



# Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Beninese Education Practice: An Ethnographic Exploration

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## Abstract

Beninese education practices are influenced by indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), which have evolved over centuries and continue to shape educational content and pedagogy. An ethnographic study was conducted in five primary schools across Benin, involving participant observation, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis of educational materials. Indigenous knowledge systems were evident in the daily interactions between teachers and students, particularly in problem-solving activities that integrated traditional practices into modern classrooms. The proportion of such instances ranged from 20% to 45%, depending on the school. This study underscores the importance of incorporating IKS into formal education to enhance relevance and effectiveness, especially among younger generations who are increasingly disconnected from their cultural roots. Educational authorities should promote dialogue between traditional knowledge holders and modern educators to integrate indigenous practices more systematically into curricula and pedagogical approaches. Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Benin, Education, Ethnography

**Keywords:** *African geography, Indigenous knowledge systems, Ethnography, Pedagogy, Cultural studies, Anthropology, Community engagement*

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