

INDILINGA

African Journal
of Indigenous
Knowledge Systems

African Indigenous Knowledge
Systems and Development

ISSN 1683-0296

Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IAJIKS) is accredited through the South African Post-Secondary Education (SAPSE) System. It seeks to sustain a full analytical discussion of issues related to Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The journal has been motivated by the need for a dependable expression for critical and analytical writing on issues related to the production, dissemination and recognition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. IAJIKS represents a variety of cross-disciplinary interests in ethno-methodology and in both quantitative and qualitative methods. Debates on methodology, epistemology, ethics, gender, science and technology, arts, food systems, education, language and sociocultural issues are invited.

AIMS AND SCOPE

The aim and thrust of IAJIKS is to bring together scholars and thinkers to promote, analyse, critique and preserve Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). The journal is devoted to the promotion of research into and scholarship on IKS. Given the growing enthusiasm for the African Renaissance, it cannot be long before attention turns to IKS to contribute towards the development of Africa and the world.

The journal was founded as an international academic forum to exchange ideas and theories surrounding IKS. It creates a forum for African scholars, analysts and activists in IKS to participate on an equal footing with their contemporaries worldwide in debates, exchange of ideas and the creation and documentation of knowledge. It also seeks to promote scholarly understanding of changes and developments in IKS.

SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS

Subscription for two issues per year

In South Africa and other African countries:

Institutions: R500.00 (including postage)

Individuals: R300.00

Other countries:

Institutions: US\$250.00 (including postage)

Individuals: US\$150.00

CONTACT DETAILS AND SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION

The Editor-in-Chief

Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems

49 Garden Road

The Orchards

0186

South Africa

Telephone 012 429 3339: Cell 0823258353

Email: mt63gum@gmail.com

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**Editor-in-Chief**

Mishack T Gumbo University of South Africa

Associate Editors

Lesiba Teffo University of South Africa
 Boni Zungu University of Witwatersrand (RSA)

Managing Editor

Sihawu Ngubane University of KwaZulu-Natal (RSA)

Review Editors

Elisam Magara Makerere University (Uganda)
 Nuraan Davids University of Stellenbosch (RSA)
 Thandi Nzama University of Zululand (RSA)

Production Editor

José Castiano Universidade Pedagógica (Mozambique)

Senior Consultant Editors

Anne Leseth Oslo Metropolitan University (Norway)
 Lesley le Grange University of Stellenbosch (RSA)

ADVISORY BOARD

Tholene Sodi University of Limpopo (RSA)
 Phillip Higgs University of South Africa
 Solvi Lillejord Research Council of Norway
 Paulin Hountondji University of Cotonou (Benin)
 David Mtetwa University of Zimbabwe
 Nompumelelo Zondi University of Zululand (RSA)
 Joyce Chitja University of KwaZulu-Natal (RSA)
 Valentin Mudimbe Duke University (USA)
 Mogege Mosimege Human Research Council (RSA)
 Annamarie Hattingh University of Cape Town (RSA)
 CC Wolhuter North-West University (RSA)
 Nils Gilje University of Bergen (Norway)
 Otto Fuglestad University of Bergen (Norway)

***Indilinga* gratefully acknowledges the expertise and hard work of reviewers whose contributions have been instrumental in maintaining and raising the quality of the articles published in the journal. We also thank the reviewers to whom the articles were submitted for review in the period from January to June 2025.**

Published bi-annually: June, December

ISSN 1683–0296

Indilinga is accredited through the South African Post-Secondary Education (SAPSE) System.

Abstracted on AJOL <http://www.inasp.info/ajol>

Copyright 2020 Indilinga African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems

<http://www.indilinga.org.za>

Electronic version obtainable: Sabinet Online at <http://www.sabinet.co.za>

Issue 24(1) 2025

FOREWORD

Mishack T Gumbo

University of South Africa

gumbomt@unisa.ac.za

Research on Indigenous people's epistemologies and practices advocates for the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in learners' education. Countries such as South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia in the Southern African Development Community have and continue to make concerted attempts to indigenise their curricula. The drive behind transforming the curriculum and teaching, and learning is to make them relevant, firstly to Indigenous learners' cultures, and secondly, to expose the non-Indigenous learners to alternative knowledge systems. The education transformation task aims to confront and dismantle the colonial legacy that has long denied IKS recognition in the education space. The work contributed by the authors in this volume adds to the body of knowledge that can be considered to guide the selection of content and pedagogies in this regard. A glimpse of each contributed article is provided in the next paragraph.

Naming children of African Indigenous societies is a highly valued norm. Parents name children based on the circumstances experienced at the time of birth. Giving birth in marriage accords an honour to the woman giving birth. This is something that the family, including the society, prides itself on, which culminates in the positive names given to children, e.g. Thabo, Mapula, Lethabo, etc. However, changes brought by certain factors, such as education and women's employment, have brought certain dynamics to naming children. In her paper titled *Changes in the naming practice of children born out of marriage in Sesotho: Implications for culture and society*, Madira Thetso explores and investigates this phenomenon in Lesotho. Using the socio-onomastic theory, she highlights changes in the naming of children meted by the socio-economic factors. As a result, the demands of factors, such as the independence brought by the employability of women, cause families to accept and celebrate the naming of children born out of wedlock. She also observes an increase in children born out of marriage. Increasingly, society is normalising this matter. The paper makes a valuable contribution as it sheds light on the changing dynamics of the circumstantial naming of children among African Indigenous societies.

Rock painting for the San communities has not served only as an art, but has also been an important communication tool, expressing the culture, customs, and habits of the people. The colonial misinterpretation, misrepresentation, and eradication of African artefacts have underplayed the ethnography of the San people, concealing the rich

knowledge that it harbours. The rock images have an educational role to play in the communities. Piera Biccard explores this role within the distance education environment. She maps the conceptual links between the San images and distance education. Hence, the rock paintings provide important resources for teaching about the San people.

Science, especially in education, is paraded as a Western enterprise. Alternative conceptualisations of science are dismissed; Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is the main casualty in this regard. Research, however, acknowledges IK from a scientific perspective. Josef de Beer's work, which is reported in the article, *The conundrum of Indigenous Knowledge in the school science curriculum: A question of ontology*, uses the Rationality Index of Plant Use (RIPU) to explore this issue. Through problem-based and cooperative learning principles, the author explores the antimicrobial activity of muthi plants, ethnobotanical surveys, and the RIPU heuristic; these hold the potential to provide learners with nuanced understandings of, and appreciation for, Indigenous Knowledge Systems. He tabulates the ontological and epistemological similarities and differences between the conventional sciences and IK, as well as determines the RIPU of Aloe Ferox for this purpose. Hence, De Beer's project sheds the research-based insights on how IK could be promoted in the school science curriculum.

Also, Vihara Singh, Imana Pal, Ashika Naicker and Karina Palmer's study was conducted to determine the knowledge, use and perceptions of the plant *Cissus quadrangularis*, to facilitate the development of food products. The authors interviewed ten elderly Indian community members as key informants in KwaZulu-Natal, who shared important information about the plant and their use of its properties, as well as how it addresses health problems. The authors learned that the participants use the plant as a side dish, for its nutritional benefits and therapeutic reasons, especially for maintaining bone health. Research such as this provides an alternative to conventional medicine. It confronts the negative attitudes towards indigenous medicine and its dismissal as primitive.

Fredrick Simasiku and Kenneth Ngcoza also conducted a case study in Namibia, which raised issues about the teaching of science by making it relevant to learners' cultural context. They connected their participants, i.e. Grade 10 teachers, with the IK custodians. The authors, in collaboration with the IK custodians and the teachers, used the preservation of *Mahangu*, pounding of *Mahangu* and making of *Oshikundu* as examples of how chemistry lessons can be contextualised, made relevant, and accessible to learners. Engaging IK custodians enabled demonstrations, participatory observation and journal reflections. The authors recommend that chemistry teachers become cultural knowledge brokers who can make science relatable and comprehensible to learners. Interaction with IK custodians will deepen their knowledge and place value on IK.

Implied in De Beer's and Simasiku and Ngcoza's works is decolonisation of the curriculum and the pedagogy. The language in education specialists, Juliet Munyaradzi and Vivian Manyike, centre Indigenous languages as tools to decolonise the curriculum and pedagogy. Using the critical race theory, they engage master's students' views about this issue in the open distance learning institution in South Africa. The analysis of the participants' views speaks to the importance of decolonisation. Eurocentricism should be

decentred to realise the decolonisation of the curricula and pedagogical practices. The institution should ensure this by promoting Indigenous languages. The study highlights that decolonising the curriculum and pedagogy should not be rushed, given its dynamism and challenges. Though it will take time for it to be fully realised, there must be an institutional commitment to monitor and promote decolonisation. Forces of resistance may stall the process and make it unachievable.

One of the critically contended issues about IK is its inclusion in the school curricula. While it is unquestionable that IKS exists and has been used by its custodians over centuries, snail-pace efforts have been made to make learners learn it, thus disadvantaging them, especially those who come from indigenous contexts. The issue finds truth in Lungile Cindi and Mogege Mosimege's case study: *An exploration of the incorporation of African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the school curriculum: Experiences from two schools in the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces, South Africa*. The authors engaged educators in interviews to find out how African AIKS can be incorporated into the basic education curriculum in South African schools. The key finding of their study is that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement does not clearly indicate how IK should be integrated. The study makes critical recommendations about the integration of the African IKS: developing its content for teaching, introducing campaigns in schools and communities, including different role players in its development processes, and developing monitoring and evaluation systems to track the development and progress.