

Navigating the Post-2000 Terrain

Critical Epistemologies and Institutional Frameworks in Ghanaian African Studies

Ama Serwaa Adjei¹, Kwame Osei^{1,2}

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR-Ghana) | Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research

Correspondence: aadjei@gmail.com

Received: 19 November 2004 | Accepted: 12 February 2005 | Published: 02 March 2005 | DOI:

[10.5281/zenodo.18944419](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18944419)

ABSTRACT

The institutional and intellectual landscape of African Studies in Ghana has undergone significant transformation since the turn of the century, influenced by global academic trends, funding shifts, and debates on decolonisation. This evolution necessitates a critical examination of the field's current epistemological foundations and institutional health. This working paper aims to critically analyse the dominant epistemological approaches and institutional frameworks shaping African Studies in Ghana. Its objectives are to map the key conceptual debates, assess institutional capacities and constraints, and evaluate the field's alignment with contemporary continental and diasporic intellectual currents. The analysis employs a critical desk-based review and synthesis of relevant literature, policy documents, and institutional reports. It utilises a conceptual framework integrating critical epistemology and institutional analysis to structure the investigation. The analysis identifies a persistent tension between globally-influenced, theory-driven research and locally-grounded, problem-solving scholarship. A dominant theme is the strategic adaptation of institutional frameworks to secure funding, which has inadvertently prioritised certain methodological approaches over others. Approximately two-thirds of the analysed institutional documents explicitly frame their research agendas in terms of 'development' and 'policy relevance'. The field is characterised by a productive but unresolved epistemological pluralism, with institutional structures acting as both facilitators and constraints on critical scholarship. The drive for policy relevance, while valuable, requires careful negotiation to preserve the critical and theoretical depth essential to the discipline. Institutions should develop explicit strategies to support critical epistemologies alongside applied research. Funders and universities must create dedicated platforms for meta-disciplinary reflection. Strengthening archival and theory-building capacities is essential for intellectual sovereignty. African Studies, epistemology, institutional analysis, decolonisation, Ghana, higher education, knowledge production This paper provides a novel synthesis of epistemological and institutional analysis specific to the Ghanaian context, offering a diagnostic framework for understanding the field's contemporary challenges and strategic directions.

Keywords: *African Studies, Ghana, Postcolonialism, Epistemology, Institutional Analysis, Higher Education*

Article Highlights

- Analyses the tension between global theory and local problem-solving in Ghanaian African Studies.
- Identifies institutional funding strategies as key shapers of methodological priorities.
- Finds two-thirds of institutional agendas explicitly frame work as 'development' focused.
- Argues for explicit strategies to support critical epistemologies alongside applied research.

Core Finding

The drive for policy relevance requires careful negotiation to preserve the critical and theoretical depth essential to the discipline.

This analysis provides a diagnostic framework for the field's contemporary challenges.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

REQUEST FULL PAPER

 **Email:** info@parj.africa

Request your copy of the full paper today!

SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH

Are you a researcher in Africa? We welcome your submissions!

Join our community of African scholars and share your groundbreaking work.

 **Submit at:** app.parj.africa



Scan to visit app.parj.africa

Open Access Scholarship from PARJ

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global Knowledge