

A Comparative Analysis of African Creation Myths: Indigenous Cosmogonies in Kenya

K, a, m, a, u, G, i, t, h, i, n, j, i, ,, A, m, i, n, a, O, c, h, i, e, n, g, ,, W, a, n, j, i,
k, u, M, w, a, n, g, i

| Abstract

Background: A significant gap exists in the comparative analysis of indigenous African cosmogonies within Kenya. This study addresses this

within the Arts & Humanities, focusing on the period from 2021 to 2026.

Purpose and objectives: The primary purpose is to systematically analyse and compare the narrative structures, symbolic elements, and socio-cultural functions of creation myths from selected ethnic communities in Kenya. The objectives are to identify common archetypes, delineate key thematic variations, and interpret their continued relevance in contemporary contexts.

Methodology: This qualitative study employed a comparative narrative analysis. Primary data were collected between 2021 and 2023 through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with cultural custodians and elders from three distinct ethnic communities. This was supplemented by a review of documented oral texts and ethnographies.

Findings: The analysis reveals a core of shared cosmological themes, such as the emergence from a primordial unity or a divine act of ordering chaos. However, significant variations were documented in the agency of the creator, the role of intermediary beings, and the explanation of human origin and purpose. Evidence indicates these narratives remain active, though adapted, repositories of ecological knowledge and social ethics.

Conclusion: The study concludes that Kenyan creation myths, while diverse, constitute a coherent field of indigenous philosophical thought. Their comparative study challenges homogenising perspectives and underscores the depth of locally situated worldviews.

Recommendations: Further research should engage with younger generations to document evolving interpretations. Educational and cultural institutions should integrate these cosmogonies into curricula and heritage programmes to affirm indigenous knowledge systems.

Key words: creation myths,

cosmogony, comparative analysis, indigenous knowledge, oral literature, Kenya, Arts & Humanities Contribution statement: This research provides a systematic, contemporary comparative framework for analysing Kenyan creation myths, contributing detailed primary data and a nuanced interpretation to the field of African religious and philosophical studies.
