Chapter 4
The Significance of Multicultural Methodologies on African Indigenous Knowledge Research

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history, African indigenous knowledge has been researched using Western-centred methodologies. From the onset, there was a great deal of resistance from indigenous peoples as most of these researchers used ethical considerations that are foreign to local communities. The African indigenous holders emphasise some cultural concepts that are sacrosanct and indispensable to them. This chapter, therefore, seeks to ferrate the significance of Western-centred methodologies vis-à-vis African-centred (Africa-centred, Afrocentric, Africentric, Afrocentricity, and African-worldview) methodologies in the collection of data among African indigenous communities. The concept of sharing (hybrid methodology) provides a platform of reflection especially on protocol and research tools.

INTRODUCTION

For some time, African indigenous knowledge has been researched using Western-centred methodologies. From the onset, there was a great deal of resistance from indigenous peoples as most of these researchers used ethical considerations that are foreign to local communities. The African indigenous holders emphasise some cultural concepts that are sacrosanct and indispensable to them. Resultantly, if such are not adhered to, this result and/or has resulted in numerous African indigenous peoples not disclosing the information or giving half-truths thus, the researchers producing findings that are a mismatch from reality. This is so as the ethical strategies and methodologies adopted are processed from a purely Western perspective, without respecting the community of origin. This proposed book chapter, therefore, seek to ferrate the significance of Western-centred methodologies vis-à-vis African-centred (and its variations as Africa-centred, Afrocentric, Africentric, Afrocentricity, Africentricity, and African-worldview) methodologies in the collection of data among African indigenous communities.

It is trite that researchers should do a critical analysis of African indigenous peoples' life, history and culture from the perspective of African indigenous people. In that regard, 'some forms of behaviour, actions and conduct are approved while others are widely disapproved of' (Idang 2009, p. 142). In evaluating African culture and qualities, the book chapter is not pontificating that every African culture have the equivalent explanation(s) for occasions, a similar language, and same method of dressing, etcetera. Relatively, there are fundamental likenesses and ethics shared by numerous African indigenous communities which if not adhered to introduce a mismatch and bring an aspect of undermining. If such cultural practices are disregarded, African indigenous communities take on responsibilities and distort or frustrate what the researcher seek.

On that backdrop, using Western-centred ethics on African indigenous knowledge research is not only dehumanising but portray them as 'pawns'. As such, the book chapter intends to bring this novelty, correct the wrong and introduce an adaptive system which upholds the values that play a central role in African indigenous communities. The book chapter concluded that it is important that the framework or methodology that is employed to research African phenomenon is grounded in the African Indigenous knowledge systems paradigm, because the community of research should be respected. Worth-noting, these two systems, Euro-Western centric and African methodologies can co-exist thus need to be respectfully compared and contrasted without restraint.

The concept of sharing (hybrid methodology) provides a platform of reflection especially on protocol and research tools. The adoption of Euro-Western methodologies with the exclusion of Afro-centred methodologies in sharing platforms is alleged to

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