

Integrating Ifá Divination and Indigenous Knowledge Systems into Coastal Resilience Planning in Benin: A Systematic Literature Review

A, d, é, o, l, a, O, g, o, u, b, i, y, i, ,, C, h, a, n, t, a, l, A, d, é, k, o, u, n, ,, K,
o, f, f, i, S, o, s, s, a, ,, M, o, u, s, s, a, G, b, è, d, è, g, b, è

| Abstract

Background: A significant research gap exists within the Arts & Humanities

regarding the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), specifically Ifá divination practices, into formal coastal resilience planning in Benin. The period from 2021 to 2026 has seen increased academic attention on local knowledge and climate adaptation, yet the role of such spiritual epistemologies in planning frameworks remains underexplored.

Purpose and objectives: This systematic literature review aims to synthesise scholarly work from 2021–2026 to clarify central debates, identify practical implications, and propose a focused agenda for future research and policy development on this subject.

Methodology: A structured systematic review was conducted, identifying and analysing relevant academic literature published between 2021 and 2026. Studies were selected through predefined criteria and their findings were integrated using thematic synthesis.

Findings: The review reveals two dominant themes. First, persistent structural constraints, including institutional scepticism and methodological incompatibility, hinder integration. Second, documented case studies show emerging local innovations where Ifá principles inform community-led adaptation. However, the evidence base is uneven, with more discussion of barriers than documented, scalable examples of integration.

Conclusion: The findings underscore the necessity for context-specific approaches that respect the ontological foundations of Ifá. They also highlight a need for more robust, empirical research to move beyond theoretical discussions to documented applications.

Recommendations: Future research should prioritise collaborative methodologies that centre local knowledge holders. Policymakers and practitioners are advised to develop inclusive

governance models that formally recognise and ethically integrate such indigenous systems, supported by improved transparency in data collection and reporting. Key words: Indigenous Knowledge Systems, climate adaptation, Ifá divination, coastal resilience, Benin, systematic review, Arts & Humanities Contribution statement: This review consolidates contemporary scholarship (2021–2026), providing a synthesised evidence base that identifies key barriers and opportunities for integrating Ifá epistemology into resilience planning, thereby informing more culturally grounded adaptation strategies in Benin.
