



## Interrogating Epistemological and Methodological Frameworks in Ugandan African Studies, 2000–2026

Nakato Muwanga<sup>1,2</sup>, David Kigozi<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Makerere University, Kampala

<sup>2</sup> Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Busitema University

<sup>3</sup> Busitema University

Correspondence: [nmuwanga@aol.com](mailto:nmuwanga@aol.com)

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### Author notes

*Nakato Muwanga is affiliated with Makerere University, Kampala and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*David Kigozi is affiliated with Makerere University, Kampala and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

### ABSTRACT

The field of African Studies in Uganda has undergone significant evolution, yet a systematic analysis of its underlying knowledge production frameworks is lacking. This gap obscures how research paradigms shape the interpretation of social, political, and historical phenomena within the national and regional context. This working paper aims to critically analyse the dominant epistemological and methodological frameworks employed within Ugandan African Studies scholarship. Its objectives are to map the prevalent theoretical orientations, evaluate methodological trends, and assess their implications for constructing knowledge about the continent. The study employs a critical interpretive synthesis of a purposively sampled corpus of prominent scholarly works, including journal articles, monographs, and institutional reports. A structured analytical framework is applied to categorise epistemological stances and methodological designs. The analysis reveals a persistent, though contested, dominance of Eurocentric theoretical frameworks, with approximately 60% of the sampled literature relying primarily on Western-derived paradigms. A significant counter-trend is the growing articulation of endogenous epistemologies, particularly centred on concepts of Ubuntu and oral historiography, which challenge hegemonic knowledge structures. The field is characterised by an ongoing epistemological tension between imported theoretical models and emerging locally-grounded frameworks. This tension fundamentally influences research questions, data interpretation, and the perceived relevance of scholarly output. Scholars and institutions should actively promote research training that critically engages with epistemology. Funding bodies ought to prioritise projects developing context-specific methodological tools. Academic journals should create dedicated space for debates on knowledge decolonisation, epistemology, methodology, knowledge production, decolonisation, African Studies, research paradigms. This paper provides the first systematic mapping of epistemological and methodological trends in post- Ugandan African Studies, introducing a novel analytical framework for classifying knowledge production stances in the field.

**Keywords:** *African Studies, Uganda, Epistemology, Decolonisation, Knowledge Production, Research Methodology*

**Article Highlights**

- Analysis reveals persistent, contested dominance of Eurocentric frameworks in sampled literature.
- Growing articulation of endogenous epistemologies challenges hegemonic knowledge structures.
- Epistemological tension fundamentally influences research questions and data interpretation.
- First systematic mapping of post-2000 epistemological trends in Ugandan African Studies.

**Core Finding**

Approximately 60% of sampled literature relies primarily on Western-derived paradigms, alongside a significant counter-trend of endogenous epistemologies.

*This paper provides a novel analytical framework for classifying knowledge production stances.*

## ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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