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An Empirical Review of Indigenous Knowledge System from Management Perspective

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the significance of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) from a management perspective. It emphasized role of IK in sustainable development, governance, and innovation. It analyzed key IK components in education, research, and industry practices. The study emphasized potential use of IK in modern applications and global recognition. The study focused on policy interventions for the preservation and integration of IK into academic and organizational frameworks. The study used an empirical review methodology to examine the role of Indigenous Knowledge across various domains such as leadership, agriculture, and climate change adaptation. The findings of the study include the researcher identified key themes and evaluated the relevance and impact of Indigenous practices. The study adopted a descriptive research design to provide a comprehensive understanding. It also emphasizes gaps in existing literature for future research. The study underlined use of IK for promoting local development, sustainability, and flexibility, through practices like agro ecology and sustainable resource management. It emphasized to integrate Indigenous governance systems into modern frameworks and the need for preserving IK through documentation and community-driven efforts. The study highlights the significance of aligning IK with modern technology, policies, and intellectual property protections to enhance its impact and safeguard it for future generations. The study concluded that, integration of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) into management practices can enhance decision making, leadership, sustainability, ethical and inclusive business practices. The study suggested to formalize and protect IK through legal frameworks and policy interventions to ensure fair compensation, preserve cultural heritage, and support sustainable development aligned with global goals.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge (IK), Conflict Resolution, Sustainable Development, Governance Systems, Corporate Social Responsibility

Introduction

The rising importance of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in areas like sustainable development, governance, and innovation emphasized by previous studies (Shrestha et al., 2025; Akpan et al., 2022). Previous studies conducted in Ethiopia and Africa underline the role of IK in conflict management and education (Shiferaw & Debela, 2024; Yeseraw et al., 2023). IK helps to address global challenges like agriculture, food security, health, with socio-economic benefits in tourism (Kaya & Seleti, 2013; Barber & Jackson, 2015). In general, IK have contributed to sustainability, cultural preservation, and economic resilience globally.

The global focus on Indigenous Knowledge (IK) emphasized its role to address challenges, though issues like ownership and exclusion persist (Kaniki & Mphahlele, 2002). Effective management of IK through knowledge management principles is essential for its evolution and protection of intellectual property. In Nepal, federal reforms have increased the inclusion of local knowledge in education, but limited work has been done to systematize IK. The present study aims to integrate IK into education and policy for regional development.

The study focused on the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) elements recognized in education, research, and industry practices. The researcher strives to understand how these knowledge components can be explored, documented, and promoted for modern-day applications in different sectors for global recognition.

The study examined the relevance of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in academia and practical applications. The study identifies key components of IK, their historical context, and examines their relevance to leadership, governance, education, and local practices. Furthermore, the study aims to align policy interventions to preserve and promote IK for community well-being in the local as well as organizational context. Finally, the study seeks to integrate IK into academic and organizational practices for sustainable development.

Review of Literature

Concept of Knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge

Dei (2024) examined how Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is captured, managed, and shared in Ghana. The study underlined its oral and tacit nature, passed down through community leaders such as healers, farmers, and religious figures. The study highlighted the informal methods of sharing this knowledge, including mentorship, storytelling, and cultural gatherings. The study noted that this approach risks the loss of IK as knowledge holders age pass away. The study suggests a formalized, systematic strategy to preserve and document IK, with the involvement of information professionals and community leaders. This formalization not only safeguard the accessibility and longevity of IK but also contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The effect of knowledge management (KM) and performance measurement systems (PMS) on economic sustainability in small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) was examined (Cardoni et al., 2020). The study revealed that KM exploration paired with regular PMS use had a favourable effect on sustainability. Previous studies the underscored the contribution of KM to improve employee performance and competitive advantage in education and banking industries. The research underlined KM should be rooted in organizational culture to promote creativity.

Indigenous Knowledge vs. Leadership and Governance

Shiferaw and Debela (2024) examined indigenous conflict management practices in Ethiopia. The study highlights the role of IK to resolve conflicts and their balancing relationship with formal conflict resolution mechanisms. The study highlighted the decline in the effectiveness of these practices due to resource scarcity. The study suggests policymakers to strengthen and integrate them into contemporary governance. The roles of elders, councils, and systems in Oromo Gada illustrates indigenous conflict management practices can complement formal structures.

Akpan, Al-Faryan, and Iromaka (2022) analyzed the relationship between corporate governance and innovation in Nigerian indigenous oil companies. The study revealed good board governance greatly promotes innovation in both products and processes. In order to increase competitiveness and sustainability

of domestic businesses, the study recommend methods that promotes innovation. Furthermore, Khadka (2016) and Aliye (2020) suggested to embed a more inclusive and culturally aware approach to conflict resolution and governance into modern leadership frameworks.

Indigenous Knowledge vs. Information Communication and Technologies

Herbert (2024) studied the difficulties, including prejudices and gaps in Indigenous history and culture, associated with the gradual incorporation of Indigenous viewpoints into information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum in the context of Australia. The under-representation of Indigenous peoples in the tech workforce and the challenges of integrating Indigenous knowledge with ICT content have slowed integration despite efforts to address these concerns since 2017. The study highlighted the importance of incorporating ICT curricula with the cultural requirements of local communities to address issues like the digital gap, cultural biases in design, and data sovereignty.

Burnasheva et al. (2024) examined integration of IK into the management of the Road in the context of Russia. The study underlined the importance of incorporating urban, rural, and nomadic experiences into the design and sustainability of communication and transportation networks. Similarly, Briggs & Mantini-Briggs (2016) and Ibnouf (2012) emphasized the significance of integrating Indigenous knowledge into food security, architecture, and health in order to address global issues and enhance sustainability.

Indigenous Knowledge vs. Occupations, Customs, and Traditions

Akalibey et al. (2024) examined integration of IK into sustainable forest management (SFM). The study underlined the importance of IK for the preservation of forest and climate change mitigation. The study suggests to conduct more research into the Akwé: Kon Guidelines for holy areas. The study highlighted indigenous methods like ethnobotany, seed banks, and sacred groves as useful instruments for forest management.

According to Shrestha, L'Espoir Decosta, and Whitford (2025), the Guthi system, promotes communal synergy, is one way that the Indigenous Newars' ontologies in Nepal influence cultural practices and support sustainable tourism. According to the study, Indigenous worldviews that place a strong emphasis on compassion and shared well-being could direct sustainable tourism than profit motive. Indigenous knowledge is important in agricultural and resource management. The incorporation of IK is necessary to address issues like food security and climate change (Tweheyo, 2018; Nelson, 2015). Previous studies highlighted the value of applying Indigenous knowledge in a variety of fields to boost sustainability.

Indigenous Knowledge vs. Barter, and Local Resourcing

Arora (2018) studied the decline of traditional practices among the Nicobarese tribes due to modernization. The study highlighted the importance of their valuable ecological knowledge for forest conservation. The study focused on preserving their culture and lifestyle. Wambebe (2018) advocated legal protections for African traditional medicine. Similarly, Sillitoe (2017) revealed incorporating video tools with local agricultural knowledge can promote sustainable farming practices, particularly in managing Striga weed in the context of Mali.

Banu (2017) studied the causes of *Raute* population's fast decline and their battles to preserve their cultural identity and understanding of biodiversity conservation. *Raute* economic activities such as exchanging forest products, were highlighted in the study, along with the difficulties caused by resource depletion, cultural discrimination, and government assimilation initiatives. In order to conserve biodiversity, it emphasized the importance of preserving *Raute* knowledge and coordinating policies with international

agreements such as ILO-169, UNDRIP, and CBD. The results revealed that policies should be more inclusive and sustainable in order to preserve IK and promote sustainable livelihoods. The study contributed to protect rights and culture of *Raute* community.

Indigenous Knowledge vs. Education, and Life skills

Matindike and Ramdhany (2024) studied the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) into Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. The study focused on obstacles faced by Indigenous students due to a lack of culturally appropriate curriculum. The study emphasized the significance of a curriculum that combines local settings, traditional knowledge, and local artefacts to increase Indigenous students' interest and success in STEM disciplines. They proposed an approach which could reduce gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, in a more inclusive educational environment.

Moges et al. (2024) investigated the function of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in adult education. The study aims to promote long-term social development through the incorporation of local knowledge into educational programs. According to the study, incorporating IK into adult education has the potential to empower communities and promote sustainable practices in areas such as agriculture and resource management. Yeseraw, Melesse, and Kelkay (2023) discovered minimal integration of Indigenous Knowledge in Ethiopian school curriculum, with textbooks providing few relevant activities, indicating a need for additional development to align education with local settings and increase student ownership of learning.

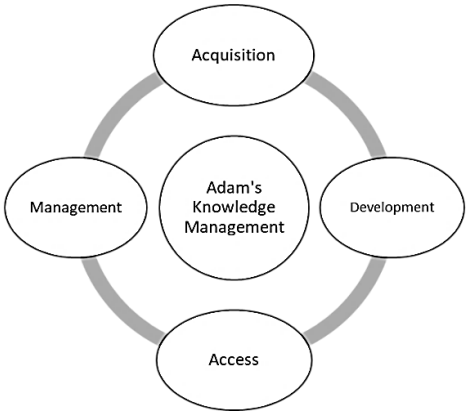
Indigenous Knowledge Development and Applications

The study on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in crop production underlined the contribution of IKS in areas such as land preparation, planting, pest control, and harvesting, deeply rooted in the local environment and expressed through stories and rituals (Magocha et al., 2020). However, challenges in adopting IKS were identified, including perceptions of outdated practices, institutional neglect, and lack of support from agricultural policies. The study suggests to conduct more research to integrate IKS with Western technology. Further, the study advocated the need of government interventions to preserve and promote these knowledge systems. Akude (2014) criticized the lack of macro-level analysis in knowledge management for development, and advocated a more comprehensive approach to global cooperation. Similarly, Twarog and Kapoor (2004) focused on protecting traditional knowledge, in natural medicine. The study emphasized the need for alternative intellectual property mechanisms to prevent "bio-piracy" and safeguard indigenous knowledge.

Implications of Knowledge Management Models in IKM

Prabha (2021) defined Indigenous Knowledge as traditional, sustainable knowledge that aids rural farmers and should be integrated into agricultural extension programs for development. The study explored knowledge management in indigenous organizations, and analyzed through Adam's model to meet community needs. Figure 2.1 illustrates how Adam's model describes people's knowledge management behaviour.

Figure 2.1: ADAM'S Model

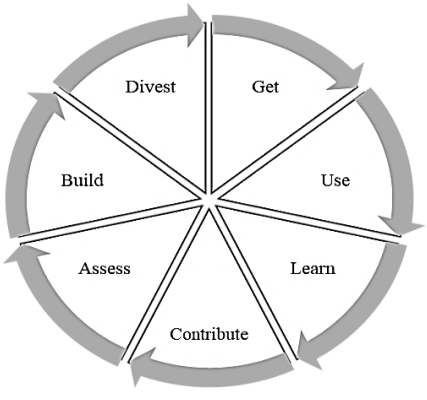


Source: Prabha, D. (2021) compares indigenous knowledge management with Adam's knowledge management.

Indigenous knowledge is acquired through family, relationships, and experience, and is developed via trial and error. Knowledge management plays a vital role in making traditional knowledge accessible, ensuring sustainable development, preserving local culture, and promoting innovation through extension studies and intellectual property protection.

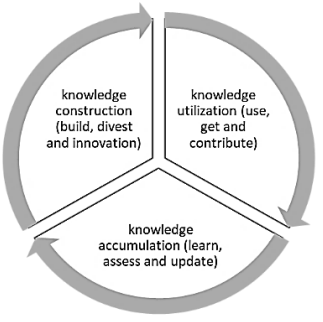
Zaman et al. (2010) generated an assessment method for Indigenous Knowledge Management Systems (IKMS) in Bario, Sarawak to evaluate community skills and resources. The study found that while Bario's community had an IKMS, certain areas needed improvement, and the Knowledge Management Diagnostic (KMD) tool (Figure 2.2) was modified to address structural issues. The researchers categorized KM processes into three groups: knowledge utilization, accumulation, and construction (Figure 2.3), identifying strategic directions for strengthening weak areas in the community's knowledge management system.

Figure 2.2: Bukowitz and Williams KM process model



Source: The Knowledge Management Field Book Bukowitz and Williams (1999)

Figure 2.3: Zaman, Kulathuramaiyer, and Yeo's proposed IKMS process model



Source: Zaman, Kulathuramaiyer, and Yeo (2010) develop strategic directions for indigenous knowledge management systems

Bario's indigenous knowledge management (IKMS) strategy should take into account the community's capabilities and resources, with a focus on long-term knowledge transfer, CoP strengthening, situational understanding, and leadership development. Future study should incorporate comparisons of proposed instruments and strategies.

Related Policy Reviews

Yu and Mu (2023) examined the integration of Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) into China's nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate change. The study identified key pathways and challenges, including fragmented policies and the abandonment of the term "indigenous." Despite these issues, China has advanced in incorporating traditional knowledge into NbS policies. In Nepal, Dhakal et al. (2022) highlighted the negative effects of external interventions on local practices. The study emphasized the role of indigenous regenerative practices in promoting resilience, supported by frameworks like Nepal's NBSAP for cultural and economic protection.

Review of Related Studies

Shibahathulla and Ashraf Ali (2024) explored the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) into Customer Relationship Management (CRM) processes in banking sector in the context of India. The results revealed that it improves customer happiness and financial inclusion. Indigenous methods such as community-centric banking and vernacular communication resulted in a 25% increase in customer satisfaction, a 30% reduction in attrition rates, and a 20% increase in cross-selling success, as rural account ownership increased from 70% to 85%. However, problems such as technological integration and human training have been identified, restricting complete adoption.

Rocha, Kragulj, and Pinheiro (2022) introduced the concept of practical wisdom (phronesis) as crucial for responsible knowledge management in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environments. The study criticized the overreliance on calculative rationality. Gómez-Baggethun (2022) highlighted the resurgence of Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) systems, emphasized their relevance in addressing global challenges like health and biodiversity. The study advocated for land rights and alternative societal models. The study highlighted the need of incorporating ILK into contemporary decision-making processes to promote sustainability and resilience.

Case Incidents and Best Practices

In the Himalayan region of Nepal, indigenous communities like the Tamang and Gurung have developed sustainable water management systems, including stone spouts, ponds, and irrigation channels to manage resources effectively (Shrestha et al., 2019). Community ownership and participation in decision-making are vital components which helps communities adapt to environmental challenges. These traditional methods, combined with capacity-building programs, contribute to long-term sustainability and resilience.

Shrestha and Nagata (2017) documented indigenous agro-ecological practices in Karnali Region of Nepal. The study focused on techniques like mixed cropping and crop rotation to mitigate climate risks and enhance soil fertility. In Mustang, Gurung and Gurung (2020) found that community-based tourism, supported by indigenous practices, promotes sustainable tourism and preserves cultural heritage. Boven and Morohashi (2002) emphasized the global importance of traditional knowledge. For instance, the use of locally modified clay pots for water storage and the zaï technique to counteract desertification.

Research Methodology

This study employed an empirical review methodology, synthesizing findings from diverse studies to evaluate the role of IK in leadership, governance, agriculture, and sustainability. A descriptive research design was used to provide a comprehensive understanding of Indigenous practices, identify gaps in existing literature, and suggest future research directions.

Results and Discussions

Results

The results are organized according to key themes derived from empirical studies. The review of empirical studies highlights the multifaceted role of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) that promotes resilience, sustainability, and cultural preservation across diverse domains.

Indigenous Knowledge Preservation and Transmission

The findings of the literature reviewed indicate that IK is primarily transmitted through oral traditions, storytelling, and mentoring by elders. It The knowledge transmitted is useful in agriculture, medicine, and ecological management (Dei, 2024). However, this tacit form of transmission is at risk due to the loss of knowledge holders and the pressures of modernization. Previous studies emphasize the pressing need for documentation and institutionalization to safeguard IK for future generations. Further the study illustrate integration of IK into curricula and policies remains limited due to weak recognition and lack of systematic frameworks (Prabha, 2021).

Indigenous Knowledge in Governance and Leadership

Empirical evidence reveals indigenous governance systems strengthen community resilience and resolve disputes through culturally grounded approaches (Shiferaw & Debela, 2024). Leadership models like Ubuntu and Gada underline inclusivity, participatory decision-making, and holistic governance. These practices nurture innovation and organizational sustainability (Akpan et al., 2022). These approaches provide culturally sensitive alternatives to formal legal and corporate structures.

Indigenous Knowledge and Technology Integration

Studies shows technology sector is surrounded by challenges like cultural prejudices, digital divide and limited participation of indigenous people while incorporating IK into modern ICT curricula (Herbert, 2024). These barriers hinder the development of ICT solutions aligned with Indigenous worldviews, particularly in areas such as data sovereignty. However, successful cases such as the Kolyma Road project in Russia establish ecological knowledge can enhance infrastructure resilience and sustainability (Burnasheva et al., 2024).

Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainability

Empirical findings confirm that Indigenous agricultural practices—such as agro-ecology, seed saving, and mixed cropping—are vital for sustainable farming in regions like Karnali. These practices help communities to address climate change and food insecurity (Shrestha et al., 2025). Techniques such as crop diversification, pest control, and soil fertility management are effective in ensuring food security and resilience in rural areas where modern technologies are limited (Tweheyo, 2018; Nelson, 2015).

Indigenous Knowledge and Health Systems

Research indicates that in remote communities, incorporation of Indigenous healthcare expertise into formal health programs improves accessibility and cultural relevance (Wambebe, 2018). Traditional healing practices complement modern medicine while protecting local medical traditions from exploitation. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) contributes to environmental health through practices like water conservation and forestry, which support climate adaptation strategies (Yu & Mu, 2023).

Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Preservation

Findings emphasize the uniqueness of IK in preserving cultural identity and heritage. Practices like storytelling, rituals, and craftsmanship safeguard cultural diversity and strengthen community cohesion (Arora, 2018; Shrestha et al., 2025). IK embedded tourism initiatives provides both cultural and economic benefits, as seen in the Karnali Region. Sustainable tourism is deeply rooted in Indigenous traditions on the one hand generates livelihoods and other preserve heritage (Burnasheva et al., 2024).

Indigenous Knowledge in Environmental and Resource Management

Ecological practices like ethnobotany, seed banks, and sacred groves are vital for biodiversity conservation and forest management (Akalibey et al., 2024). Community-based forest management systems in the Karnali Region remain vital for ecosystem maintenance and livelihood support. Indigenous worldviews highlight mutual benefit, collective decision-making, and respect for nature provide strong foundations for sustainable resource management (Shrestha et al., 2019).

Policy and Governance for Indigenous Knowledge Preservation

Policies like UNDRIP identify the importance of IK, but legal protections remain weak, against exploitation in traditional medicine and biodiversity (Wambebe, 2018; Posey, 1996). However, stronger legal protections are needed to prevent misappropriation, particularly in traditional medicine, where risks of exploitation and bio-piracy remain high (Wambebe, 2018). This is relevant in the Karnali Region, where Indigenous health systems and natural resources are vulnerable to external misuse.

To provide a clearer synthesis of the empirical review, Table 1 summarizes the comparative findings across the eight thematic areas of Indigenous Knowledge.

Table 1: *Comparative Summary of Results*

Theme	Key Findings (from empirical studies)	Implications for Sustainable Development
1. IK Preservation and Transmission	IK is mainly transmitted orally through storytelling, rituals, and mentoring; vulnerable due to aging knowledge holders and modernization pressures (Dei, 2024; Prabha, 2021).	Urgent need for documentation, institutionalization, and integration into curricula and policies to safeguard continuity.
2. IK in Governance and Leadership	Systems like the Oromo Gada and Ubuntu emphasize participatory leadership, inclusivity, and conflict resolution (Shiferaw & Debela, 2024; Akpan et al., 2022).	Embedding Indigenous governance models can strengthen resilience, unity, and culturally sensitive leadership in both local and global contexts.
3. IK and Technology Integration	Barriers include cultural prejudices, digital divide, and limited Indigenous participation in ICT; successful cases like Kolyma Road show ecological knowledge enhances infrastructure (Herbert, 2024; Burnasheva et al., 2024).	Inclusive education and Indigenous participation in tech sectors are needed; IK can inform culturally appropriate ICT and resilient infrastructure design.
4. IK and Sustainability	Agricultural practices such as agroecology, seed saving, and mixed cropping enhance biodiversity and climate resilience (Shrestha et al., 2025; Tweheyo, 2018; Nelson, 2015).	Integrating IK into agricultural policies reduces dependency on external inputs and strengthens food security in vulnerable regions.
5. IK and Health Systems	Traditional healing complements modern medicine, improving accessibility and cultural relevance; TEK supports environmental health through water conservation and forestry (Wambebe, 2018; Yu & Mu, 2023).	Blending IK with modern healthcare and environmental policies fosters inclusive, culturally relevant, and climate-resilient systems.
6. IK and Cultural Preservation	Storytelling, rituals, and craftsmanship safeguard heritage; tourism rooted in IK generates livelihoods and revitalizes traditions (Arora, 2018; Shrestha et al., 2025; Burnasheva et al., 2024).	Embedding IK into cultural and tourism strategies promotes identity preservation, economic growth, and inclusive development.
7. IK in Environmental and Resource Management	Practices like ethnobotany, seed banks, and sacred groves conserve biodiversity; community-based forest management sustains ecosystems (Akalibey et al., 2024; Shrestha et al., 2019).	Indigenous worldviews emphasizing reciprocity and respect for nature provide strong foundations for sustainable resource governance.
8. Policy and Governance for IK Preservation	Policies such as UNDRIP recognize IK, but legal protections against misappropriation remain weak; risks of bio-piracy persist (Wambebe, 2018; Posey, 1996).	Stronger governance and legal safeguards are needed to protect IK, ensure equitable benefit-sharing, and uphold community sovereignty.

The findings of the study are highlighted as follows:

1. Managers need to document and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into training and policies to prevent its loss.
2. Indigenous leadership models like Gada and Ubuntu demonstrate participatory and inclusive governance strengthens organizations.

3. Managers should invest in inclusive education and representation to overcome obstacles related to embedding IK into technology.
4. Indigenous farming practices teach people involve in agriculture sector to design sustainable strategies in order to reduce reliance on external inputs.
5. Managers from health sectors can improve access and cultural relevance by blending Indigenous healing with modern healthcare systems.
6. Managers in tourism and cultural industries can use IK which helps to create sustainable models to generate income and preserve heritage.
7. Resource managers can apply Indigenous ecological practices and values of reciprocity to strengthen biodiversity and long-term sustainability.
8. Managers and policymakers must build stronger legal frameworks to protect Indigenous Knowledge and ensure fair benefit-sharing.

Discussion

Vulnerability of Oral Transmission and Need for Documentation

Managers need to document and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into training and policies to prevent its loss. This finding align with Dei (2024) finding that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) remains central to community resilience and sustainability, yet its reliance on oral traditions makes it highly vulnerable to loss. While Prabha (2021) notes that embedding IK into formal systems faces challenges due to weak institutional frameworks. However, Agrawal (2002) argues oral transmission without systematic documentation risks erasure under modernization pressures.

Governance and Leadership Models

Indigenous leadership models like Gada and Ubuntu demonstrate participatory and inclusive governance strengthens organizations. This finding is supported by Shiferaw & Debela (2024). Their findings show that Oromo Gada system demonstrates how community-based conflict resolution fosters unity and resilience (Shiferaw & Debela, 2024). Similarly, Ubuntu emphasizes collective responsibility and inclusivity, which Akpan et al. (2022) argue that they enhance corporate governance. Murithi (2006) also highlights Ubuntu's role in peacebuilding and reconciliation. Integrating these Indigenous approaches into modern governance structures ensures culturally sensitive decision-making and supports sustainable development worldwide.

Technology Integration and Infrastructure Development

Managers should invest in inclusive education and representation to overcome obstacles related to embedding IK into technology. Integrating IK into Information and Communication Technology (ICT) remains hindered by systemic barriers such as cultural prejudices and the digital divide. Herbert (2024) stresses the need for inclusive education and stronger Indigenous representation in technology fields. Dyson et al. (2007) argues that Indigenous participation in digital innovation ensure culturally appropriate solutions.

Agricultural Knowledge and Food Security

Indigenous farming practices teach people who are involved in agriculture sector to design sustainable strategies in order to reduce reliance on external inputs.

Indigenous agricultural knowledge offers practical solutions to modern challenges in farming and food security. Shrestha et al. (2025) highlight practices such as seed saving and mixed cropping, which enhance

biodiversity and climate resilience. Techniques like crop diversification and soil fertility management have also proven effective in rural communities (Tweheyo, 2018; Nelson, 2015). Altieri (2004) confirm that agro-ecological practices rooted in Indigenous traditions are vital for sustainable agriculture. Integrating these systems into agricultural policies reduces dependency on external inputs and empowers communities to adapt to environmental changes.

Healthcare Systems and Environmental Health

Managers from health sectors can improve access and cultural relevance by blending Indigenous healing with modern healthcare systems. This finding is supported by Wambebe (2018) conclusion that blending Indigenous healing with modern healthcare improves accessibility and cultural relevance, especially in remote areas.

Cultural Preservation and Tourism

Managers in tourism and cultural industries can use IK which helps to create sustainable models to generate income and preserve heritage. Practices like rituals, storytelling, and craftsmanship protect cultural heritage and build resilience against globalization (Arora, 2018; Shrestha et al., 2025). Tourism rooted in Indigenous traditions offers economic opportunities while revitalizing cultural identity. Burnasheva et al. (2024) show that sustainable tourism can balance development with heritage preservation. Smith (2009) also highlight how Indigenous tourism strengthens cultural pride and community cohesion.

Resource Management and Ecological Worldviews

Resource managers can apply Indigenous ecological practices and values of reciprocity to strengthen biodiversity and long-term sustainability. This finding align with the finding of Akalibey et al. (2024) Indigenous ecological practices such as seed banks, ethnobotany, and sacred groves are vital for biodiversity conservation. For resource managers, Indigenous worldviews that emphasize reciprocity and collective responsibility provide strong foundations for sustainable governance (Shrestha et al., 2019).

Policy and Governance for Knowledge Protection

Managers and policymakers must build stronger legal frameworks to protect Indigenous Knowledge and ensure fair benefit-sharing. This finding align with the finding of Wambebe (2018) global and national policies recognize the value of IK, stronger governance mechanisms are needed for protection and fair use. Their finding stresses the importance of legal safeguards against exploitation, including intellectual property rights and anti-bio-piracy laws. However, Posey (1996) argue the risks of bio-piracy and the need for equitable benefit-sharing.

In summary, Indigenous Knowledge provides managers with practical tools for sustainable leadership, natural, local and organizational resources management, healthcare, and tourism industry. Protection, preservation and incorporation of IK into organizational strategies and policies can strengthen flexibility, protect communities, and promote inclusive development.

Summary of Findings

This study emphasizes that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is an important resource for local, policy makers and managers across different fields. It highlights the need to document and incorporate IK into organizational policies, training, and leadership practices to prevent its loss. Indigenous governance models such as Gada and Ubuntu provide lessons in participatory and inclusive leadership. IK also offers practical

guidance for technology integration, agriculture, healthcare, tourism, and resource management. IK can strengthen organizational resilience, improve decision-making, and support sustainable development.

The findings also emphasize that managers and policymakers must create stronger legal frameworks to protect IK from exploitation and ensure fair benefit-sharing. Organizations can promote cultural preservation, economic growth, and environmental sustainability through integration of IK into management strategies. The study suggests that IK is not only cultural heritage but also a practical management tool that can guide organizations toward more ethical, inclusive, and sustainable practices.

Conclusion of the Study

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is not only a repository of cultural heritage but also a dynamic framework which enhance sustainability across diverse fields. IK provides context-specific, community-driven solutions that address pressing global challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, health inequities, and cultural erosion. Protection and preservation of IK through documentation and legal mechanisms ensures its continuity and equitable use which helps to position IK as a cornerstone for sustainable development.

IK provides insights for reshaping leadership and management practices. Models such as Ubuntu and Gada highlight inclusivity, participatory decision-making, and community engagement. These models can nurture ethical and resilient governance in both local and corporate contexts. Stronger commitments to innovation, social responsibility and sustainability are vital to ensure long-term benefits by addressing challenges related to incorporation of these systems into modern structures.

Finally, the study highlights the importance of formalizing and protecting IK through academic curricula, research, and policy frameworks. National and international instruments play a crucial role in safeguarding IK and preventing exploitation, particularly in areas like traditional medicine and biodiversity conservation. Incorporating IK into education, infrastructure, and agricultural development ensures achievement of dual goal - equitable benefit of indigenous communities and achievement of global sustainability goals.

Implications of the Study

Future research should focus on finding better ways to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into education, healthcare, agriculture, and technology by respecting community rights. Studies should also explore legal protections and digital tools to preserve IK which supports sustainability and flexibility without losing cultural authenticity.

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