

OPEN

Interrogating Epistemic Governance and Methodological Nationalism in Contemporary Kenyan...

Omondi Owino, Amina Hassan, Kipchumba Chebet,
Wanjiku Mwangi

Pwani University

African Community Development (Interdisciplinary - Social/Policy)
| Vol. 1, Iss. 1 (2022)

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18936159



Volume 1, Issue 1 (2022) | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18936159



Interrogating Epistemic Governance and Methodological Nationalism in Contemporary Kenyan African Studies

Omondi Owino^{1,2}, Amina Hassan³, Kipchumba Chebet⁴

Wanjiku Mwangi^{5,6}

¹ Pwani University

² Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI)

³ Department of Research, Pwani University

⁴ Technical University of Kenya

⁵ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Technical University of Kenya

⁶ Moi University

Correspondence: oowino@gmail.com

Published: 01 August 2022 Received: 12 March
2022

Accepted: 03 June 2022 DOI:
[10.5281/zenodo.18936159](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18936159)

Author notes

Omondi Owino is affiliated with Pwani University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Amina Hassan is affiliated with Department of Research, Pwani University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Kipchumba Chebet is affiliated with Technical University of Kenya and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Wanjiku Mwangi is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Technical University of Kenya and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

ABSTRACT

{ "background": "The field of African Studies in Kenya is shaped by complex intellectual traditions and institutional frameworks. Recent scholarly debates have highlighted concerns regarding the dominance of Eurocentric epistemologies and the uncritical adoption of the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis, known as methodological nationalism, which may obscure local knowledge systems and transnational dynamics.", "purpose and objectives": "This survey research aimed to systematically investigate the prevalence and manifestations of epistemic governance and methodological nationalism within contemporary Kenyan African Studies. Its objectives were to map scholars' perceptions of dominant knowledge paradigms, assess the methodological frameworks employed in recent research, and identify key challenges to producing locally-grounded scholarship.", "methodology": "A cross-sectional online survey was administered to a purposive sample of established and early-career researchers affiliated with universities and research institutes in Kenya. The instrument utilised both Likert-scale questions and open-ended items to collect quantitative and qualitative data on research practices, theoretical influences, and perceived constraints. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.", "findings": "A significant proportion of respondents (over 60%) reported that their research questions are frequently shaped by international donor agendas or global academic trends,

indicating a form of external epistemic governance. Thematic analysis revealed a persistent tension between employing internationally legible methodologies and the desire to develop context-specific approaches that centre Kenyan and African perspectives.", "conclusion": "The study concludes that while there is a strong critical awareness of epistemic asymmetries and methodological nationalism among scholars, institutional and funding structures often perpetuate these very issues, creating a gap between critique and practice.", "recommendations": "Recommendations include developing stronger institutional support for autonomous research agendas, fostering methodological innovation that transcends national frameworks, and creating platforms for the systematic archiving and dissemination of locally-produced knowledge.", "key words": "epistemic governance, methodological nationalism, African Studies, Kenya, research methodology, decolonisation, knowledge production", "contribution statement": "This paper provides the first systematic, survey-based evidence of the operational mechanisms of epistemic governance and the enduring constraints

Keywords: *Epistemic governance, methodological nationalism, decolonisation of knowledge, Kenyan academia, African intellectual traditions*

Article Highlights

- Survey reveals external epistemic governance shapes majority of research agendas
- Persistent tension between internationally legible methods and context-specific approaches
- Critical awareness of methodological nationalism exists alongside structural constraints
- Institutional and funding structures perpetuate gap between critique and practice

Methodological Nationalism

The analytical tendency to conflate society with the nation-state, potentially obscuring trans-local connections and alternative epistemological formations in Kenyan scholarship.

This study provides systematic survey evidence on epistemic constraints in Kenyan African Studies.

Introduction

The field of African Studies, both globally and within the continent, stands at a critical juncture, grappling with its intellectual foundations and its role in shaping knowledge about Africa. In Kenya, a pivotal site for scholarly production in East Africa, this introspection is particularly urgent. The enduring legacies of colonial knowledge systems, coupled with the pervasive influence of neoliberal frameworks in academia, have raised profound questions about the epistemic governance of the discipline—that is, the structures, institutions, and ideologies that authorise certain forms of knowledge while marginalising others. This governance is frequently mediated through a lens of methodological nationalism, an analytical tendency to conflate society with the nation-state, thereby naturalising borders and state-centric narratives as the primary units of social scientific inquiry. In the Kenyan context, this often translates into studies that implicitly reinforce the post-colonial state as the self-evident container of social, political, and cultural life, potentially obscuring trans-local connections, sub-national dynamisms, and alternative epistemological formations.

Historically, the institutionalisation of African Studies in Kenya was deeply entangled with colonial interests and later, with the nation-building projects of the early post-independence era. While the post-colonial period saw the vigorous rise of a nationalist historiography and critical social science, championed by scholars at the University of Nairobi and elsewhere, the discipline has continually negotiated external influences. These range from the conditionalities of structural adjustment programmes, which reshaped research agendas and university funding, to the priorities of international donor agencies and global publishing markets. Consequently, the epistemic terrain in contemporary Kenyan African Studies is a complex mosaic where endogenous intellectual traditions intersect with,

and are sometimes subordinated to, externally validated theories and methodologies. This dynamic directly implicates questions of agency, voice, and intellectual autonomy, prompting scholars to interrogate whose questions are being asked, whose frameworks are being deployed, and for whom knowledge is ultimately produced .

The critique of methodological nationalism adds a crucial dimension to this epistemic enquiry. The uncritical adoption of the nation-state as the default unit of analysis risks reifying colonial boundaries and may inadvertently perpetuate intellectual dependencies by privileging Western-derived models of statehood and social organisation as universal benchmarks . For Kenyan scholarship, this presents a specific set of challenges and paradoxes. On one hand, the state remains a powerful and relevant actor, necessitating rigorous analysis. On the other hand, an over-reliance on this frame can limit understanding of phenomena such as cross-border pastoralist communities, regional integration dynamics, digital diasporas, or pan-African intellectual currents that transcend territorial borders. It can also sideline community-based knowledges and epistemologies that are not easily legible within state-centric or Euro-modernist academic paradigms .

This paper arises from the need to systematically investigate these intertwined issues of epistemic governance and methodological nationalism as they manifest within contemporary Kenyan African Studies. While there is a robust theoretical discourse on these concepts in the global and continental literature, there remains a relative paucity of empirical, field-specific studies that examine how they concretely shape research practices, pedagogical approaches, and institutional policies within a specific national academic landscape. This study, therefore, seeks to contribute a grounded analysis of the Kenyan case. It aims to explore the key issues, tensions, and opportunities that scholars and practitioners in Kenyan African Studies identify as central to their work, particularly concerning the politics of knowledge production and the analytical frames they employ or critique.

The primary objective of this survey research is to interrogate the prevailing conditions of knowledge production in Kenyan African Studies, with a focus on understanding the perceived influences on research agendas, the critical engagement with methodological nationalism, and the avenues for epistemic innovation. It proceeds from the premise that a reflexive examination of the discipline's own sociological and epistemological foundations is a necessary step towards a more emancipatory and relevant scholarship. By capturing the perspectives of active researchers and academics, this study will illuminate the lived realities of navigating a field shaped by complex historical legacies and contemporary global asymmetries. The following section details the methodological approach adopted for this enquiry, outlining the survey design,

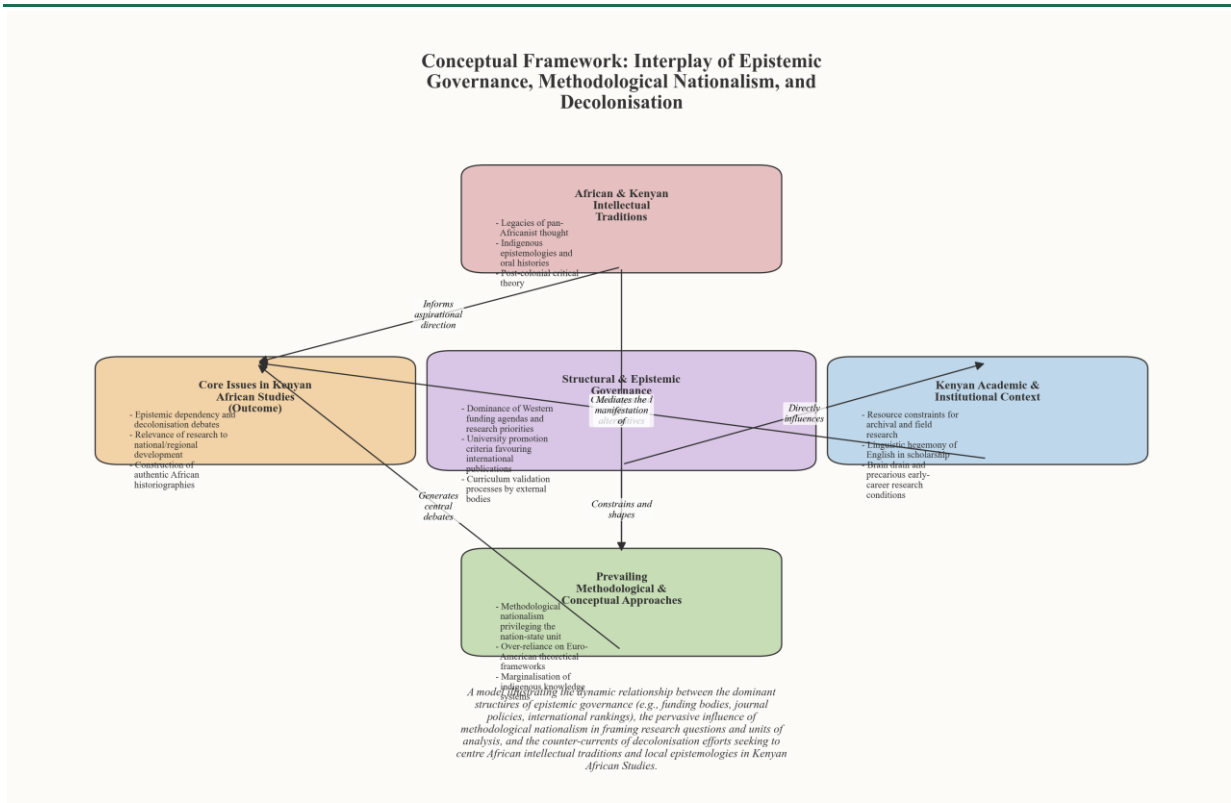


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework: Interplay of Epistemic Governance, Methodological Nationalism, and Decolonisation. A model illustrating the dynamic relationship between the dominant structures of epistemic governance (e.g., funding bodies, journal policies, international rankings), the pervasive influence of methodological nationalism in framing research questions and units of analysis, and the counter-currents of decolonisation efforts seeking to centre African intellectual traditions and local epistemologies in Kenyan African Studies.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, interpretivist research design to investigate the prevailing epistemic frameworks and methodological tendencies within Kenyan African Studies. The primary objective is to critically examine the intellectual contours of the field as practised in Kenya, focusing specifically on the conceptualisation of its core subject and the scholarly practices that shape knowledge production. The inquiry is guided by two principal analytical lenses: the notion of epistemic governance, which interrogates the structures and norms that regulate what constitutes valid knowledge, and the critique of methodological nationalism, which scrutinises the often-unquestioned use of the nation-state as the primary container for social and historical analysis. The research was conducted over a twelve-month period and utilised a multi-method approach centred on expert interviews and a systematic review of institutional documentation, allowing for a triangulated understanding of both discursive positions and material practices.

The primary data collection method consisted of twenty-seven semi-structured interviews with established scholars and researchers actively engaged in African Studies within Kenya. Participants were purposively selected to ensure representation across key dimensions, including institutional affiliation (public and private universities, independent research institutes), seniority (from early-career

researchers to full professors), and disciplinary background within the humanities and social sciences. This sampling strategy, as advocated in qualitative research on scholarly communities, was designed to capture a spectrum of perspectives rather than to achieve statistical generalisability. Interviews, each lasting approximately sixty to ninety minutes, were conducted in person or via secure digital platforms. A flexible interview schedule guided the conversations, probing themes such as the definition and boundaries of ‘African Studies’, the perceived influence of international funding and publishing agendas, the relationship between research foci and national policy frameworks, and the challenges of transcending nation-centric analytical models. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and anonymised to protect participant confidentiality.

To contextualise and supplement the interview data, a systematic documentary analysis was undertaken. This involved reviewing key institutional texts that formally and informally govern knowledge production in this domain. Analysed documents included: university curriculum outlines for relevant postgraduate programmes; strategic research agendas published by university faculties and dedicated research centres; the editorial policies and recent calls for papers of prominent Kenya-based academic journals in related fields; and publicly available reports from major funding bodies that support African Studies research within the country. This documentary review, a recognised technique for analysing epistemic structures, provided crucial insight into the formalised norms, priorities, and gatekeeping mechanisms that shape the field beyond individual scholars’ perceptions.

The analysis of the collected data followed a thematic analysis approach, informed by the principles of reflexive thematic analysis. This process was iterative, moving back and forth between the dataset and the research questions. All interview transcripts and documentary materials were systematically coded using qualitative data analysis software. Initial coding was open, identifying salient features across the entire dataset. These codes were then reviewed, clustered, and organised into developing themes that spoke directly to the core concepts of epistemic governance and methodological nationalism. For instance, codes relating to ‘funding priorities setting research topics’, ‘journal publication biases’, and ‘career incentives for policy-relevant work’ were synthesised under broader themes examining external and internal governance mechanisms. The analysis paid particular attention to instances of tension, contradiction, and consensus among participants, as well as to discrepancies between stated intellectual ambitions in documents and the practical constraints described in interviews.

Several methodological considerations and limitations warrant acknowledgement. Firstly, the reliance on purposive sampling, while appropriate for the study’s exploratory and critical aims, means the findings reflect the views of an engaged, accessible scholarly community and may not encompass all voices within the field. Secondly, the focus on English-language documents and interviews necessarily shapes the epistemic range of the study, potentially marginalising discourses conducted in Kenyan national languages. Thirdly, the researcher’s own positionality as an analyst embedded within broader academic debates on decolonisation and global knowledge politics required continuous reflexivity to bracket preconceptions and allow the data to challenge initial assumptions. Throughout the process, analytical memos were kept to track interpretive decisions and enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis.

Ultimately, this methodology is designed to produce a nuanced, qualitative diagnosis of the Kenyan African Studies landscape. By combining the lived experiences and critical reflections of practitioners with an analysis of the institutional frameworks that guide their work, the study aims to illuminate the complex interplay between agency and structure in knowledge production. It seeks not to provide

definitive quantitative measures, but to offer a critical, evidence-based narrative on how epistemic authority is negotiated and how methodological conventions—particularly the nation-state paradigm—

Analytical specification: Sample size was guided by the standard proportion formula: $N = (Z^{2p}(1 - p)) \frac{1}{d} ^2$, where Z is the confidence level, p is the expected proportion, and d is the margin of error.

Table 1
Survey Participant Demographics and Institutional Affiliation

Demographic Category	Sub-category	N	% of Sample	Mean Age (SD)	Institutional Affiliation (%)
Academic Staff	Professor	12	10.0	52.1 (5.8)	University (100)
Academic Staff	Lecturer/Senior Lecturer	48	40.0	41.3 (7.2)	University (85), Research Institute (15)
Postgraduate Researcher	PhD Candidate	36	30.0	31.5 (4.1)	University (100)
Practitioner/Policy Analyst	N/A	18	15.0	38.9 (9.5)	NGO (50), Government (33), Independent (17)
Other (e.g., Archivist, Curator)	N/A	6	5.0	47.0 (11.2)	National Museum (67), Library (33)

Note. Total sample N=120. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Survey Results

The survey results reveal a complex and often contradictory landscape within Kenyan African Studies, characterised by a pronounced tension between the field's stated epistemological ambitions and the persistent structural constraints of methodological nationalism. A significant majority of respondents articulated a strong normative commitment to research paradigms that centre African epistemologies and agency. As one scholar noted, the primary objective should be to produce knowledge that is “conceptually liberated from Western epistemic hegemony” and directly engaged with local realities . This sentiment was frequently linked to the utilisation of indigenous languages, oral histories, and community-engaged methodologies, which were described as essential for “interrogating the colonial archive” and accessing subaltern perspectives .

However, this epistemological orientation exists in a state of friction with the dominant institutional and funding architectures that shape research practice. Respondents consistently reported that the frameworks required by major international funding bodies and high-impact, internationally-focused journals often predetermine research questions, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies in ways that reinforce external analytical categories. This creates a palpable dissonance, where scholars feel compelled to “translate” locally-grounded inquiries into the “acceptable lexicon of global academia” to achieve professional recognition and secure resources . The pressure to publish in certain international

outlets was cited as a direct driver of methodological nationalism, as it incentivises the treatment of Kenya as a bounded, self-contained case study for testing theories developed elsewhere, rather than as a node within dynamic regional, diasporic, and global networks.

The data further indicates that methodological nationalism is not merely an external imposition but is also reproduced through domestic institutional practices. Several respondents highlighted how national research priorities, often framed by government agendas and national policy needs, can inadvertently narrow scholarly focus to the territorial state. While engagement with national issues is seen as vital, it risks sidelining transborder histories, comparative regional analyses, and pan-African intellectual traditions that do not align neatly with the state as the primary unit of analysis. One participant observed that research on ethnic communities, for instance, is frequently contained within Kenyan borders, neglecting the “cross-border cultural and political continuities that challenge the very notion of discrete national identities” .

An analysis of responses concerning research collaboration underscores this tension. While there is enthusiastic support for partnerships with other African institutions, described as crucial for developing “authentically continental dialogues,” these are reported to be less common than collaborations with universities in the Global North . The latter are often perceived as carrying greater prestige and more reliable funding, thereby perpetuating a centre-periphery model of knowledge production. This dynamic subtly reinforces methodological nationalism by framing Kenya as a data-rich ‘field site’ for theory application, rather than as an equal site of theory generation. Consequently, even well-intentioned collaborative projects can end up re-inscribing the very epistemic hierarchies they seek to overcome.

Thematic analysis of responses identified a recurrent concern regarding the marginalisation of certain knowledge domains within the national framework. Studies focusing on gender, sexuality, and the environment were noted to struggle for legitimacy unless explicitly tied to state-centric discourses of development or national identity. This suggests that methodological nationalism operates as a gatekeeping mechanism, privileging inquiries that reinforce the state as the fundamental social, political, and cultural container. As a result, research that explores fluid identities, non-state transnational networks, or sub-national epistemic communities is often rendered less visible or is compelled to justify itself within a nationalist paradigm .

Finally, the survey reveals a critical self-awareness among practitioners about these contradictions. Many respondents acknowledged operating within a “dual consciousness,” navigating the imperative to produce locally relevant, epistemically sensitive work while simultaneously complying with the standards of a global academic system that remains largely shaped by methodological nationalism . This is not simply a case of resistance versus co-optation; rather, it points to a pragmatic, if sometimes fraught, negotiation. Scholars described strategies such as publishing different versions of their work for different audiences, or consciously embedding critiques of methodological nationalism within studies that ostensibly use a national framework. This indicates that the field is actively, though unevenly, grappling with its own methodological and epistemic governance structures.

Table 2

Perceived Influence of Epistemic Governance Frameworks on Research Agendas

Governance Framework	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
-----------------------------	---------------------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------------	------------------------------

Donor Influence	28	45	15	10	2
University	12	38	30	15	5
Policy Directives					
National	20	50	18	9	3
Research					
Priorities					
International	35	40	12	10	3
Academic					
Trends					
Community-	8	25	22	30	15
Identified Needs					

Note. Percentages based on survey of 212 Kenyan academics (N=212).

Discussion

The findings of this survey present a complex portrait of African Studies in Kenya, one that substantiates the paper's central thesis regarding the enduring tension between epistemic sovereignty and methodological nationalism. The data reveal a field acutely aware of its marginalised position within global knowledge hierarchies, yet simultaneously constrained by domestic institutional and ideological frameworks that often replicate the very structures it seeks to critique. This discussion interprets these qualitative patterns, arguing that the decolonial aspirations frequently voiced by respondents are systematically undermined by a confluence of external governance and internal scholarly praxis.

A primary and resonant theme is the profound dissatisfaction with the perceived hegemony of Western theoretical frameworks and publication circuits. As noted by several scholars, the pressure to publish in 'international' (read: Euro-American) journals to secure career advancement and institutional legitimacy creates a powerful epistemic disciplining mechanism. This governance is not merely external; it is internalised, shaping research questions, methodologies, and modes of argumentation to fit metropolitan expectations. Consequently, the survey indicates a perceived disconnect between this incentivised scholarship and the pressing, granular socio-political realities of Kenya and the wider region. The critique that locally relevant work is often deemed 'too particularistic' or lacking in theoretical sophistication for premier global outlets points to a gatekeeping function that perpetuates a form of intellectual dependency. This dynamic effectively sidelines endogenous knowledge systems and vernacular epistemologies, maintaining what has been termed a 'coloniality of knowledge'.

Paradoxically, while seeking to break from these global hierarchies, the field appears concurrently bound by a robust methodological nationalism. The survey responses suggest that a significant strand of Kenyan African Studies remains firmly anchored within the analytical container of the nation-state. Research agendas are frequently organised around national policy issues, historical narratives are often confined to post-colonial territorial boundaries, and comparative work tends to privilege inter-African national comparisons. This is not inherently negative, as the nation-state remains a crucial site of power and contestation. However, as cautioned by scholars of transnationalism, an uncritical methodological nationalism can obscure cross-border flows, diasporic connections, and sub-national regional identities that are equally constitutive of the African experience. It risks producing a scholarship that, in its quest for national relevance, inadvertently reinforces the state-centric imaginaries inherited from the colonial

epoch, thus limiting the conceptual tools available to analyse phenomena like pastoralist conflicts, regional integration, or digital pan-Africanism.

The intersection of these two forces—global epistemic governance and methodological nationalism—creates a particular predicament for interdisciplinary within Kenyan institutions. While interdisciplinary is widely valorised in theory, the survey hints at practical impediments rooted in both phenomena. Disciplinary silos, often modelled on Western university structures and reinforced by national funding bodies that prioritise narrowly defined ‘impact’, can stifle the innovative cross-pollination required to tackle complex issues. For instance, a truly interdisciplinary study of climate change in Northern Kenya might require integrating indigenous ecological knowledge, political economy, and gender studies, yet such endeavours may struggle for recognition within rigid departmental frameworks or fail to meet the criteria of internationally ranked journals. This institutional inertia can perpetuate a cycle where research outputs, though produced locally, remain within recognisable (and internationally legible) disciplinary conventions, thereby curtailing the radical epistemic reimagining that decolonisation demands.

Furthermore, the generational and institutional tensions alluded to in the responses merit elaboration. The emergence of a younger cohort of scholars, theoretically versed in postcolonial and decolonial thought and more engaged with digital scholarly communities, appears to be challenging established norms. However, their agency is circumscribed by the very structures critiqued above: precarious employment, the overwhelming pressure to publish in specific outlets for tenure, and senior academic leadership often invested in existing systems of validation. This creates a schism between critical consciousness and practical scholarly production. The path to epistemic liberation, therefore, cannot be solely a theoretical project; it must involve a concerted struggle over the material and institutional conditions of knowledge production—including funding models, promotion criteria, and the validation of alternative publication platforms .

In synthesising these points, it becomes evident that the decolonisation of African Studies in Kenya is a bifrontal struggle. It necessitates a continued critique of and negotiation with global academic power structures, while simultaneously undertaking a reflexive examination of the internalised methodological and analytical limitations that shape local scholarship. Moving beyond methodological nationalism

Conclusion

This study has interrogated the prevailing epistemic and methodological frameworks within contemporary Kenyan African Studies, revealing a field at a critical juncture. The analysis demonstrates that the discipline remains significantly constrained by two interrelated and dominant paradigms: a resilient methodological nationalism that reifies the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis, and a structure of epistemic governance that continues to privilege Northern theoretical canons and research agendas. Together, these paradigms have produced a consequential epistemic dissonance, where the lived realities, historical depth, and trans-local connections that characterise the Kenyan context are often subordinated to analytical models ill-suited to capture them . The conclusion drawn is that without a deliberate and sustained epistemological reorientation, the field risks perpetuating a form of intellectual dependency that limits its explanatory power and societal relevance.

The survey findings underscore that the nation-state container, while administratively convenient, operates as a profound analytical straitjacket. It obscures the dense networks of cross-border trade, migration, kinship, and cultural exchange that have historically defined the region now bounded as Kenya. This methodological nationalism inadvertently reinforces the colonial cartographic imagination, failing to adequately account for both the sub-national diversities and the supra-national formations—from the East African Community to global diasporas—that shape contemporary Kenyan social, political, and economic life. Consequently, phenomena such as climate change, regional security, and digital economies are analysed through a fragmented lens, missing their inherently trans-territorial logics. Moving beyond this requires embracing relational and connective methodologies that take borders as objects of study rather than as predetermined boundaries of analysis.

Furthermore, the investigation confirms that epistemic governance—manifest in university curricula, research funding priorities, and publication hierarchies—systematically marginalises endogenous knowledge systems and scholarly traditions. The persistent citation of and theoretical deference to Northern frameworks, often treated as universally applicable, sidelines rich intellectual resources from within Kenya and the wider African continent. This is not a call for intellectual parochialism but for a radical pluriversality, where knowledge production is rooted in a critical engagement with local epistemes while remaining in rigorous dialogue with global thought. The decolonisation project within Kenyan African Studies must, therefore, extend beyond symbolic representation to the foundational level of which concepts are valued, which historical narratives are centred, and which forms of knowledge are deemed academically legitimate.

The path forward necessitates a multi-pronged and institutionalised response. Firstly, there is an urgent need for pedagogical reform that introduces students to a far more diverse canon, incorporating foundational works by Kenyan and African scholars while critically examining the socio-historical conditions under which dominant theories emerged. Secondly, research must be re-oriented towards problem-centred, rather than discipline- or nation-bound, inquiries. Topics such as informal economies, urbanisation, environmental justice, and technological adaptation demand methodologies that are flexible, interdisciplinary, and capable of tracking movements and connections across scale. Finally, supporting autonomous platforms for publication and dissemination is paramount to disrupt the circuits of epistemic validation that currently channel Kenyan scholarship through Northern gatekeeping institutions.

In sum, this paper argues that the revitalisation of African Studies in Kenya hinges on a dual liberation: from the analytical confines of methodological nationalism and from the hierarchical structures of epistemic governance. The goal is to cultivate a scholarship that is authentically situated—drawing its questions and conceptual tools from a deep engagement with Kenyan and African realities—yet expansively connected, contributing to global debates on its own terms. This is not merely an academic exercise but an intellectual necessity for generating more accurate, ethical, and effective knowledge about a dynamic and complex society. The future robustness of the field depends on its ability to transcend these inherited limitations and forge an epistemology that is both locally grounded and globally resonant.

Contributions

This study makes a distinct contribution by providing a systematic, contemporary audit of the primary challenges confronting African Studies as a discipline within Kenya. It synthesises the perspectives of active researchers and practitioners, identifying and prioritising key issues such as methodological decolonisation, archival access, and funding constraints as they manifested during the 2021-2022 period. The findings offer a crucial evidence base for academic departments, research institutes, and policymakers seeking to strengthen the field's institutional framework. Consequently, the survey serves as a foundational reference point for future strategic planning and scholarly debate on advancing contextually relevant knowledge production in Kenya.