

# Interrogating Epistemologies and Methodological Frameworks in Nigerian African Studies, 2000–2024

Oluwaseun Adebayo<sup>1</sup>|Amina Suleiman<sup>2,3</sup>|Chinwe Okonkwo<sup>4</sup>  
Ifeoma Nwachukwu<sup>4,5</sup>

*Department of Advanced Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka* • *Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Federal University of Technology, Akure* • *Department of Research, University of Abuja* • *University of Abuja* • *Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka*

Correspondence: [oadebayo@yahoo.com](mailto:oadebayo@yahoo.com)

Received: 13 December 2011 | Accepted: 19 January 2012 | Published: 14 February 2012 | DOI:

[10.5281/zenodo.18944469](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18944469)

## ABSTRACT

The field of African Studies within the country has been characterised by ongoing debates concerning its theoretical foundations and research practices. Critiques have emerged regarding the dominance of Western epistemological frameworks and the marginalisation of indigenous knowledge systems, creating a need for a systematic analysis of contemporary scholarly production. This study aimed to critically analyse the dominant epistemological orientations and methodological approaches employed in Nigerian African Studies research. Its objectives were to map the prevalence of specific theoretical frameworks, evaluate the integration of mixed methods designs, and identify key methodological challenges reported by scholars. A sequential explanatory mixed methods design was employed. A systematic quantitative content analysis of published journal articles was conducted, followed by in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a purposively sampled cohort of established researchers and early-career academics to contextualise the quantitative findings. Quantitative analysis revealed a continued predominance of Eurocentric theoretical frameworks, utilised in approximately 70% of the sampled articles. Qualitative data identified a recurrent theme of institutional constraints, including limited funding for fieldwork and pressures to publish in internationally indexed journals, which shape methodological choices. The study concludes that while there is a growing discursive commitment to methodological pluralism and epistemic diversity, structural and institutional factors significantly constrain their practical application within the field. Recommendations include the development of dedicated funding streams for methodological innovation, the strengthening of postgraduate training in mixed methods and indigenous research methodologies, and editorial policies that incentivise epistemic diversity in local and continental journals. This paper provides the first comprehensive mixed methods analysis of epistemological and methodological trends in post- Nigerian African Studies, introducing a novel framework for evaluating epistemic integration in scholarly output.

**Keywords:** *African Studies, Nigeria, Epistemology, Decolonisation, Mixed Methods Research, Postcolonial Theory*

### Article Highlights

- Quantitative analysis shows ~70% prevalence of Eurocentric theoretical frameworks.
- Institutional constraints—funding limitations and publication pressures—shape methodological choices.
- Identifies need for dedicated funding streams and training in indigenous methodologies.
- Proposes editorial policies to incentivize epistemic diversity

### Core Finding

A gap persists between the discursive embrace of epistemic diversity and its practical implementation, heavily mediated by structural academic constraints.

*This analysis offers a novel framework for evaluating epistemic integration in scholarly output.*

in African journals.	
----------------------	--

## 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](mailto: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](http://app.parj.africa)



Scan to visit [app.parj.africa](http://app.parj.africa)

### **Open Access Scholarship from PARJ**

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global Knowledge