

THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN SCIENCE IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT: A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

Julius Ijekeye, PhD

*Departments of Philosophy and Theology,
Seminary of All Saints,
Uhiele-Ekpoma, Edo State
dr.frjulius@yahoo.com*

Executive Summary

The meeting point of African science and its impact on the global future raises profound philosophical inquiries due to Africa's rich scientific traditions. Research indicates that akin to Western perceptions, African perspectives also view science as the systematic examination of the physical and natural world through observation, experimentation, and empirical validation of theories. This paper delves into the philosophical foundations governing the intricate relationship between African scientific advancements and their ramifications on the global stage. It elucidates how themes such as knowledge generation, cultural viewpoints, ethical deliberations, and the transformative potential of African scientific insights intersect with prevailing global paradigms, influencing the collective course of humanity. Employing critical analysis, this study navigates through these themes to shed light on the profound implications of African science for the future of the world.

Keywords: African science, Global future, Philosophical analysis, Cultural perspectives, Transformative potential

Introduction

Examining African science and its impact on the global future from a philosophical perspective enables us to grasp the distinctive contributions of African thought and scientific heritage, along with their capacity to influence human progress. Delving into themes such as knowledge generation, cultural viewpoints, ethics, and the transformative capacity of African science reveals how African concepts, methodologies, and innovations intersect with dominant global frameworks, thereby influencing the collective course of humanity.

African science emerges from a fundamental necessity to establish an indigenous African logic deeply rooted within the African thought framework.²² This science embodies the African method of exploring the world, encompassing both physical and metaphysical realms. The distinctive nature of the African knowledge system and its holistic approach to science cannot be overlooked.²³ This paper therefore explores the complex interplay between African science and global viewpoints, analyzing how traditional African knowledge systems and scientific progress influence and question prevailing models of knowledge creation and dissemination. Also, the paper investigates how African scientific methodologies, shaped by a diverse cultural heritage and adherence to ethical values, might disrupt established assumptions and prejudices within global scientific conversations.

Despite facing numerous criticisms, African indigenous knowledge systems offer valuable contributions to modern scientific inquiry. Through rigorous analysis, one can acknowledge the potential of African science to enhance one's comprehension of the natural world, spur innovation and advancement, and promote a more inclusive, equitable, and just society. This philosophical analysis of African science in a global context will tackle several crucial inquiries, such as the distinctive perspectives and contributions of African scientific thought and their integration with established global knowledge frameworks. By grappling with these queries and others, this philosophical scrutiny will offer a thorough and stimulating investigation into African science and its impact on humanity's future.

Origins of African Science

The Eurocentric bias not only questioned the philosophical capabilities of Africans but also cast doubt on the existence of indigenous African science, often depicting Africans as lacking in scientific innovation and exploration. However, numerous studies challenge this perspective, revealing the presence of African scientific traditions that predate Western science. These studies also trace the origins of modern Western science back to African antecedents.

According to Chiekh Diop, African science has its roots in ancient civilizations, particularly the Nile Valley cultures of Egypt and ancient Nubia (present-day Sudan). These civilizations notably excelled in fields such as astronomy, mathematics, and medicine, contributing significantly to the advancement of human knowledge.²⁴ To

²² Oseni Taiwo Afisi, *Is African Science True Science? Reflections on the Methods of African Science*. *Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*, vol. 5 No. 1. 2016, 59-75.

²³ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 2.

²⁴ Brian Murfin, "African Science in School Curriculum," https://www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/African_Science.html (Accessed 15/03/2024).

strengthen his argument, Diop emphasized several advanced sciences practiced by Africans long ago. For instance, he highlights the preexistence of trigonometry and Pythagoras' theorem in African contexts before their formalization in Western scholarship by Pythagoras.²⁵

Similarly, within the Nigerian context, Chris Akpan observed how, prior to modern distillation methods for producing alcoholic beverages, early African ancestors utilized empirical observations to develop scientific knowledge. They learned how to ferment palm wine through traditional distillation methods to create gin. Additionally, through traditional practices such as crop rotation and land preservation, they acquired knowledge of food processing.²⁶ In summary, the historical context of African science asserts that it is not a recent addition to the African landscape; rather, it stretches back many centuries, even predating modern Western sciences.

Philosophical Foundations of African Science

The African continent boasts a wealth of intellectual traditions often neglected or misinterpreted in Western academia. One facet of this tradition deserving deeper exploration is the philosophical frameworks guiding African perspectives on science and knowledge creation. These frameworks provide invaluable perspectives on diverse understandings of the natural world and one's role within it.

Kwame Gyekye suggests that many African philosophical systems prioritize a profound reverence for the interconnectedness and interdependence of all phenomena.²⁷ This holistic perspective contrasts with the Cartesian dualism prevalent in Western scientific thought, which often perceives the world through rigid dichotomies such as mind and body, nature and culture. Kwasi Wiredu further supports this notion by asserting that within the African context, individuals are viewed as inherently interconnected with their community.²⁸

In African societies, the practice of science is deeply intertwined with communal values and priorities. Rather than solely focusing on individual advancements or discoveries, scientific endeavours often serve the collective good, addressing the needs and challenges of the community as a whole. This orientation reflects a broader

²⁵ Murfin, "African Science in School Curriculum".

²⁶ Akpan, Chris O, "The Method of African Science: A Philosophical Evaluation," *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 2011, 2(1): 11-20.

²⁷ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 46.

²⁸ Kwasi Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 21.

philosophical outlook that emphasizes interconnectedness, interdependence, and harmony within society and the natural world. By prioritizing community well-being over individual achievement, African scientists approach their work with a sense of responsibility and accountability to the broader social fabric. This approach not only fosters collaboration and cooperation but also encourages the integration of diverse perspectives and knowledge systems.

Moreover, the emphasis on collective welfare in African science challenges the hierarchical and reductionist tendencies often found in Western scientific paradigms. Instead of compartmentalizing knowledge into discrete domains or disciplines, African scientists adopt a holistic approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of various phenomena and disciplines. By embracing this holistic and community-oriented approach, African scientists offer valuable insights and contributions to global scientific discourse. By drawing on indigenous knowledge systems, cultural traditions, and local expertise, they enrich one's understanding of the natural world and contribute to more inclusive and equitable scientific practices.

Insights from History on African Science

In delving into the historical insights of African science, the paper aims to uncover the intricate interplay between cultural contexts and scientific exploration. This examination will illuminate how cultural beliefs, traditions, and practices have shaped the development of scientific thought on the African continent over time. Furthermore, it will explore the epistemological frameworks underlying African scientific inquiry, shedding light on the diverse ways in which knowledge is acquired, validated, and transmitted within African societies.

The historical perspectives of African science will bring one to gain a deeper understanding of the unique contributions of African science to the global scientific discourse, and help one appreciate the resilience and ingenuity of African scholars and practitioners who have navigated complex social, political, and environmental landscapes to pursue scientific inquiry and innovation. Through the historical exploration of African science, the paper aims to challenge existing narratives and biases that have marginalized African contributions to science and highlight the rich intellectual heritage of the African continent.

The historical insights on African science go thus:

a. The Impact of Culture on Scientific Exploration

The historical view of African Science underscores the profound impact of cultural elements on scientific investigation. African scientific endeavours are intricately

connected to the surrounding cultural milieu, shaping both scientific practices and the individuals involved. This connection highlights that scientific knowledge is moulded by the social fabric, power dynamics, political landscape, socio-economic conditions, philosophical outlook, and religious beliefs inherent within a culture.²⁹ Moreover, the contrast between Western science and traditional knowledge systems reveals distinct methodologies. Western science, grounded in analytical and reductionist techniques, diverges from traditional knowledge systems, which adopt a more intuitive and holistic perspective often intertwined with spirituality and qualitative evaluations.³⁰

This comparison underscores the diverse cultural lenses through which scientific inquiry is conducted and interpreted, offering valuable insights into the intricate interplay between culture and scientific exploration. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing and respecting different cultural perspectives in shaping peoples understanding of the natural world, fostering a more inclusive and holistic approach to scientific inquiry.

b. Reflections on Epistemology

The historical view of African Science regarding epistemological considerations has been influenced by the complex interplay of indigenous knowledge systems, colonialism, and subsequent decolonization movements. African epistemology is firmly grounded in the cultural context and knowledge communities of its inhabitants, stressing the significance of comprehending African lived experiences and worldviews.³¹

Western epistemology has historically marginalized traditional African knowledge systems, underscoring the necessity for the decolonization of epistemology in Africa.³² This decolonization endeavour entails reinstating African epistemology and indigenous knowledge in education, while also scrutinizing Eurocentric biases and promoting the inclusion of diverse perspectives.³³ The African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science is committed to decolonizing knowledge by amplifying African

²⁹ Norman G. Lederman, Judith S. Lederman, Allison Antink, "Nature of Science and Scientific Inquiry as Contexts for the Learning of Science and Achievement of Scientific Literacy," *International Journal of Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology*, Vol. (1) 3, 2013, 138-147.

³⁰ [Fulvio Mazzocchi](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1479546/), "Western science and traditional knowledge: Despite their variations, different forms of knowledge can learn from each other," *EMBO Reports* 2006 May; 7(5): 463-466, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1479546/> (Accessed 15/03/2024).

³¹ Angelo Nicholaides and Jean Steyn, "Towards Authentic African Higher Education Based on African Epistemology," *Journal of Education Culture and Society* no. 2 (2023): 116-125, <https://www.jecs.pl/index.php/jecs/article/download/1543/1321>

³² Nicholaides and Steyn, "Towards Authentic African Higher Education," 119.

³³ Nicholaides and Steyn, "Towards Authentic African Higher Education," 122.

perspectives in philosophy, enhancing knowledge systems globally, both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres.³⁴ Likewise, research on indigenous knowledge systems in Africa has revealed that although argumentation can facilitate the integration of scientific and indigenous knowledge, the substantial epistemological disparities between them pose a notable challenge.³⁵

African Science and Philosophy

The complex interplay between African science and philosophy is shaped by cultural, historical, and epistemological factors, resulting in a multifaceted relationship. African philosophy encompasses diverse philosophical domains such as metaphysics, epistemology, moral philosophy, and political philosophy. The integration of philosophy into African science signifies a broader endeavour to comprehend knowledge, rationality, and human understanding within the African context.³⁶ The philosophical foundation of African science is significantly influenced by African epistemology. Epistemology, the exploration of knowledge, delves into essential inquiries regarding rationality and knowledge acquisition, offering a structure to comprehend the processes of acquiring, justifying, and interpreting knowledge.³⁷ African epistemology, stemming from indigenous knowledge systems, presents a distinctive viewpoint on knowledge generation and investigation, stressing the significance of cultural context and personal experiences in shaping scientific comprehension.

Additionally, the resurgence of African indigenous modes of understanding and knowledge creation underscores the importance of local knowledge systems in contesting prevailing paradigms enforced by colonialism and imperialism.³⁸ This endeavour underscores the significance of incorporating a range of knowledge systems,

³⁴ Nicholaides and Steyn, "Towards Authentic African Higher Education," 122.

³⁵ Gracious Zinyeka, *The epistemological Basis of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Science Education*, (M.A Thesis: University of Pretoria, 2014), 111, https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/52979/Zinyeka_Epistemological_2014.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1 (Accessed 21/03/2024).

³⁶ Dismas Masolo, "African Sage Philosophy," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, last modified February 2016. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/african-sage/> (Accessed 21/03/2024).

³⁷ Ovet K. Nwosimiri, *Epistemology in African Philosophy: A Critique of African Concepts of Knowledge*, (M.A Thesis: University of Kwazulu-Natali, 2019), 3. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/16028743-d7eb-446d-a0e6-8f4544d084c8/content> (Accessed 21/03/2024).

³⁸ Hassan O. Kaya, "Revitalizing African Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Knowledge Production," E-International Relations. <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/05/26/revitalizing-african-indigenous-ways-of-knowing-and-knowledge-production/> (Accessed 21/03/2024).

encompassing traditional African wisdom, into scientific exploration to tackle worldwide issues like climate change and poverty.³⁹

African Scientific Contributions to Issues of Globalization

The substantial level of international collaboration in African research can artificially expand the perceived impact of African researchers on global research. Adjusting for this collaborative effect reveals that the actual proportion of contributions by African authors is lower than the raw count suggests, indicating a smaller share of global research output than initially perceived. For instance, Anthony Eniayejuni study: *Scientific Research in West Africa and the Impact of International Collaboration*, analyzed the trend of West African research output, the effect of population size and its relative global share during the period 1997- 2017, and the patterns and impact of intra-regional and inter-regional research collaboration on West Africa research output, and the findings reveal significant growth in research output across all West African countries, with their collective share of global research steadily rising over the years. However, the volume of research produced by West Africa remains comparatively small when considering its potential impact on the region's population. So, the study indicates minimal research output resulting from collaborative efforts among West African countries, with inter-regional collaboration showing a greater impact than intra-regional collaboration. These results underscore the necessity for increased investment in research and enhanced research production capabilities through collaborative endeavours among West African nations.⁴⁰

Africa's limited contribution to global research largely stems from insufficient investment in research infrastructure, training, and programs.⁴¹ Nevertheless, African scientific contributions span a wide array of fields, including mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, tool-making, environmental science, medicine, and space exploration. From ancient civilizations like Egypt to contemporary times, Africa boasts a rich history of scientific achievements that often remain overlooked.

³⁹ Kaya, "Revitalizing African Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Knowledge Production."

⁴⁰ Anthony Eniayejuni, "Scientific Research in West Africa and the Impact of International Collaboration: An Analysis in Scopus Database, 1997-2017," <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajlajs/article/view/196563> (Accessed 21/03/2024).

⁴¹ Azeh Godwill Engwa, "Science and Technology in Africa: The key Elements and Measures for Sustainable Development," *Global Journal of Science Frontier Research (G)*, Volume XIV Issue 2 Version I, Year 2014, 16-28, <http://eprints.gouni.edu.ng/1156/1/4-Science-and-Technology-in-Africa.pdf> (Accessed 21/03/2024).

Incorporating African Science into the Global Scientific Dialogue

In pursuit of comprehending the universe through observable evidence and offering practical solutions, a scientist's approach reflects the essence of intellectual curiosity and openness, qualities present in any society. This perspective underscores the complexity of advocating for a universal, standardized scientific methodology, as it overlooks the diverse inquiry methods inherent in scientific disciplines. Imposing Western scientific norms globally may obscure the unique scientific approaches found in various cultures, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and respecting these diverse methodologies, including indigenous approaches to science.

The integration of African science into the global scientific arena necessitates a comprehensive strategy to enhance the visibility and impact of African scientific contributions worldwide. Utilizing African Indigenous Languages (AILs) in science communication emerges as a pivotal tactic, fostering trust and comprehension of science within African communities. By disseminating scientific knowledge in AILs, African scientists can bridge the gap between scientific expertise and local populations, nurturing a deeper appreciation and confidence in science across the continent. Furthermore, overcoming barriers to science engagement in Africa—such as insufficient institutional support, government restrictions, perceived low public science literacy, inadequate training programmes, and limited resources for developing science materials in diverse languages—is imperative for the full integration of African science into the global discourse.

In addition to utilizing African Indigenous Languages (AILs) in science communication, there is a need for collaborative efforts to amplify the visibility and influence of African scientific contributions globally. This involves fostering partnerships between African research institutions and international counterparts, promoting knowledge exchange, and facilitating joint research initiatives.⁴² Such collaborations not only enhance the impact of African scientific endeavours but also foster a more inclusive and diverse global scientific community.

Moreover, addressing systemic challenges within African scientific ecosystems is crucial for sustainable integration into the global scientific discourse.⁴³ This includes

⁴² Elizabeth Sousa Vieira & Jorge Cerdeira, "The integration of African countries in international research networks, *Scientometrics*," vol. 127 (2022), 1995-2021.

⁴³ Ngongalah, Lem; Ngwa, Niba Rawlings; Wepngong, Emerson & Musisi, James. (2018). Research challenges in Africa – an exploratory study on the experiences and opinions of African researchers. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328348101_Research_challenges_in_Africa_-

investing in research infrastructure, providing adequate funding for scientific research, improving access to education and training in STEM fields (i.e., science, technology, engineering and mathematics), and fostering a culture of scientific inquiry and innovation. By strengthening the scientific capacity of African nations, they can actively contribute to addressing global challenges and advancing scientific knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

Furthermore, initiatives aimed at promoting the recognition and preservation of indigenous knowledge systems alongside formal scientific practices can enrich scientific discourse and foster interdisciplinary collaboration. Recognizing the value of traditional knowledge in areas such as agriculture, medicine, and environmental management can lead to more holistic and contextually relevant solutions to complex global problems. By embracing these principles, African nations can contribute meaningfully to global scientific progress while ensuring that their unique perspectives and contributions are valued and respected on the world stage.

Influence of Colonialism and Post-Colonial Dynamics on the Development of African Science

Colonialism has left an indelible mark on Africa, precipitating profound and lasting changes in its societies, economies, and cultures. Exploitative practices, such as resource extraction and labour exploitation, coupled with inadequate access to education and healthcare, have perpetuated enduring challenges to sustainable development in the region. The imposition of detrimental economic policies, alongside political instability and social divisions, underscores the enduring legacy of colonialism and the persisting hurdles facing Africa.

The influx of white settlers, encompassing traders, missionaries, administrators, and military personnel, heralded the rise of European elites who wielded control over governance, often at the expense of the political rights of native African populations. Land dispossession was rampant, with colonial powers appropriating land from indigenous Africans for agricultural and mining ventures, predominantly benefiting European settlers. This era also witnessed the widespread exploitation of Africans through forced labour, slavery, and coerced migration, exacerbating the hardships faced by African communities.⁴⁴

an_exploratory_study_on_the_experiences_and_opinions_of_African_researchers (Accessed 21/03/2024).

⁴⁴ Joshua Dwayne Setles, *The Impact of Colonialism on African Economic Development*. (1996). University of Tennessee Honors thesis projects,

Colonialism instigated profound cultural and social shifts, disrupting indigenous customs, languages, and traditions. The imposition of European customs, languages, and educational structures frequently marginalized or suppressed indigenous cultures and belief systems. Education systems propagated Eurocentric values and narratives, often portraying African cultures as primitive or inferior, shaping enduring perceptions and challenges within African societies today.

Ethical Considerations in African Scientific Endeavours

Maurice Richter, in his sociological perspective on the nature of science, characterizes it as a cultural evolution—a dynamic process through which one continually gathers and evolves his or her understanding of the natural world, encompassing human life and society.⁴⁵ This suggests that science continually progresses, and this structured approach to investigation is present in all societies, making it familiar to African communities as well. G. O. Ozumba argued in his essay "Analytic and Synthetic Dimensions of African Science" that Africans possess their distinct method of observing, experimenting, and verifying observable facts regarding the natural world. This approach enables them to comprehend and harness nature for their benefit.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, claiming the existence of African science prompts inquiries into the parallels and distinctions between African and Western scientific traditions. Scholars have sought to address this by scrutinizing the methodologies as a primary point of departure. Oseni T. Afisi, in his examination of Chris Akpan's African scientific ideology, suggests that African science is fundamentally grounded in the principle of causality, which harbours a deep-seated mythical and religious essence.⁴⁷ This implies that while Western science, with its critical scientific methodologies, leans towards materialism and individualism, African science embraces a holistic perspective.

Furthermore, Africa boasts a richly diverse cultural landscape, one that cherishes the interplay between social values and the probing examination of nature within its scientific endeavours. In contrast to Western science, which often prioritizes individual interests over communal welfare, African science places paramount importance on the well-being of the community. This symbiotic relationship between African science and

https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1182&context=utk_chanhonoproj (Accessed 21/03/2024).

⁴⁵ Akpan, "The Method of African Science: A Philosophical Evaluation."

⁴⁶ Akpan, "The Method of African Science: A Philosophical Evaluation," 13.

⁴⁷ Oseni T. Afisi, "Is African Science True Science? Reflections on the Methods of African Science," *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*, Vol. 5, No.1 (2016), 66. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ft.v5i1.5> (Accessed 01/04/2024).

moral values raises profound questions about the ethical responsibilities of African scientists to their communities. It also underscores the ethical considerations surrounding scientific research's impact on the local environment and the pursuit of the common good. In doing so, it shines a spotlight on concepts of justice, equity, integrity, and the authenticity of scientific contributions within the realm of African science.

The Role of Philosophy in Driving Forward African Scientific Research and Innovation

Many scholars consider philosophy a second-order discipline, as it critically examines the foundational principles of other fields to foster a comprehensive understanding of reality.⁴⁸ This suggests that philosophy, being a rational discipline, delves into the essence of the fundamental substance that serves as the subject of critical discourse across various fields. Employing its tools of analysis, prescription, and speculation, philosophy examines the reliability and authenticity of African knowledge, along with the methods and practices for acquiring and safeguarding such knowledge from an African perspective.

David Millar and Betrus Haverkort assert that Africans possess a distinctive traditional mode of thinking and reasoning, distinct from the Western paradigm.⁴⁹ The Western reception of the African approach to inquiry is subject to debate, as it lacks a rigorous scientific methodology akin to Western sciences. Consequently, African knowledge is frequently undervalued at a surface level, contributing to limited scientific progress and a stagnation of knowledge within the African context, stemming from the absence of thorough empirical investigation into things in the universe.

Various African scholars have engaged in rigorous philosophical inquiry, proposing diverse theories aimed at guiding African nations and societies beyond their reliance on mythical and religious explanations of reality. These efforts seek to cultivate a more critical and scientific perspective, encouraging African minds to embrace scientific curiosity, thereby fostering a better understanding of the universe and stimulating innovation. Philosophy plays a pivotal role in fostering transformative knowledge in Africa, as it is essential for the continent to progress in developing scientific tools that facilitate technological advancement. By employing philosophical methods, Africa can

⁴⁸ Charles C. Nweke and Vera A. Uyanwune, "The Relevance of Philosophy to Any Discipline," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, Vol. 4, issue 8, (2020), 784-788.

⁴⁹ David Millar and Betrus Haverkort, "African Knowledge and Sciences: Exploring the ways of Knowing of Sub-Saharan Africa," In David Millar, Stephen B. Kendie et al., *African Knowledge and Sciences: Understanding and Supporting the ways of knowing in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (Bolgatanga: Compas series, 2005), 20.

transcend cultural, mystical, and religious biases, fostering an open-minded and objective approach to knowledge acquisition.⁵⁰

Strengthening Internal Collaboration and Partnerships

Collaboration and partnership are essential for advancing African science into a more productive enterprise, thereby fostering innovation across the continent. Given the challenges of poverty and limited technological resources within African scientific research centers, successful scientific programmes often rely on collaboration with other research institutions or government support. Amy Jamison, Thomas Jayne, and others contend that effective partnerships can significantly impact the African economy and political landscape, highlighting the transformative potential of such collaborations.⁵¹

Furthermore, African nations must mobilize resources, provide necessary equipment, and allocate funding for research programmes by implementing favourable policies that attract foreign investors interested in sponsoring scientific research for state development rather than solely for personal gain. Collaborating with established research institutions can lead to the establishment of industries and relevant facilities conducive to technological research.⁵² Most importantly, achieving sustainable transformation in the development of standard scientific centers in Africa, which are crucial for progress, requires collaboration from all Africans, not just the government. Working hand in hand with scientific researchers can foster a harmonious advancement in science across the continent.

The Implications of African Science for the Global Future

The African continent has long been a hub of innovation and scientific discovery, contributing significantly to the global scientific community throughout its rich history. However, in today's world, one faces various challenges such as climate change, global health issues, sustainable development, and the need for technological advancements. Given these challenges, the role of African science in shaping the global future is increasingly important to consider.

One area where African science is making a significant impact is in public health. By developing and integrating traditional medicine, African science can greatly improve

⁵⁰ Afisi, "Is African Science True Science?" 72.

⁵¹ Amy Jamison, Thomas Jayne, et al., *Rethinking African Partnership for Global Solutions* (Michigan: Michigan State University, 2017), 5.

⁵² Engwa A. Godwill, "Science and Technology in Africa: The key Elements and Measures for Sustainable Development," 23.

the well-being of people worldwide, particularly in light of emerging illnesses. These approaches have the potential to influence global healthcare strategies and enhance healthcare accessibility.

A notable aspect of African science is its emphasis on indigenous knowledge systems. These traditional forms of knowledge, passed down through generations, offer unique perspectives and solutions to global challenges. For instance, traditional African agricultural practices like agroforestry and soil conservation techniques can inform sustainable farming methods, addressing issues such as food security and environmental degradation.

Moreover, African scientists have made notable progress in renewable energy, offering innovative solutions to the continent's energy needs. The adoption of solar power, wind energy, and biofuels in Africa serves as a model for sustainable energy production and distribution worldwide.

Evaluation

African science provides a distinct viewpoint on the natural world, drawing from diverse indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews that challenge existing paradigms and open up new avenues of exploration. By placing ethical considerations and community-driven research at the forefront, African science fosters more equitable and just forms of knowledge creation and scientific advancement. However, significant challenges such as limited resources and infrastructure hinder the progress of African science in many countries on the continent. Additionally, stereotypes and biases against African scholarship in global scientific discussions limit opportunities for collaboration and perpetuate harmful misrepresentations of African scientific contributions.

Despite these obstacles, African science offers unique strengths and opportunities for innovative research and knowledge generation. Understanding both its strengths and weaknesses is crucial for appreciating its significance within African societies and the global community. By challenging existing knowledge hierarchies and advocating for more inclusive scientific inquiry, African science can contribute meaningfully to addressing global challenges and advancing human knowledge and development.

The relationship between philosophy and science is intricate, demanding a holistic approach that acknowledges the strengths and limitations of each discipline while promoting their mutual enrichment and collaboration. The prevalence of Eurocentric

and Western epistemology education in Africa stems from the legacy of colonialism,⁵³ which introduced new technologies and scientific knowledge while suppressing indigenous forms of knowledge and practice. This suppression led to the erosion of African scientific traditions and undermined their global contributions. Colonialist attitudes dismissed African expertise, perpetuating stereotypes of African societies as "backward" in scientific achievement. Today, African science continues to grapple with the repercussions of colonialism, striving to overcome historical biases and injustices in its pursuit of scientific progress.

Globalization offers an opportunity for African science to interact with the broader scientific community, fostering greater collaboration, financial support, and acknowledgment of African research and innovation.⁵⁴ Through the sharing and dissemination of African scientific knowledge and perspectives, globalization can enrich the global scientific conversation, fostering diversity and inclusivity. Leveraging its rich indigenous knowledge systems and unique environmental and cultural contexts, African science can offer valuable solutions to pressing global challenges such as climate change, public health, and sustainable development. By prioritizing values of community, sustainability, and social justice, African science has the potential to challenge existing biases and assumptions in global scientific discussions, promoting more equitable and inclusive approaches to knowledge generation and application.

However, the insufficient funding and resources allocated to African science pose a significant obstacle to its ability to contribute meaningfully to global scientific progress and innovation, limiting its potential impact on the global future. Effective communication of scientific ideas is essential for overcoming this barrier, underscoring the importance of enhancing communication methods within African scientific communities.⁵⁵ Scientific journals, books, and online platforms should be utilized to document and disseminate scientific information across borders. This approach will facilitate the spread of scientific ideas and increase public awareness.

Conclusion

After examining the intersection of African science and the global future, the study revealed a multitude of complex philosophical questions and challenges that demand careful consideration to understand their potential impact. African science provides essential insights and perspectives that have frequently been marginalized and overlooked. Nonetheless, its importance in addressing global challenges and

⁵³ Nicholaides and Steyn, "Towards Authentic African Higher Education Based on African Epistemology," 126.

⁵⁴ Amy Jamison, et al., *Rethinking African Partnership for Global Solutions*, 4.

⁵⁵ Engwa, "Science and Technology in Africa, 23.

transforming scientific discourse is immense. By fostering comprehensive and inclusive engagement with African science, there can be the development of a more diverse, equitable, and innovative global scientific community, better equipped to tackle the challenges ahead.

By recognizing and embracing the multifaceted nature of African science, doors to a wealth of knowledge and expertise that enriches collective understanding of the world are opened. It is not merely about acknowledging the contributions of African scientists but also about integrating their unique perspectives into the broader scientific dialogue. This integration fosters a more robust and dynamic scientific community, where diverse viewpoints are valued and celebrated.

Moreover, the challenges facing Africa, whether in the realms of public health, environmental sustainability, or technological advancement, often resonate with global issues. Therefore, tapping into African scientific insights and innovations, will not only address local challenges but also help to gain valuable insights into tackling similar problems on a global scale. This synergy between African science and the broader scientific community holds immense potential for driving positive change and shaping a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

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