservation in the face of its persistent marginalisation within dominant Western epistemology. Drawing on Paul Feyerabend's critique of methodological monism and his defense of epistemological pluralism, the paper challenges the view that only Western scientific methods can produce valid environmental knowledge. It further employs virtue reliabilism to argue that AIK should be regarded as epistemically credible because its ecological practices have proven effective over time in sustaining human–environment relationships, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation. Using the method of critical analysis, the study shows that AIK is not merely a supplementary resource but a parallel and complementary knowledge system capable of informing sustainable environmental governance. The article concludes that African Indigenous Knowledge is both epistemically reliable and practically indispensable for contemporary environmental conservation, and that a genuinely pluralistic epistemology is necessary for a more resilient and ecologically just future.

Keywords

African Indigenous Knowledge, epistemic reliabilism, virtue reliabilism, epistemological pluralism, Paul Feyerabend, environmental conservation, indigenous knowledge systems, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, SDG 13 – Climate Action, SDG 15 – Life on Land

Streszczenie

Artykuł dowodzi epistemicznej wiarygodności afrykańskiej wiedzy rdzennych społeczności (African Indigenous Knowledge, AIK) jako wartościowych ram ochrony środowiska w obliczu jej trwałej marginalizacji w dominującym zachodnim dyskursie epistemologicznym. Odwołując się do krytyki monizmu metodologicznego oraz obrony pluralizmu epistemologicznego sformułowanych przez Paula Feyerabenda, autor podważa pogląd, że jedynie zachodnie metody naukowe są zdolne do tworzenia wiarygodnej wiedzy o środowisku. W dalszej części, autor wykorzystuje koncepcję reliabilizmu, argumentując, że AIK należy uznać za epistemicznie wiarygodną, ponieważ jej praktyki ekologiczne przez długi czas skutecznie wspierały zrównoważone relacje człowieka ze środowiskiem, ochronę bioróżnorodności oraz adaptację do zmian klimatu. Zastosowanie metody analizy krytycznej pozwala wykazać, że AIK nie jest jedynie uzupełniającym źródłem wiedzy, lecz równoległym i komplementarnym systemem poznawczym, zdolnym do wspierania zrównoważonego zarządzania środowiskiem. W konkluzji autor stwierdza, że afrykańska wiedza rdzennych społeczności jest zarówno epistemicznie wiarygodna, jak i praktycznie niezbędna dla współczesnej ochrony środowiska, a rzeczywiście pluralistyczna epistemologia stanowi warunek budowania bardziej odpornej i sprawiedliwej ekologicznie przyszłości.

Słowa kluczowe

afrykańska wiedza rdzennych społeczności, reliabilizm epistemiczny, reliabilizm cnót, pluralizm epistemologiczny, Paul Feyerabend, ochrona środowiska, systemy wiedzy rdzennych społeczności, ochrona bioróżnorodności, adaptacja do zmian klimatu, SDG 13 – Działania w dziedzinie klimatu, SDG 15 – Życie na lądzie

Introduction

The current environmental crisis unfolding globally is deteriorating the Earth's health and consistently disrupting global ecological stability (Mihailov and Sakelarieva 2013; Obi 2024). This has necessitated the exploration of diverse epistemological frameworks to inform sustainable conservation practices. There have been several approaches to this, including scientific and technological interventions, religious approaches, and even indigenous practices (Sadowski 2020; Lasisi 2023; Sadowski and Ayvaz 2023; Obi 2024), which also involves African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK).

African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) is a knowledge system that embodies the collective wisdom, practices, and beliefs developed over generations within African communities (Lasisi 2023). It represents a dependable knowledge system for conservation strategies (Warren 1991; Ojomo 2011), specific to the African people. However, the epistemic legitimacy of AIK has often been denied on the grounds of its non-alignment with the dominant paradigm of Western science (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Owusu-Ansah and Mji 2013; Mawere 2015). According to Olaitan (2024), the negligence of AIK is the result of the dominance of Western-centric knowledge, which has rendered the AIK inferior in standard. This scepticism, which is a deliberate

endeavour and a reflection of Western Epistemological hegemony, overlooks the demonstrable success of AIK in various fields, including ensuring sustainable human–environment relationships across centuries (Njau 2014; Gbadebo and Omosulu 2015; Lasisi 2023), effective administrative governance (Mascarenhas 2004; Mahlala et al. 2023), and effective education (Mawere 2015), among many others. Although these knowledge systems have, over time, demonstrated a degree of reliabilism attributable to certain virtues and cognitive processes involved in the acquisition of knowledge (Zinyeka et al. 2016; Iwuanyanwu 2022; Etuk and Inwang 2024; Oni and Olalere 2024), they continue to be denied epistemic recognition. In essence, rather than focusing on the tenability of knowledge, Western knowledge has been placed at the centre of epistemology, considered universal, and every other kind of knowledge are flagged unscientific (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Owusu-Ansah and Mji 2013), which Njau (2014), Mahlala et al. (2023), Ndlovu (2023), and Mzimela and Moyo (2024) attributed to western influence.

However, according to epistemic reliabilism which holds that beliefs are justified when they are produced by reliable cognitive agents or processes (Goldman 1979; Sosa 1991; Greco 2010), African knowledge is not merely an adjunct to scientific methods but a parallel and complementary form of knowledge capable of informing sustainable resource management, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation strategies. This position is further supported by several scholars including Ayeni et al. (2014), Nakashima et al. (2012), Nyadzi et al. (2021) and Lasisi (2023) among many others, who argue that AIK has been generated through time-tested communal practices, rituals, and ecological interactions that demonstrate both continuity and adaptability. This paper challenges this denial of the tenability of African knowledge by situating it within the philosophical framework of Paul Feyerabend's epistemology. Feyerabend (1975) argues for the rejection of rigid methodological constraints in scientific inquiry. His argument rather than prescribing a method argues for any method. This is captured in his provocative maxim, "anything goes" (Feyerabend 1975, 23), which expresses his commitment to epistemological pluralism. His critique of methodological monism undermines the claim that valid knowledge can only arise from a singular scientific method, the very basis on which the argument of this paper is built.

1. Methodology

In realising the goal of this research paper, a qualitative method will be employed, particularly the method of critical analysis. Following this methodology section, the paper is organized into five substantive

sections. The first clarifies the concept of epistemic reliabilism. The second clarifies the concept of African Indigenous Knowledge. The third examines African Indigenous Knowledge and its marginalisation. The fourth presents Paul Feyerabend's epistemological pluralism as the theoretical framework of the paper, which strengthens the conceptual framework of epistemic reliabilism. The fifth addresses the epistemic reliability of African Indigenous Knowledge in environmental conservation. Premised on Feyerabend's epistemological pluralism, it emphasises how AIK has served as a source of knowledge for African communities.

2. The Concept of Epistemic Reliabilism

The concept of knowledge has been the subject of numerous critiques. Traditionally, the theory of knowledge is built on three conditions. First, that a proposition is true (truth condition); second, that the subject believes the proposition (belief condition); and third, that the subject possesses adequate justification for believing the proposition (justification condition) (Gettier 1963). However, this has been criticised, particularly following the problem raised by Edmund Gettier, who exposed the insufficiency of the traditional account of Justified True Belief (JTB). In response to Gettier's challenge to this traditional account, several theories of knowledge have emerged, where some argue for the need for a fourth condition, and some, including Epistemic Reliabilism, argue against the direction taken by the debate following Gettier's challenge (Tolly 2021). Epistemic reliabilism, as an epistemological theory, deviates from the view of many scholars who attempted to create a fourth condition. It shifts the focus of epistemology from subject cognition, known as internalism, to the natural processes and methods through which knowledge is acquired (Laamanen 2021). It seeks to provide a way in which epistemic properties can be situated within a naturalistic worldview (Goldman 1979). As Goldman (1979, 1) writes: "I want a theory of justified belief to specify in non-epistemic terms when a belief is justified." This quest by Goldman began with what is called Process Reliabilism (Laamanen 2021). Process Reliabilism holds that a belief is justified if and only if it is produced by a process that often reliably leads to true belief (Goldman 1979; Feldman 1998). Its justification for accepting knowledge is based on whether the process that produces it has, over time, generated more truths than falsehoods. That is, if the degree of positive outcomes exceeds the negative, the process is considered reliable, and that reliability itself justifies accepting the knowledge (Beddor et al. 2021).

According to Smart et al. (2020), Reliabilism traditionally focuses on the natural processes through which knowledge is acquired. Its primary concern is not questioning how one came to know or whether the

knowledge could be falsified, but rather whether the process is reliable. Hence, whether a belief is justified or not depends on whether it is supported by adequate reasons (Beddor et al. 2021). This approach is often called the externalist mode of knowing, in contrast to the traditional internalist mode of knowing (Dretske 2008; Greco 2005; Etuk and Inwang 2024).

However, due to some limitations of Process Reliabilism, scholars like Ernest Sosa and John Greco argue that it should be extended to include the active participation of the agent. According to Sosa (2007), evaluating knowledge solely by the reliability of processes overlooks intellectual virtues, such as carefulness, insight, intellectual courage, and integrity, which contribute to producing true beliefs. By linking reliability to the agent's virtues, justification becomes more robust, accounting not only for the truth-conducive nature of processes but also for the quality of the agent's cognitive character. In a similar vein, Greco (2010) extends Process Reliabilism to virtue reliability, aiming to bridge externalist and internalist concerns. He emphasises that knowledge attribution should consider both the reliability of processes and the agent's competence, thereby addressing criticisms that externalist accounts ignore the epistemic responsibility of knowers. This approach ensures that agents are properly credited for their cognitive achievements while also being held accountable for the exercise of their intellectual abilities.

The position of Virtue Reliabilism is further strengthened in the work of Akande (2017), who draws on the Yoruba conception of virtue as a necessity in human beings. According to Akande (2017), in Gettier's analysis, Smith lacked the necessary virtues of firmness and precision and therefore made errors in predicting who would get the job. He argues that it is misguided to hide behind the vagueness of words or sentences to score what he terms epistemic points. Rather than following earlier philosophers who sought to add a fourth condition to strengthen the relationship among belief, truth, and justification, Akande stresses the necessity of ensuring a virtuous agent, since humans play a central role in the creation of knowledge. For him, logical justification has been shown to be insufficient, and as such, there is a need to resort to the moral justification of the agent (Akande 2017, 2019). Thus, agent reliabilism, which is founded on the virtues of the knower, is promoted as a viable framework for strengthening the traditional conditions of knowledge. This paper therefore builds on both approaches.

3. The Concept of African Indigenous Knowledge

The concept of Indigenous knowledge has, over time, been considered and recognised from different

perspectives, depending on context and peculiarities. According to McGregor (2021), it is regarded as synonymous with traditional knowledge, or, simply put, Aboriginal traditional knowledge. It is more or less the body of knowledge demonstrated and practiced by Indigenous peoples (Ayeni and Aborisade 2021). Warren (1991) describes Indigenous knowledge as a form of knowledge peculiar to local people. This definition is further developed in Ubisi et al. (2020), as well as Mahlala and Shai (2022), who argue that indigenous knowledge is unique to specific cultures. Mbah et al. (2021) further argue that it is a kind of knowledge that is tied to culture, thereby encompassing all aspects of a people's reality, including language, practices, rituals, spirituality, and even their system of classifications. According to Ndlovu (2023, 128), it involves "practices, experiences, cultural beliefs and traditions, values and norms, locally produced by a particular group of people and expressed in their local language." In another vein, Melchias (2001) argues that indigenous knowledge can be described as what indigenous people know and do. It is an accumulation of what they have known and done for generations, which is often practices that have evolved over time through trial and error (Enaifoghe 2021), and as such reflects the flexibility of this knowledge to cope with a changing world. In essence, it can therefore be understood as knowledge that emerges from the lived realities of people, which has often undergone various forms of evolution through trial and error, as well as other generational refinements (Lasisi 2023; Melchias 2001; Ayeni et al. 2014; Nakashima et al. 2012; Nyadzi et al. 2021).

Considering the above, African Indigenous Knowledge can be described as a knowledge system peculiar to African people that has evolved over the years due to its ability to adapt to new norms and survive through time. Olatade and Mogaji (2025) explain that this knowledge guides and informs the practices of Indigenous Africans. They argue that it is often built on African cultures and environments and reflects "the accumulated experiences, traditions, and innovations of local communities throughout the continent" (Olatade and Mogaji 2025, 63–64). In a similar vein, using a specific group from Africa, particularly the Yoruba people, who are indigenous to south-western Nigeria, Lasisi (2023, 96) argues:

> The traditional Yoruba people see the interdependence of the people and the environment as important; this is because their cultures, beliefs, morality and traditions were outcomes of several observations of their environment which makes their caring for the environment paramount and this relationship is visible in their attitudes.

In other words, African Indigenous knowledge has been the bedrock which indigenous communities

relied on to navigate various environmental challenges and explore opportunities (Gbadebo and Omosulu 2015; Olatade and Mogaji 2025).

4. The Misconception and Marginalisation of African Indigenous Knowledge System

African Indigenous Knowledge Systems, like many other indigenous knowledge systems, have often faced severe marginalisation and misunderstanding, which many have traced to the dominance of Western narratives (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Njau 2014; Mawere 2015; Afisi 2016a; Olaitan and Oloruntoba 2023; Mzimela and Moyo 2024). According to Ocholla and Onyancha (2008), Indigenous Knowledge Systems have, over time, been neglected, undermined, and stigmatised, experiencing significant resistance and suppression among the majority of world communities. As a result, Western knowledge has overshadowed them and has been regarded as the universal model that should be embraced by all. As Mawere (2015) argues, African knowledge has often been branded unscientific, illogical, anti-developmental, and even ungodly, an attitude he attributes to colonial administration, which degraded, relegated, and undermined everything about Africa. Mascarenhas (2004) further argues that such marginalisation continues because it serves the interests of those who benefit from resisting the promotion of indigenous knowledge. Accordingly, "African professionals, scholars, researchers, policy makers and activists attempting to understand or promote IK run the risk of a cool reception, ridicule or even outright opposition, because IK could be an obstacle to many vested interests" (Mascarenhas 2004, 1).

Mzimela and Moyo (2024) further highlighted how indigenous knowledge was sidelined during the COVID-19 period. According to their study, indigenous knowledge has historically played a significant role in addressing health crises as severe as the COVID-19 pandemic. However, during this period, it was largely excluded from formal healthcare policies and programs because it did not conform to the model of Western science. This exclusion reflects the influence of Euromodernity, as they call it in contemporary times, which privileges the Western canon as the only viable source of knowledge while dismissing other knowledge systems as myths or invalid for practice (Mzimela and Moyo 2024). They argue, "this is consistent with Euromodernity, which valorizes Western canon as knowledge and everything else as myth or lies" (Mzimela and Moyo 2024, 10). As Hlabangane (2021, 165) argues, "Western science has pushed for and assumed a universal status. It is, in fact, a provincial view of the world – a knowledge system that, like any other, vies for and underpins a particular perspective on the world."

Furthermore, Njau (2014) argues that the role of colonialism cannot be divorced from the consistent marginalization of Indigenous knowledge systems. Accordingly, he highlights that colonialism is a major factor hindering the flourishing of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, while drawing on his findings on the area of land and soil conservation. He argues that colonial intrusion into African life was abrupt and disruptive, altering realities in a way that has had long-lasting consequences (Njau 2014). This forceful interruption, he maintains, has contributed greatly to Africa's underdeveloped approaches to environmental degradation, as colonialism ensured systems that favoured smooth exploitation of resources (Njau 2014). Mahlala et al. (2023) further argue that African Indigenous Knowledge has often been confronted with contradictions and misconceptions, which they trace to unrealistic expectations imposed on it. This position echoes the argument of Ocholla and Onyancha (2008), as they emphasise that knowledge today has been wedded to Western standards, largely because of Africa's historical neglect and marginalisation.

Thus, reflecting on the above studies and case studies, it is clear how African Indigenous Knowledge System has often been sidelined, not because of inefficacy or inefficiency, but rather due to the dominance of the Western model of science, which classifies any knowledge that does not align with its framework as mythical and, in some cases, static or primitive.

5. The Framework of Paul Feyerabend's Epistemological Pluralism

Paul Feyerabend's reflection on scientific methodology deviates from conventional thinking about knowledge acquisition (Hidayat and Muzammil 2025). With his popular stance of "anything goes" (Feyerabend 1975, 23), he questions what are often regarded as methodological boundaries, since these, in one way or another, always contain certain limitations. His rejection of the view that the Western scientific approach to knowledge is superior represents a radical shift from the universal quest to institutionalize knowledge acquisition through a single method, the Western scientific method (Ruser 2024). His framework, which argues for epistemic pluralism, attempts a radical departure, as mentioned, from Western domination in knowledge acquisition. He maintains that any attempt to rigidify knowledge is an attempt to hinder productivity, creativity, innovation, and transformation, among many other possibilities that could emerge from the freedom of knowledge. For this reason, he argues for epistemological anarchism. This epistemological anarchism, encapsulated in the notion of "anything goes" (Feyerabend 1975, 23), champions epistemic freedom and opposes methodological rigidity and boundaries, on the grounds that every method, no

matter how sound it may appear, has inherent limitations (Hidayat and Muzammil 2025). In his seminal work *Against Method*, Feyerabend (1975) avers that science should not be viewed as the only method by which we can arrive at truth and reality, for it is only one among many possible methods for attaining knowledge, truth, and, by extension, reality in general.

According to Lasisi (2022), Feyerabend's *Against Method* is historically supported by numerous events that reveal how the status quo of scientific breakthroughs and innovations was often challenged in order to achieve new scientific discoveries. Feyerabend (1970, 275–276) argues:

> It is not only possible but also desirable to introduce and elaborate hypotheses which are inconsistent with highly confirmed theories and with evidence [for example], evidence which refutes a theory can often be found only with the help of an alternative so that the advice to postpone alternatives until the first refutation has occurred puts the cart before the horse.

Lasisi (2022, 92) further argues that "In the history and philosophy of science, events and developments, such as the invention of atomism by Democritus, the observations made by Nicholas Copernicus on the heliocentric nature of the universe as against the false geocentric orientation of the earth, led to the Copernican Revolution." In essence, several scientific breakthroughs defied the existing rules of their time. As Feyerabend (1975, 23) argues:

> The idea of a fixed method, or of a fixed (theory of) rationality, arises from too naïve a view of man and of his social surroundings … there is only one principle that can be defended under all circumstances, and in all stages of human development. It is the principle: anything goes.

Thus, it can be argued that no single method leads to truth, knowledge, nor is there any perspective, or approach that holds absolute truth. The next section draws on the preceding arguments to demonstrate the epistemic credibility of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) in environmental conservation.

6. Epistemic Reliability in African Indigenous Knowledge for Environmental Conservation: A Feyerabendian Defence

African ecological wisdom, which has evolved through centuries of observation, adaptation, and communal refinement, exemplifies such reliability because its practices consistently yield positive outcomes in maintaining biodiversity, mitigating ecological crises, and ensuring sustainable coexistence between humans and the environment (Lasisi 2023; Njau 2014; Ayeni et al. 2014). In the broader context of climate

adaptation and disaster-risk governance in sub-Saharan Africa, Tirivangasi (2018) and Ebhuoma (2022) highlight the continuing relevance of locally grounded and indigenous knowledge for strengthening community responses to environmental and climatic challenges. This approach, without doubt, has proven effective and challenges the dominance of formal Western approaches, which have often prioritised Western scientific models over indigenous systems of knowledge acquisition. In another vein, research from South Africa, including the Vhembe district, shows that indigenous ecological knowledge continues to inform local responses to environmental and climatic challenges (Mpandeli and Maponya 2014). Akande (2024) examines the importance of employing fear in animal conservation, with particular reference to the indigenous knowledge system of the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria. It can be inferred from the works of Olusola (2005) and Akande (2024) that the pragmatic application of the "philosophy of fear" has historically influenced and informed human relations with the animal kingdom in Yoruba communities. This philosophy has helped maintain moral uprightness by instilling respect for animals and the environment.

Njau (2014), while critiquing colonial intrusion for modern environmental crises in Africa, shows how ancient African societies through their knowledge of the environment consistently protected and preserved the environment. Their care was not built on the idea of exploitation, but rather, founded on moral and sacred principles. In his analysis, he exposed how communities like the Turkana used innovative methods to neutralise salty soils, while others used ashes, dung, and fallow periods to restore fertility. Unlike the abstract scepticism often projected by Western epistemology, the lived success of AIK in soil management, water conservation, and adaptive climate responses provides pragmatic justification for its continued relevance. This reflects Feyerabend's claim that the success of knowledge systems is the only reliable measure of their validity (Feyerabend 1975).

The application of epistemic reliabilism to African Indigenous Knowledge also reveals the agent-centred virtues embedded in indigenous ecological practices. For instance, traditional Yoruba environmental ethics, as described by Lasisi (2023) and supported by Olodude (2024), are not just passive traditions but represent active intellectual virtues such as precision, foresight, and communal responsibility, all of which ensure ecological sustainability. Inferring from the arguments of Polo and Olanrewaju (2025), the epistemic identity of the African people with regards to their approach to knowledge acquisition, affirms the credibility of their knowledge system. Their collective rationality, for example, regardless of the group undertaking it, is not diminished nor is its quality undermined by the fact that it emerges from a collective process. This is

synonymous with modern day scientific research which does not imply group thinking together in unison but rather reflects a shared understanding akin to a group of individuals participating in research (Polo and Olanrewaju 2025). This African approach to knowledge is undeniably reliable, as it has helped solve real life problems for the African people (Lasisi 2023; Njau 2014; Ayeni et al. 2014; Olodude 2024). This explains why Mbembe (2015) argues that the strength and significance of African epistemologies lie in their inherently experiential and experimental nature.

Furthermore, the virtues embedded within the African intellectual exercise in arriving at their knowledge align with the framework of virtue reliabilism, which holds that justification is strengthened when reliable processes are complemented by the intellectual character of agents (Sosa 2007; Greco 2010). In this sense, the African farmer who, through generational observation, cultivates land in ways that preserve soil fertility embodies a kind of epistemic agent whose knowledge is not only the product of trial and error but also of cultivated intellectual virtues passed down through generations (Akande 2017; Etuk and Inwang 2024). Such epistemic practices validate the claim that AIK is not a primitive or mythical body of thought, but a reliable epistemic process built on both agent-virtue and practical success. The convergence of reliability in process and agent makes AIK an indispensable system parallel to Western science, capable of providing authentic contributions to global environmental governance (Mbah et al. 2021; Nyadzi et al. 2021). In support of epistemic plurality, Afisi argues:

> Whether there is a single self-consistent mode of Western rationality that could be globalised, I deny. I do not doubt the impressiveness of science in the West, but I question its ostensible monopoly on rationality. I perceive as obscuring the true nature of science, the view that science depends upon a kind of rational method that an individual could deploy, and that all of science is unified around this fact (Afisi 2016b, 276).

Hence, at this juncture, Feyerabend's pluralism becomes crucial, as it provides the necessary defence against the epistemological hegemony that undermines AIK. His rejection of methodological monism and his provocative maxim "anything goes" (Feyerabend 1975, 23) serve as an intellectual shield against the coloniality of knowledge that positions Western science as the only legitimate epistemic framework (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Mzimela and Moyo 2024). Through his quest for epistemological anarchism, Feyerabend disrupts the monopoly of Western science and opens the space for multiple epistemologies to coexist, each justified by its practical effectiveness. This framework aligns with the African epistemological struggle against

marginalization, which has often been the product of colonial imposition and Eurocentric domination (Njau 2014; Mawere 2015; Olaitan and Oloruntoba 2023). Just as Afisi (2016a, 63) argues, the methodology of inquiry is "distinctively unique to the cultural orientation of the people." Hence, in defence of AIK, Feyerabend's epistemology allows us to resist the misconception that indigenous knowledge must be validated by Western scientific criteria. Thus, in a Feyerabendian sense, the rejection of AIK is not only epistemologically arrogant but also ecologically dangerous, as it dismisses a reservoir of knowledge proven effective in practice.

Conclusion

To conclude, the epistemic reliability of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) in environmental conservation reveals itself amongst many other knowledge systems as both a philosophical and practical necessity in addressing contemporary ecological crises. When this is then situated within the framework of reliabilism, AIK demonstrates its justification through processes and agents that have proven consistent, virtuous, and effective over centuries of application. This is evident in their methods of knowing, through their intellectual prowess, supernatural methods, collaborative understanding, among many others. On their environmental pragmatism, their tested and demonstrated capacity to sustain biodiversity, forecast climatic changes, and maintain ecological balance shows and affirms their reliability as a knowledge system that is not inferior but parallel to, and at times surpassing, Western scientific approaches. Furthermore, Feyerabend's pluralism provides the intellectual permissibility to resist epistemic hierarchies that have often historically dismissed indigenous ways of knowing. His rejection of methodological monism defends AIK against marginalization, showing that its long record of practical success constitutes a sufficient basis for epistemic legitimacy. Thus, acknowledging AIK is not merely a matter of cultural preservation but an urgent imperative in global environmental governance. To neglect it is to perpetuate epistemic injustice and to forfeit a reservoir of sustainable practices vital for humanity's survival in the face of climate change. AIK, therefore, must be integrated into broader ecological strategies as a coequal partner, with its value measured not by external standards imposed by Western epistemology, but by its own enduring efficacy in fostering harmonious human–environment relationships. This paper contends that by embracing epistemic pluralism, scholars and policymakers alike can restore AIK's dignity, secure its contributions for future generations, and ensure that humanity's pursuit of environmental sustainability is guided by the collective wisdom of diverse knowledge traditions.

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