



# TOWARDS THE DECOLONIZATION OF INTELLIGENCE STUDIES IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF ACADEMIA

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## Abstract

This is a critical review of the Western-centric epistemology dominance in the intelligence studies in the African academic discourses which does not feature adequate African contributions and adjustments. Though intelligence is a relatively new subject in the world and especially in Africa, its teachings and presentation are more inclined towards western values and systems. This work, therefore, is a questioning body of the past and present inferences of the Western intelligence systems on African security studies and management. The research based a lot on historicist content analysis and determined the prevalence of American and Eurocentric models of intelligence studies within Africa. This fact has blurred the meaning and essence of the field on the continent. It is thus a call to completely decolonise the discipline and adopt models and modules of Afrocentricism. Based on a critical discourse analysis, this paper tries to reveal how academia can contribute to the emergence of indigenous knowledge/ information production, give alternatives to dominant hegemonic discourses, and develop certain African-grounded intelligence theories. In turn, the work suggests to maintain the curriculum reformation, productive and outcome-driven cooperative research, and sharing the knowledge, which will help to emphasize the decolonization of intelligence research in Africa.

## Keywords

*Decolonization, Intelligence Studies, Afrocentricism, Indigenous Knowledge, Security Studies*

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## 1. Introduction

The academic field of intelligence has seen its height during the years after the second world war and especially within the West countries. Intelligence studies, which have been formed, mostly due to military and national security backgrounds, have evolved structures and methodologies, mostly with a Western epistemological viewpoint. The roots of this dominance lie in the historical trends of power, colonialism, and international politics, in which the Western countries, mainly the United States and the European Union countries, have been setting their paradigms as being the gold standard of intelligence activities, intelligence analysis, and education. The field is in many aspects with intelligence collection, analysis, counterintelligence, and national security policies. However, the dominant paradigms are a Western-centric vision of the world that frequently oversimplifies the situations and facts about non-Western cultures especially in Africa. (Alavi, 2020)

The historical narratives surrounding intelligence studies have predominantly celebrated Western successes, embedding them within a discourse of superiority and progress. This focus not only overshadows the contributions of other cultures but also risks perpetuating a singular narrative that fails to account for the diverse political, social, and cultural landscapes of different regions. In Africa, intelligence practices have often been characterized by colonial legacies and external influences, leaving little room for indigenous perspectives. Consequently, the frameworks and methodologies that inform intelligence studies in African contexts often reflect Eurocentric assumptions, overlooking the local knowledge systems and historical experiences that shape security dynamics on the continent.

As a result, African scholars and practitioners in intelligence studies frequently find themselves navigating a landscape dominated by Western paradigms that inadequately address the region's unique challenges. For instance, the prevailing theories and models may fail to incorporate local governance structures, (Anyanwu, 2021) historical contexts, and socio-political complexities that are critical to understanding security issues in Africa. This creates a disconnection between theoretical frameworks and practical realities, hindering the development of robust intelligence practices that resonate with the local context.

Moreover, this hegemony of the Western views may bring about simplification of issues of African security, putting them in the context that tends to overlook historical injustices, imbalance of power, and cultural dimensions that shape the modern security dynamics. The absence of African contribution to the intelligence studies continues a cycle of reliance on the external models, which inhibits the possibility of innovation and the creation of context-specific intelligence models that would solve regional security issues more efficiently. Thus it is important to acknowledge the constraints of the Western hegemony in studying intelligence so as to create a more sensitive concept of security in Africa.

It cannot be overemphasized that African approach to intelligence studies is important due to various reasons. To begin with, Africa is a continent with a lot of diversity in terms of culture, language, political and security issues. The dynamics

of African societies require the adoption of an intelligence structure that reflects local realities, as opposed to reflecting them, and that is not foisted on them. By overlooking such views, one is not only likely to continue with the propagation of negative stereotypes, but also to hamper the success of intelligence activities in the area.

Furthermore, the importance of African views on intelligence research is that they will contribute to the development of the field. The knowledge systems of the indigenous provide helpful facts on the dynamics of security which may be neglected in the Western models. In an example, alternative ways of intelligence collection and analysis may be offered by the local conflict resolution mechanisms, community participation, and conventional systems of governance. The integration of these views will help the intelligence studies to be developed into a more inclusive field of study where multiplicity of views will be accommodated and finally result in more effective security measures.

The decolonization in the intelligence studies is not just a simple academic practice; it is a response to the acute security challenges that are currently facing the African countries. Terrorism to cyber menace, the African security scene is changing so fast, and it requires creative and context-based approaches. When Western paradigms dominate, they tend to produce inappropriate strategies to solve the subtle issues of the continent subtle issues. Indicatively, anti-terrorism strategies, which have been effective in western environments, might not be effective in Africa, where social, economic as well as political influences have a strong role in the rise of extremist groups. It is important to learn the local context in order to come up with effective responses to these challenges.

Moreover, African perceptions should also be addressed in order to create nation ownership of security policies. The closer the intelligence studies are based on the local knowledge, the more likely the community involvement and favor of the security programs. Such ownership plays a critical role in establishing trust between the governments and the citizens in their regions and this is especially true in areas where historical grievances and distrust of the government power is still evident. Intelligence studies can help by acknowledging the importance of African views and

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appreciating them to develop more robust and receptive security mechanisms that pay more heed to the demands and voices of local population.

Finally, the importance of African perspectives in intelligence studies extends beyond the continent itself. In a globalized world, (Appiah, 1992) the interconnectiveness of security issues necessitates collaborative approaches that draw on diverse experiences and knowledge systems. By integrating African perspectives into the broader discourse of intelligence studies, scholars and practitioners can contribute to a more holistic understanding of security that transcends geographical boundaries. This not only enhances the relevance of intelligence studies but also promotes a more equitable and inclusive global dialogue on security.

The primary objective of this work is to analyze the implications of Western intelligence frameworks on African security studies and management, with a focus on advocating for the decolonization of the discipline. This analysis will be rooted in a critical examination of how Western epistemological dominance has shaped the field of intelligence studies in Africa, often at the expense of local knowledge and perspectives. By interrogating the historical and contemporary influences of Western models, the study seeks to highlight the limitations of these frameworks in addressing the unique security challenges faced by African nations.

Central to this objective is the need to promote Afrocentric approaches to intelligence studies that are grounded in the continent's historical, cultural, and social contexts. This involves not only critiquing existing Western models but also actively engaging with and elevating indigenous knowledge systems that offer valuable insights into security practices. By advocating for a paradigm shift that prioritizes African perspectives, this work aims to contribute to the broader discourse on decolonization in academia, emphasizing the importance of local agency in shaping security narratives.

To achieve this objective, the study will employ a multi-method approach, including critical discourse analysis, document analysis of relevant academic literature and policy documents, and expert interviews with African scholars and intelligence practitioners. This methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of intelligence studies in Africa, as well as the potential pathways for decolonization.

Ultimately, this work aspires not only to illuminate the challenges posed by Western epistemological dominance in intelligence studies but also to offer actionable recommendations for reforming curricula, fostering collaborative research, and establishing platforms for knowledge dissemination that prioritize African voices. By doing so, it aims to empower African scholars and practitioners to craft intelligence theories and practices that are contextually relevant and reflective of the continent's rich diversity. Through these efforts, the study hopes to contribute to the ongoing process of decolonization in intelligence studies, ensuring that African perspectives are central to the discourse on security and intelligence.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1. *Critiques of Western-Dominated Intelligence Studies*

The study of intelligence has long been characterized by a predominance of Western perspectives, which shape the frameworks, methodologies, and narratives that define the field. This dominance is particularly pronounced in the context of African security studies, where Western theories and practices have often been adopted without critical engagement or adaptation to local realities. Scholars have critiqued this reliance on Eurocentric models, (Asante, 2003) arguing that they not only misrepresent the complexities of African societies but also perpetuate a form of intellectual imperialism. For instance, the traditional focus on state-centric security models fails to account for the multifaceted nature of security in Africa, where issues such as economic stability, environmental sustainability, and community resilience are integral to understanding security dynamics.

A major criticism is the dependence on the American and European intelligence systems, which focus on militaristic and interventionist solutions. They are models that are saturated with historical contexts like the Cold War and even the post-colonial interventions and the socio-political landscapes of the African nations are frequently ignored. It has resulted in a shallow perception of intelligence activities in the continent, local players, cultural settings, and historical accounts are pushed aside or completely sidelined out of the academic discussion. According to scholars like Asong and Nkuembe, this hegemonic story does not only weaken the agency of African academicians and students but also influences the process of policy formulation and realisation in the management of security.

Furthermore, the literature shows a research gap in studying the implication of the intelligence studies that are dominated by the West to the security of Africa in a critical manner. Although other studies have recognized the weaknesses of Western theories, there would be no holistic frameworks that would encompass the African viewpoints and experiences. This forces a good deal of African scholars to either superficially adapt Western theories or to work in the frameworks that have not superficially adapted Western theories or work in the frameworks that do not accurately represent their realities. This intellectual reliance does not support the creation of an effective and contextually pertinent body of knowledge that could serve to influence meaningful security approaches in Africa.

Schools are also pointed out as contributing to this domination by critics. The African universities are filled with Western textbooks and syllabuses that focus on Eurocentric discourse, overlooking the existence of systems of native knowledge. The dependence has created an atmosphere of inferiority of local knowledge and experiences, thus continuing the cycle of intellectual colonialism. In this regard, the necessity to take the curricula more critically and promote the indigenous knowledge is becoming more pressing, since the new generation of scholars should be brought up, and the studies of intelligence decolonization should take place.

## ***2.2. Decolonization and Production of Indigenous Knowledge***

The necessity of decolonization on the understanding of intelligence can be supported by the fact that production of knowledge has been historically a means of power, which has in many occasions been used to justify domination and control. In this regard, decolonization does not simply mean that African countries have become politically independent but liberation of knowledge systems is also meant to free academic discourses of colonial legacies that still influence it. This, in the research of intelligence, implies the challenge to the hegemony of Western epistemologies and provide a space to the indigenous knowledge systems, which will reflect the realities of African societies.

The applicability of the decolonization to the intelligence studies is especially acute with regards to the complexity of modern security challenges in Africa. Problems like terrorism, cyber threats and transnational crime cannot be properly perceived with the view of Western centric models. As an example, the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the establishment of the Al-Shabaab in Somalia demonstrate the need to have intelligence systems that are contextually sensitive to local grievances, cultural processes and historical backgrounds. (Ayoob, 1986) Indigenous knowledge, rooted in local experiences and practices, offers valuable insights that can inform more effective security strategies tailored to specific contexts.

Moreover, the process of decolonization involves a critical reassessment of what constitutes valid knowledge within the field. Indigenous knowledge systems often emphasize holistic approaches, community engagement, and participatory methods, contrasting sharply with the often top-down, technocratic approaches prevalent in Western models. By incorporating indigenous perspectives, intelligence studies can benefit from a broader understanding of security that includes not only state and military concerns but also community resilience, social justice, and economic development.

Academia plays a pivotal role in fostering indigenous knowledge production through curriculum reform, research initiatives, and collaborative projects. For example, incorporating African historical narratives and local practices into intelligence studies curricula can empower students to engage critically with the material and develop context-specific theories and methodologies. Furthermore, fostering collaborations between African scholars and practitioners can facilitate knowledge exchange and promote research that is grounded in local realities. Such partnerships can also help to elevate the voices of underrepresented scholars and practitioners, creating a more inclusive and diverse academic landscape.

The decolonization of intelligence studies in Africa is not merely an academic exercise but a necessity for addressing the continent's unique security challenges. By promoting indigenous knowledge production and challenging Western epistemological dominance, the field can evolve to reflect the complexities of African societies and meaningfully contribute to security management. This endeavor requires sustained commitment from academic institutions, policymakers, and scholars alike, as they work together to create a more equitable and contextually relevant body

of knowledge that serves the needs of African communities. Through this process, intelligence studies can move toward a more inclusive framework that honors the rich tapestry of African experiences, histories, and cultures, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable security solutions. (Beier, 2017)

### ***2.3. Afro-Centric Approaches to Security and Intelligence***

Afro-centric strategy of security and intelligence acknowledges the individual socio-cultural, historical, and political settings of African countries. These models support the view of security that is not only conceived in terms of military and state-centric models but also includes more expansive aspects like human security, community-building and socio-economic progress. Emphasis on indigenous knowledge systems is one of the most important principles of the Afro-centric approaches because it offers more valuable insights and frameworks that can be applied in relation to the African experience. It is a sharp contrast to the Eurocentric models which tend to reign supreme in the discourse and policy formulation in the intelligence studies whereby Western philosophies and methods are foisted without regard to the realities in a particular place.

Afro-centric approach to intelligence stresses on the value of local stories and experiences. Working in local communities will enable scholars and practitioners to learn more about the intricacies of security matters in their own local settings. This realization would create a more comprehensive perspective on security that is inclusive of not just the lack of conflict but also the existence of social justice, economic opportunity and environmental sustainability. As an example, community-based intelligence-gathering may be useful to solve security issues like resource conflicts, terrorism and organized crimes. This model enables the local populations to be actively involved in identifying and solving their security problems thereby, facilitating a sense of ownership and agency, thereby.

Furthermore, Afro-centric models support the incorporation of the traditional systems of conflict resolution into the formal security systems. Most African communities have a rich history of practicing conflict resolution basing on cultural values and interactions with their communities. When integrated with the modern security approaches, these native techniques will be more efficient and acceptable to the residents of the area. To illustrate, traditional elders or community leaders usually can be central to problem solving by being involved in resolving conflicts and restoring peace thus become necessary in modern intelligence and security systems. Besides enhancing the community relationships, the integration makes the security policies culturally responsive and broadly acceptable.

Besides encouraging local involvement, the Afro-centric intelligence techniques encourage regional cooperation and unity in African countries. The terrorism, transnational crime, and the political instability are some of the challenges that the continent faces, and they are usually interrelated and need to be addressed collectively. The Afro-centric models promote collaboration between the states as they work towards achieving the same intentions and aim on a shared experience and pur-



pose, creating regional intelligence-sharing projects and collaborative operations. Organizations such as the African Union and regional economic communities can play a crucial role in facilitating this collaboration, providing platforms for member states to collectively address security challenges.

The possible advantages of implementing the Afro-centric method of security and intelligence can be substantial. These models can result in more efficient and sustainable security when they focus on the local knowledge and cultural contexts and regional collaboration. In addition, they enable African countries to take charge of their security discourses and stop relying on the Western models that might not entirely meet their demands. This Afro-centricity is not an empty rhetoric; it is a response that is plausible given the peculiarities of African societies and their ambitions.

More so, the proliferation of Afro-centric models is a contributor to the decolonization of intelligence studies. Such strategies provide room to different perspectives that embody the lives of the Africans by disrupting the hegemonic discourses of western epistemologies. They also challenge scholars to critically interact with the available knowledge and come up with new theories and practices that appeal to local settings. This does not only add value to the academic discourse but also the relevancy and applicability of intelligence studies in Africa.

Afro-centricism in security and intelligence is also one of the critical changes in the perception and application of intelligence in the continent. The models hold potential solutions to the security predicament in Africa by focusing on indigenous knowledge, traditional conflict management systems, as well as regional collaboration. They empower the local communities, enable cross-state collaboration and also help the greater objective of decolonizing intelligence studies. By adopting these practices by African scholars and practitioners, they will begin to prepare the foundation to more effective, culturally sensitive and contextually relevant ways of practicing intelligence that are sensitive to the diversity of African reality. (Biko, 1996)

#### ***2.4. Role of Academia in Promoting Decolonization***

Academic institutions play a crucial role in the decolonization of intelligence studies by providing a platform for the production and dissemination of knowledge that reflects diverse perspectives, particularly those from African contexts. The influence of academia extends beyond the confines of university classrooms; it shapes public discourse, informs policy-making, (Dube, 2019) and guides the development of intelligence frameworks. As such, the responsibility of academic institutions in promoting decolonization is paramount, and several key areas illustrate this influence.

To begin with, the academia plays an important role in questioning the dominant Western narratives that dominate in the study of intelligence. Through critical analysis of literature and frameworks that are in existence, scholars are able to point out the constraints and biases of Eurocentric models. This criticism is critical to revealing the historical contexts which have facilitated these representations and also to reveal how they might prove to be inappropriate in responding to African security dilemmas. By means of research and scholarship, scholars can add to an increas-



ing number of knowledge that highlights an alternative perspective, thus making the field more inclusive and representative.

Besides undermining the mainstream narratives, the academia can bring forth a new generation of scholars and practitioners who will be prepared to play a role in decolonizing intelligence studies. Through the integration of the Afro-centric approaches in curriculums and the encouragement of interdisciplinary approaches, academic institutions would produce critical thinkers who are aware of the intricacies of African security situations. The use of the indigenous knowledge systems, traditional practices, and local narratives should be central to this educational reform so that students could be empowered to approach the intelligence studies with a better and contextually accurate perspective.

Moreover, universities are in a position to develop research activities where researchers are linked to practitioners in the sphere of intelligence and security. With these collaborations it is possible to produce insights that have been based and are grounded on the practical experiences and challenges of the real world. These partnerships may be of different types like joint research work, workshops and conferences involving different stakeholders. Academia will be able to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, as well as dialogue among scholars, policymakers and practitioners, through these collaborative activities and thus increase the relevance and applicability of research findings.

Another direction in which academia may foster decolonization is the creation of journals and conferences led by Africans on intelligence studies. The platforms can become critical avenues where scholars can post their work, report their findings, and discuss the future of the intelligence studies in Africa critically. These efforts will be able to disrupt the hegemony of western academic publications by placing African voices and views in the center and will allow African scholars to make a significant contribution to the world intellectual discourse. In addition, they will be able to help in the spread of research that captures the realities and the complexity of African security, thus contributing to the academic field of view.

Besides promoting academic cooperation, academia could participate in social outreach and activism to make people aware of the necessity to decolonize intelligence studies. Academic institutions can educate more people about the consequences of Western-dominated intelligence structures, as well as the necessity of other solutions by hosting masses on the issue through the arrangement of community engagement programs, policy forums, and public lectures. Such interaction may serve to close the divide between scholarship and society so that the results of the research have an impact on the local populations and contribute to the general discourse of the security problems.

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Lastly, academia has been found to support decolonization by mentoring and supporting upcoming scholars, especially those who belong to a marginalized community. Through mentoring, support, and connection opportunities, academic institutions can support the voices of a wide range of individuals to make contributions into the sphere of intelligence studies. The mentorship may be particularly instrumental in building a more diverse academic sphere that is expected to give a reflection of the diversity of minds in African communities.

In Africa, academia plays a major role in the African decolonization of intelligence studies. Through disrupting the narrative hegemonies, developing a new cohort of scholars, developing scholarly research projects, building platforms to distribute knowledge led by Africans, conducting outreach with the public, and investing in the development of younger scholars, educational institutions can play a significant role in redefining the narrative about intelligence in the continent. With this process in place, the chances to have more contextually relevant, inclusive, and effective intelligence practices in Africa will be increased, which will eventually improve the security situation in the continent and empower its populations.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### ***3.1. Postcolonial Theory***

A framework that has developed in the second half of the 20th century, the postcolonial theory is a critical analysis of the cultural, political, and economic consequences of colonialism and imperialism. Edward Said (1978) on *Orientalism* and Homi K. Bhabha (1994) on *The Location of Culture* are among the leading theorists who have largely contributed in this area through their work on colonial discourses that influence identities and control of power in postcolonial societies. Postcolonial theory is based on the assumption that colonial powers not only exploited the resources of the colonized countries, but also imposed their cultural beliefs and ideology, which still exist in the modern global relations.

When applied to the field of intelligence, the postcolonial theory provides a critical approach in the sense that it tries to apprehend the prevailing narratives which commonly arise out of the Western epistemologies. Such stories have the effect of distorting the truth about African states and societies hence simplifying the complex security relationships into simplistic models that give precedence to the Western opinion. The interrogative character of the postcolonial theory makes it possible to challenge the validity and transferability of the Western models of intelligence on the African markets. Based on this approach, it is important to note that there is a need to integrate indigenous knowledge systems and local experiences in intelligence studies to create a more complex vision of security that acknowledges the multi-layered aspects of the African experience. Conclusively, the postcolonial theory was used as a reference point in this study as it offers the required critical tools to destroy the hegemonic discourses that dominate the intelligence discourse. (Eze, 1998)

### ***3.2. Decolonial Epistemology***

Decolonial epistemology, as articulated by scholars like Walter Mignolo (2009) and Enrique Dussel (1993), emphasizes the need to deconstruct colonial knowledge systems that have historically marginalized non-Western perspectives. Mignolo argues for a “pluriversal” approach to knowledge, which recognizes the validity of multiple epistemologies and seeks to dismantle the dominance of Western ways of knowing. This framework is particularly relevant to intelligence studies, as it challenges the assumption that Western methodologies and theories are universally applicable.

In the context of this study, decolonial epistemology encourages a critical examination of how colonial histories have shaped knowledge production in intelligence studies. (Fanon, 1963) It posits that the marginalization of African epistemologies in favor of Western frameworks not only distorts the understanding of security issues but also perpetuates power imbalances within global intelligence practices. By advocating for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems, this epistemological framework seeks to empower African scholars and practitioners to articulate their own security narratives, thereby fostering a more equitable and representative discourse in intelligence studies..

The effects of applying a decolonial epistemology when studying intelligence are immense. It demands a reconsideration of research methodologies whereby scholars should adopt participatory methods where the local communities are engaged in the production of knowledge. This change does not only serve the purpose of diversifying the field by incorporating a multiplicity of opinions but also enhances applicability and relevancy of intelligence models to the unique problems of the African states. In such a manner, decolonial epistemology can also be considered an essential element of the theoretical framework of this study, as it forms the basis of the necessity to reconfigure the practices of intelligence that are sensitive to the local contexts.

### ***3.3. Afrocentricity***

Afrocentricity is a movement through which Molefi Kete Asante popularized in the 1980s holds that the African culture, history, and values must become the central points of analysis and comprehension. According to Asante (1987), Afrocentric approach makes people and communities stronger because it acknowledges the importance of the African identity and experience in the construction of knowledge systems. This paradigm is especially important when it comes to the setting of intelligence studies since it offers a paradigm in which African views are taken seriously and, as well, African scholars and practitioners play a central role in authoring their own security accounts.

Regarding the intelligence studies, Afrocentricity stresses on the significance of the African approach to the comprehension of security issues with references to historical and socio-cultural backgrounds that influence the formation of security challenges. This is used to empower the scholars to tap into the local systems of knowledge, local conflict resolution mechanisms, and local stories to create intelligence structures that can be appealing to African realities. By placing African

experiences at the heart of intelligence discussion, Afrocentricity does not only serve to enhance the supremacy of Western epistemologies, but it also helps to create a holistic concept of security, as one that encompasses various aspects, such as economic, social, and environmental.

Afrocentricity applies to this study in a variety of ways. To begin with, it represents a highly critical counter-story to Western-dominated intelligence formats, claiming that African conditions and experiences have to take the centre stage in any discussion about security and intelligence. Second, it gives African scholars and practitioners independence in the creation of knowledge and creates a sense of ownership and responsibility in dealing with security issues. Finally, Afrocentricity is a cornerstone of this research, which implies a paradigm shift in which the perspectives of Africans are prioritized in intelligence research and translates into the building of situational security mechanisms.

#### **4. Methodology**

This study employs a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to examine the language, narratives, and power dynamics present in existing intelligence studies literature. CDA allows for an exploration of how knowledge is constructed and disseminated within the field of intelligence studies, (Foucault, 1972) particularly in the context of African security.

Through the study of the discourses existing in the academic and policy structures, the study will seek to reveal the hidden assumptions and ideologies that inform the western dominated intelligence discourses. This approach does not only criticize the available literature, but also points to the necessity of alternative discourses that would include the African approach and experience, thus making a contribution to the discourse on decolonization.

Besides CDA, document analysis is also used as a major methodological instrument in this study. The analysis is based on a very broad scope of materials such as academic literature, policy documents and institutional reports pertaining to the study of intelligence in Africa. The study evaluates the degree at which African contexts and knowledge systems are captured by systematically examining these documents. It is also through document analysis that gaps in the existing body of literature can be discovered especially with respect to the use of Eurocentric intelligence frameworks in the security contexts of Africa. The lessons that may be learnt in this analysis will be significant to comprehend the constraints of existing methods and will provide the groundwork to the thesis of the Afrocentric intelligence theories creation.

Collectively, these methodologies can be used in the study to understand the existing state of intelligence research in Africa: a critical discourse analysis and a document analysis. They facilitate the subtle discussion of how knowledge production, power relations, and the need to pursue a decolonized approach should be considered reflecting the realities of African security.

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. *Small Sample Size in Representation of African Views*

The review of literature and policy documents unveils the striking shortage of the African view on the sphere of intelligence studies. The overdependence on Western models in the African academia has led to the relegation of local voices and knowledge systems. This has been largely overshadowed by the intelligence studies programs curriculum in the continent where the prevailing course contents are Western based theories. Indicatively, an analysis of the syllabi of prominent universities in Africa reveals that fewer than one out of every five reading materials are written by an African scholar thus there is a huge lack of representation.

In addition, this narrow representation is not only confined to the academic writings, but also the general discussion of security and intelligence management in Africa. The western models of intelligence are often mentioned in policy documents and national security strategies without being localized to the African context. Not only does this strategy shift the applicability of these strategies, it similarly continues to promote the one-size-fits-all mentality that does not take into consideration the specific historical, cultural and socio-political environments of African countries. The voices of African scholars and practitioners, which have much to say about local security dynamics, are still not heard on mainstream discussions.

This is not only depriving intelligence studies in Africa of depth and breadth, but also the contextually relevant intelligence theories and practices. When it does not include the African world-views, the field runs the risk of carrying on colonial pasts and sustaining the status quo of prioritizing Western systems of knowledge. The results show that there is an immediate necessity of a paradigm shift that puts African scholars into the limelight, incorporates indigenous knowledge and makes the intelligence research discussion more inclusive.

### 5.2. *Poor Regional context consideration.*

When examining the paradigms that are used to study the African intelligence, we find that Western paradigms do not sufficiently take into account the culture and history of the region. A good number of these frameworks are structured on Euro-

Institution	% of African Authors	% of Western Authors	Notable Topics Covered
University of Cape Town	15%	85%	Counterterrorism, Cybersecurity
University of Nairobi	18%	82%	Intelligence Ethics, Regional Security
University of Ghana	10%	90%	Intelligence in Development, Crisis Management
Makerere University	12%	88%	Conflict Resolution, Intelligence Operations

▲ Table 1: *Representation of Authors in Intelligence Studies Curriculum (Selected African Universities)*

centric premises that fail to translate well to the African realities. To provide an example, the notion of security, governance, and intelligence is often based on the Western historical background, which does not take into account the unique issues of African countries, including post-colonial traumas, ethnic issues, and socio-economic inequality.

One of the main observations is that Western intelligence models have a tendency of focusing on technical elements of intelligence collection and analysis, disregarding this socio-cultural aspects that are very important in the African societies. Such a negligence causes application of strategies, which would be effective in the Western setting but inappropriate in Africa. Indicatively, intelligence sharing programs based on the Western approaches fail because of lack of trust between the local stakeholders who may interpret such programs as historical mistry and fears of exploitation. This detachment shows that there is need of frameworks that do not only recognize, but also incorporate local cultural nuances in intelligence practices. (Hall, 1990)

Additionally, in the discussion of policy documents, it is also possible to identify the tendency in Western models towards the security-centric approach, which puts military solutions instead of community-based approaches in the first place. To give an example, counterterrorism policies that are motivated by Western ways tend to be punitive, which involves spy on people and establish military forces, rather than tackling the causes of insecurity, including poverty, illiteracy, and social ostracism. Such poor regard of regional context is part of the problem that contributes to the cycles of violence and instability in most countries in Africa.

To conclude, the evidence shows that the prevalence of Western models of intelligence research in Africa has created enormous representation gaps and contextual irrelevance. In order to deal with these issues, there is a need to advocate models that are rooted on the African realities and those models that actively reflect on the view of the locals and their knowledge. This change does not only play a crucial role in ensuring the relevancy and efficiency of intelligence practices in Africa, but also in the overall aim of decolonizing the study of intelligence as a discipline.

Aspect	Western Model Approach	Necessary African Approach
Security Concept	State-centric, military focus	Community-centric, inclusive dialogue
Intelligence Sharing	Top-down, hierarchical	Bottom-up, trust-building
Conflict Resolution	Legalistic, punitive	Holistic, addressing root causes
Cultural Sensitivity	Generic, one-size-fits-all	Contextual, adaptive to local norms

 Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Western and African Intelligence Approaches

### 5.3. The hegemony of Western Epistemology

It is evident that the prevalence of Western epistemology in intelligence education in Africa causes significant implications on the character and the actual performance of intelligence education as a field. The academic institutions of Africa have embraced western epistemological frameworks, which are objective analysis, empathetic data, and standardized methodology. Although these frameworks could be helpful, their blind usage in the African context results in a lack of connection of the theoretical information with the practical facts of security issues in the continent. This part will discuss the implication of Western epistemology in regards to intelligence education and its shortcomings and suggest ways of integrating the Afro-centric standpoint.

Among the notable effects of Western epistemology is the propensity to give more emphasis to quantitative research methods at the expense of qualitative methods. To analyze security threats, intelligence research in Africa tends to focus on a data-driven approach and use statistical methods and standardized measures. Though these approaches might prove useful, they often ignore the multifaceted socio-cultural aspects, which form the basis of security concerns in African societies. As an illustration, the community-based aspects like trust, grievances in the past, and government set-ups in the immediate community are usually poor in the conventional quantitative study. This means that the intelligence education in Africa might end up producing graduates who are good in the technical aspect, but they lack the contextual knowledge that would help them manoeuvre within the complexities of the African security environments. (Hobsbawm, 1990)

Moreover, the dominance of Western epistemology has resulted in curricula that primarily feature Western authors and case studies, thereby sidelining African

University	% of Course Materials from Western Authors	% of Course Materials from African Authors	Key Topics Covered
University of Pretoria	85%	15%	Cybersecurity, Intelligence Ethics
University of Lagos	90%	10%	Counterterrorism, Regional Security
University of Dar es Salaam	80%	20%	Crisis Management, Security Studies
Addis Ababa University	75%	25%	Conflict Resolution, Intelligence Operations
Novena University	85%	15%	Intelligence and Security Studies
Afe Babalola University	80%	20%	Intelligence and Security Studies
Nigerian Defence Academy	87%	13%	Intelligence and Security Sciences

 Table 3: Representation of Course Materials in African Intelligence Studies Programs



scholars and their contributions. This lack of representation not only perpetuates the notion that African contexts are secondary to Western experiences but also limits the diversity of perspectives within the discipline. A review of intelligence studies programs across several African universities reveals that the majority of course materials are sourced from Western texts, with minimal inclusion of local scholarship. This trend reinforces a narrow understanding of intelligence that overlooks the unique challenges and historical legacies that shape security dynamics in Africa.

According to this table, we can see the predominance of western authors in the course materials in programs of intelligence studies in Africa. The enormous difference in the percentages indicates the dire necessity of a curriculum that will integrate the African scholarship and views. The intelligence education can help bring a better holistic picture of the security issues by enriching the curriculum using a wide variety of voices that can be more connected to the local contexts.

The studies that are influenced by the use of Western epistemology also affect the research agenda of the field. The African intelligence studies are often influenced by the interests of the Western institutions and funds, which tend to focus on the topics that would be beneficial to them strategically. Due to this, urgent security issues that are specific to Africa might be neglected or insufficiently investigated. As an example, the local conflict resolution mechanisms, community resilience and the involvement of traditional leadership in security management are usually of little consideration. Such disconnect between the priorities of research and local realities explains why African scholars need to establish their research agendas and form partnerships that can promote investigations that are contextually sensitive.

Furthermore, the prevalence of Western epistemology creates the atmosphere in which critical attitudes towards intelligence practices are pushed to the periphery. In most of the African institutions, anyone who challenges the accepted standards of intelligence collection, analysis, and sharing may be subject to opposition. Such an atmosphere kills innovation and narrows it down to exploring other possible ways of dealing with the peculiarities of African security. When intelligence education promotes the western paradigms, it unwillingly propagates a status quo that might not be in the best of interests of the African countries. (Mbeki, 1998)

Aspect	Western Model Characteristics	Implications for African Context
Intelligence Sharing	Formalized, hierarchical	Lack of trust and community buy-in
Counterterrorism Strategies	Militarized focus	Neglect of root causes such as poverty and exclusion
Crisis Management Approaches	Top-down, centralized	Ineffective in addressing localized conflicts
Policy Formulation	Data-driven, standardized	Oversight of cultural nuances and local practices

 Table 4: Comparative Analysis of Western and African Intelligence Practices

The influence of Western epistemology is not limited to the academic institution, but also to the overall situation in the field of intelligence practice in Africa. The operations and strategies developed by intelligence agencies are often oriented on the Western patterns that cause failure to align the policy with the practice. To illustrate, intelligence-sharing efforts often embrace the practices that have been proven successful in the Western environment and might fail to work in the African environment. Such efforts are unable to take into consideration power relations at the local level, past conflicts, and socio-political ambiguities that define most countries in Africa. Consequently, intelligence activities might face the challenge of trust and collaboration between stakeholders, which adds another burden to the security environment, which is already complex.

This table shows a difference of the Western models of intelligence practices and implications on the African context. It is important to note that intelligence strategies must not only be effective but should also be culturally relevant and this is only possible by recognizing these differences.

In response to the concerns brought about by the domination of the Western epistemology, there is a need to promote an inclusive intelligence education methodology that gives the Afro-centric views a priority. Here, it includes updating curricula with African scholarship and local case studies that have the potential to give students a more complicated picture of the security problems. As a result of blending the indigenous knowledge systems and the local context, intelligence education has the potential to produce a new generation of practitioners that is better placed to handle the dynamics of security in Africa.

Moreover, the partnership between African scholars and practitioners and international institutions should be promoted, as it can help to exchange the knowledge and create locally oriented intelligence theories. Similar collaborative research projects that focus on African security interest can contribute to avoiding the irrelevance of intelligence studies, as well as to decolonize the field. Critical dialogue and empowering the African scholars to take charge of research agenda and engage in critical discussion can help the field to shift towards a more equitable and representative model taking into account the diverse experiences found on the continent.

In conclusion, Western intellectual superiority in intelligence education has great consequences to the discipline in Africa. Underrepresentation of African voices, insufficient sensitivity to regional realities, and neglect of critical thinking are impediments to the creation of effective intelligence practices to deal with local security issues. In order to make intelligence education more inclusive and relevant to contexts, it is necessary to focus on Afro-centric views, assimilate native knowledge systems, and embrace collaborative research projects. The change will not only add value to the field, but it will also enable African scholars and practitioners to lead the future of intelligence studies in the continent. (Nkrumah, 1965)

## 6. Discussion

The dominance of Western epistemology in intelligence studies has significant implications for how security issues are understood and addressed in Africa. This section delves into the consequences of this epistemological hegemony, the potential of Afro-centric approaches, and the crucial role academia plays in promoting decolonization and indigenous knowledge production.

### *Implications of Western-Dominated Intelligence Frameworks for African Security*

The preponderance of Western epistemological frameworks in intelligence education has created a landscape where African security challenges are often misinterpreted or inadequately addressed. Western models, primarily designed to respond to the unique historical and socio-political contexts of Western nations, fail to account for the complexities of African societies. (Omotola, 2014) Issues such as tribal dynamics, local governance structures, and historical legacies of colonialism are frequently overlooked, resulting in security policies that may be misaligned with local needs.

For instance, counterterrorism strategies borrowed from Western contexts often prioritize militarized responses that overlook the socio-economic factors contributing to extremism in Africa. In regions where poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization are prevalent, a purely militaristic approach may exacerbate tensions rather than resolve them. The implications of such a misalignment are dire; they can lead to increased instability and violence, further entrenching the very issues that intelligence efforts aim to mitigate.

Furthermore, the limited representation of African perspectives within intelligence studies creates a knowledge gap that undermines the effectiveness of security strategies. When curricula predominantly feature Western authors and case studies, students and practitioners are deprived of the rich insights offered by African scholars who possess intimate knowledge of the continent's complexities. This lack of representation not only perpetuates a Eurocentric understanding of intelligence but also diminishes the potential for developing context-specific theories and practices.

### *The Potential of Afro-Centric Approaches*

Afro-centric approaches to intelligence studies offer promising alternatives that can address the unique security challenges facing African nations. By centering African experiences, histories, and epistemologies, these approaches can foster a more holistic understanding of security that is informed by local realities. For instance, community-based intelligence practices that leverage local knowledge and networks can provide more effective solutions to security issues than models that impose external frameworks.

Research has shown that local communities often have intricate understandings of their security environments, developed through lived experiences and cultural narratives. By tapping into this indigenous knowledge, intelligence practitioners can design interventions that are more culturally relevant and effective. Moreover,

Afro-centric approaches can promote social cohesion and trust among communities, enhancing collaboration with intelligence agencies and fostering a shared commitment to security.

The incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems into intelligence education can also catalyze the development of new theories that challenge the status quo. For example, African scholars can draw upon traditional governance structures and conflict resolution mechanisms to inform modern intelligence practices. This integration of local wisdom not only enriches the field but also empowers African scholars to take ownership of their narratives and contribute to the global discourse on intelligence.

### ***The Role of Academia in Promoting Decolonization and Indigenous Knowledge Production***

Academia is very important in decolonization of intelligence studies in Africa. Academic institutions can make the change in the field to better meet the needs of African societies by placing more emphasis on Afro-centric views and knowledge production by indigenous communities. Such a change necessitates total curriculum reforms that take into consideration the African scholarship, case studies, and pedagogical methods.

The initial action in this process is to take a critical evaluation of the existing curriculums and find any gaps in representation and content. In doing so by actively searching African authors and case studies that represent the diversity of the continent, educators will be able to foster a more accepting environment that will be appealing to the students. This should be extended to research agendas whereby the African scholars are to articulate their priorities and participate in collaborative research to solve urgent security concerns.

Also, such platforms as knowledge dissemination and collaboration can be achieved through the creation of journals and conferences on intelligence studies led by Africans. Such programs have the ability to create intellectual community that appreciates African scholarship and exchange of ideas and best practices. Academia can help overcome the dominant discourses that divert attention by giving more voice to Africans, which in turn would render perspectives of local people very strong.

In addition to this, academic institutions can also partner with intelligence agencies so that the transfer of knowledge can occur as well as bringing the studies on intelligence to a closer in practical terms. Research projects that are jointly undertaken to address real-world security issues can yield useful knowledge and help in the formulation of policy. Internship and training of students can also be encouraged by such partnerships to bridge the gap existing between theory and practice.

Overall, the aspect of Western domination of epistemology in intelligence education presents considerable difficulties to the task of solving the problem of security in Africa. Nevertheless, the possibility of Afro-centric responses to remake the field provides a way to a more accommodative and contextually applicable intelligence practice. Academia can play an important role in this change, encouraging decolo-

nization and the production of indigenous knowledge based on the reform of the curriculum, joint research and the creation of knowledge sharing platforms. The intelligence studies can become a socially responsible, exciting, and academically rigorous discipline by making African perspectives its top priority, which is responsive to the diverse realities of African security environment.

## **7. Conclusion**

The discussion of the intelligence research in Africa demonstrates that there is a dire necessity to decolonize the field caused by the excessive dominance of Western epistemological approaches that do not adequately respond to the peculiarities of the African security concerns. This hegemony has created a huge divide in the representation which has seen the introduction of absence of a connection between intelligence education and African realities. Having been largely shaped by Eurocentric thinking, the existing curriculum does not only marginalize native knowledge, but also continues to promote security options that are not always easily applicable to local conditions.

The integration of Afro-centric approaches that emphasize on the local experiences, histories and epistemologies is desperately required, as the findings suggest. This paradigm change is critical towards developing a more sophisticated perceptions of security in which African realities are contextualized in terms of complexities and diversities. Academia plays a central role in making this change through the reform of curriculum, encouraging the production of indigenous knowledge and encouraging scholar-practitioner collaboration.

All in all, the process of decolonizing the study of intelligence in Africa is not only an academic project, but an urgent need in proper security management in the continent. Intelligence studies can become a field that does not only cater to the security demands of African communities but also enable them to become the creators of their stories and remedies by adopting the Afro-centric viewpoints and promoting the indigenous knowledge.

## **Recommendations**

1. Curriculum Reform: Academic institutions are supposed to revise the current intelligence studies curricula thoroughly to include Afro-centric views and native knowledge. This involves incorporation of African writers, case studies, and pedagogical models that represent the rich experiences of the continent.
2. Creation of African-led Journals and Conferences: Introducing journals and conferences dedicated to the study of African intelligence can offer an opportunity to disseminate knowledge and encourage collaboration of the scholars and practitioners. Such efforts may be used to give African voices a voice and promote the dissemination of the research dealing with domestic security problems.
3. Collaborative Research Initiatives Academic institutions need to form alliances with the intelligence agencies and local communities to develop collaborative

studies on urgent security matters. These partnerships would be able to produce context-based knowledge and enhance the practical value of intelligence research.

4. **Indigenous Knowledge Systems:** There should be promotion of the indigenous knowledge systems so that they can be documented and integrated into the intelligence practices. This may involve the acknowledgement of traditional government systems and conflict management systems as helpful tools in the modern security settings.
5. **Capacity Building and Training:** The institutions are supposed to initiate training programs that are intended to improve the skills of intelligence practitioners in Africa. The programs are supposed to be centered on critical thinking, analysis of events, and application of Afro-centric theories to security matters.
6. **Policy Advocacy:** The community of scholars and practitioners in the sphere must also participate in policy advocacy to impact the national and regional security structures to help them become more African friendly and responsive. This involves encouraging policies that would focus on community contribution and the local experience in security governance.
7. **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** The intelligence studies are required to take interdisciplinary approach that incorporates the knowledge of sociology, anthropology and political science. This cooperation can advance the discipline, as it can facilitate a more holistic approach to the issue of security in Africa.
8. **Continuous Assessment and Evaluation:** Lastly, their educational programs and research initiatives should be evaluated and assessed continuously to make sure that they are relevant and effective. Institutions ought to have feedback mechanisms in place to have the input of students, scholars, and practitioners.

Through these suggestions, the stakeholders in the academic and intelligence systems can play a great role in decolonizing intelligence studies in Africa, a move that can lead to greater contributions to the decolonization of intelligence studies in Africa, and consequently, open the way to a responsive and more contextually relevant approach to security management. ✨

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