Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Community-Based Information Services for Sustainable Development: The Role of Kwara State Public Library

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ABSTRACT

This study examined indigenous knowledge (IK) systems and community-based information services for sustainable development at Kwara State Public Library, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted, involving all 13 librarians and used total enumeration technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed moderate availability of indigenous knowledge resources, particularly in agriculture, traditional medicine, and cultural heritage, but limited representation of local language materials and indigenous crafts. Documentation and preservation practices were weak, while community-based information services and community participation remained limited. Major challenges included inadequate funding, insufficient ICT infrastructure, shortage of trained personnel, weak institutional policies, and limited collaboration with indigenous communities. The study concluded that the library has potential to support indigenous knowledge preservation and sustainable development but requires substantial institutional improvement. It recommended increased funding, improved ICT facilities, comprehensive policies, continuous staff training, and stronger partnerships with local communities to enhance the preservation, accessibility, and utilisation of indigenous knowledge.

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development has become a central concern for governments, development agencies, and knowledge institutions globally, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria, where local realities strongly shape development outcomes. Sustainable development cannot be achieved solely through top-down policy interventions but must incorporate grassroots knowledge and locally embedded practices that reflect the lived realities of communities (Biermann et al., 2022). However, in recent decades, increasing attention has been given to Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) as valuable resources for addressing socio-economic, environmental, and cultural challenges at the grassroots level. Dasgupta, Dhyani and Basu (2023) stated that in the dynamic landscape of sustainable development, the use of indigenous knowledge (IK) fosters resilient livelihoods, especially in regions rich with cultural diversity and multi-culture. IKS are locally developed bodies of knowledge, practices, and beliefs that are rooted in the cultural and environmental experiences of communities and passed down through generations. According to Gómez-Baggethun (2021), IKS refer to the unique cultures, languages, values, histories, governance and legal systems of indigenous people. Kugara and Mokgoatšana (2022) stated that historically, IKS has been regarded as one of the indispensable assets rural people own and utilised for transforming and developing communities.

Indigenous knowledge, developed through long-term interaction between communities and their environment, has proven effective in areas such as agriculture, healthcare, environmental management, conflict resolution, and cultural preservation. According to Sarkhel (2016), IK finds practical application in various aspects of daily life, including agriculture, healthcare, education, household management, and other community-based activities. IK is a common ability of a particular group of people in a society mostly in rural areas who have a common history that forms basis of their local level decision making of their everyday affair including occupation, healthcare, agriculture, food preparation and social life (Aboyade & Adeyemo, 2019). IK encompasses areas such as agriculture, health, natural resource management, social organization, conflict resolution, and cultural expression, making it a significant resource for community well-being and resilience. Ezeanya-Esiobu (2019) stated that IK covers all fields of human endeavour including, but not limited to, agriculture, environment, pharmacology, health, trade and economics, and political systems. Furthermore, IK is increasingly recognized as a critical contributor to sustainable development, particularly in rural and local contexts where formal scientific knowledge may be inaccessible or inappropriate without contextual adaptation. IK has helped to fuel innovation and development in industries, ranging from agriculture and pharmaceuticals to chemicals, paper products, energy and others (Mdhluli, Mokgoatšana, Kugara & Vuma, 2021).

IK gained formal international recognition as a valuable resource for sustainable development during the global environmental debates of the late twentieth century. The landmark report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), titled “Our Common Future”, emphasized the importance of integrating local knowledge and community participation into development planning. The report highlighted that sustainable development strategies must reflect the experiences, practices, and environmental understandings of local communities, particularly in developing countries

(WCED, 1987). This recognition was further reinforced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), titled "Rio Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, where Agenda 21 explicitly acknowledged the critical role of indigenous people and their knowledge systems in environmental management and sustainable resource use (United Nations, 1992). Since then, international development discourse has increasingly affirmed that indigenous knowledge contributes to biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, food security, and community resilience. Consequently, IK is now widely regarded as an essential component of sustainable development frameworks, particularly in contexts where local communities rely heavily on traditional practices for their livelihoods and environmental stewardship.

Despite this recognition, IK remains largely unrecorded and informally transmitted, often confined to oral tradition and community practices. Indigenous knowledge, though sometimes clearly articulated, is vulnerable to loss because it is primarily transmitted orally and lacks proper documentation (Lwoga, Ngulube & Stilwell, 2010). The lack of systematic documentation and integration into formal information systems risks the gradual loss of these valuable knowledge resources as older generations pass on and younger ones adopt more globalized cultural values. Sarkhel (2016) noted that IK are traditionally transmitted orally across generations, faces the risk of disappearance if deliberate efforts are not made to document and preserve it formally. Furthermore, if adequate measures are not taken to preserve and share them, invaluable indigenous knowledge systems may gradually weaken, become diluted, or disappear entirely (Cámara-Leret & Bascompte, 2021). The occurrence of urban migration, modernization, and evolving lifestyles have further disrupted the transmission of indigenous knowledge across generations, limiting opportunities for traditional apprenticeships and communal storytelling that have historically maintained these knowledge systems. Dei (2008) argued that younger generations increasingly prioritize Western education systems and digital media cultures, which often undervalue traditional knowledge systems.

Public libraries are increasingly recognized as strategic information institutions for bridging the gap between indigenous knowledge and modern information systems. They function as community knowledge centres, facilitators of lifelong learning, and agents of social inclusion beyond their conventional role of providing access to printed materials (IFLA, 2020). Public libraries bear a responsibility to safeguard the traditions of the communities they serve by actively preserving and conserving indigenous knowledge. This helps prevent its loss and ensures that an accurate record of cultural heritage is maintained, given that such knowledge is unique to a particular culture or society (Osuchukwu & Udeze, 2021). Through community-based information services, libraries collaborate closely with indigenous communities to identify knowledge needs, engage local knowledge holders, and ensure ethical and participatory knowledge acquisition and dissemination processes (Chigwada & Ngulube, 2023). Community-based information services emphasize local participation, relevance, and accessibility. They focus on delivering information that responds directly to community needs while respecting local values and cultural contexts. Dei (2008) highlighted that integrating indigenous knowledge into library services not only strengthens cultural preservation but also contributes to sustainable development by empowering communities with information relevant to agriculture, health, environmental management, and education. In this regard, such services enhance community ownership of development initiatives and support sustainable solutions that are culturally appropriate and environ-

mentally sound.

The Kwara State Public Library (KSPL) in Nigeria, serves a diverse population including urban and rural residents, farmers, artisans, students, and professionals. The cultural landscape of the state is rich with indigenous practices such as traditional medicine, local agricultural techniques, community festivals, and oral histories. However, based on personal observation, there have been limited efforts to systematically document and incorporate this indigenous knowledge into the formal collections and services of KSPL. This gap reflects a broader challenge within library systems, where indigenous knowledge management may face obstacles such as limited institutional policy support, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and insufficient collaboration with local knowledge holders. Given the potential of public libraries to support sustainable development through community-based information services, it is important to understand how KSPL engages with indigenous knowledge systems. This includes examining both the extent to which indigenous knowledge is integrated into its collections and services and the impact of these efforts on community access to culturally relevant information. Investigating these dynamics provides insight into the roles that public libraries play in promoting inclusiveness, context-sensitive information environments that contribute to local sustainable development objectives.

1.1 Research questions

The following research questions are tailored for this study:

1) What are the types of indigenous knowledge resources available in Kwara State Public Library?
2) What is the extent to which indigenous knowledge is documented and preserved in Kwara State Public Library?
3) What are the community-based information services provided in support of indigenous knowledge and sustainable development by Kwara State Public Library?
4) What is the level of community participation and engagement related to indigenous knowledge systems facilitated by the Kwara State Public Library? and
5) What are the challenges encountered in managing and promoting indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable development in Kwara State Public Library?

2. Literature Review

Indigenous knowledge is increasingly acknowledged as essential to sustainable development because it embodies community-based understandings of local environments, cultural practices, and social organization. There is an increasing and widespread agreement that indigenous knowledge is vital to the everyday functioning of indigenous communities, particularly in areas of development, governance, and health (Mdhluli et al., 2021). Studies demonstrate that IKS reflects sophisticated ecological and social insights that contribute to sustainable resource management, health practices, and community resilience (e.g., in areas such as agriculture and water management) due to its context-specific and adaptive nature. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019), approximately 40% of contemporary medicines are derived from plant sources that were traditionally used by local

communities based on indigenous knowledge. This underscores the growing recognition of indigenous knowledge as a significant contributor to the advancement of global healthcare. However, IK is predominantly oral and tacit, making it difficult to document, codify, and integrate into formal information systems without intentional strategies. These knowledge systems originate within communities rather than from formal scientific processes, and they are typically transmitted across generations through oral traditions (Ncube, Chigwada, Ngulube & Maluleka, 2025). This tacit character limits accessibility and institutional representation of IK in documented collections, which has implications for knowledge preservation and sustainable development planning. Sarkhel (2016) noted that IK is often passed down through generations orally and seldom in any form of documentation.

Public libraries are strategically positioned to serve as community knowledge centres that support the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of IK through community-based information services. Community-based information services involve tailored information access and dissemination mechanisms designed to meet the specific needs of local populations. Consequently, acknowledging the contribution of IK to national development should encourage formal information management institutions, such as public libraries in Nigeria, to take greater interest in its preservation and effective management (Ogunkeyede, Ndukwe, Akinola & Olaseigbe, 2023). Similarly, library is expected to serve its community by documenting local histories, showcasing IK through visual displays, and creating platforms that encourage community participation in IK activities. Furthermore, existing library infrastructure particularly ICT facilities can be effectively utilized to conserve and preserve indigenous knowledge resources for access and use by the general public (Ilori, Imam, Adesanya & Adeyemi, 2021). Ogunkeyede et al. (2023) argued that public libraries should take responsibility for identifying, collating, and organizing indigenous knowledge, particularly in sectors like agriculture and health where local practices are relevant to wider development goals. However, evidence from existing literature suggests that many public libraries in Nigeria continue to focus primarily on conventional print and digital resources, with limited attention given to IK materials and local content development. As a result, IK remains marginalized within library collections and services, reducing its accessibility and relevance to community development initiatives.

Empirical studies have increasingly examined the intersection between Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), public library services, and sustainable development, highlighting both the potentials and limitations of formal information institutions, particularly public libraries in preserving and promoting local knowledge. These studies provide evidence-based insights into how libraries document indigenous knowledge, engage communities, integrate local content into their collections, and contribute to development outcomes, particularly within developing country contexts. For instance, Ogunkeyede et al. (2023) wrote a paper on “Indigenous Knowledge and Public Library System for National Development in Nigeria”. They focused on IK and the public library system for national development in Nigeria. They began with introducing the concept of IKS and articulates the definitions for IK. They went further to explore the relevance of IK, especially in agriculture and medicine and recognizing the unique value embedded in local traditions and practices. They also investigated how public libraries can serve as dynamic platforms for preserving, disseminating, and utilising IK. They concluded that to enhance the propagation of IK, and aid it in taking its place in nation-building, the public library must hold itself responsible for identifying, collating, and sorting IK.

Similarly, Ilori et al. (2021) conducted a study on "Indigenous Knowledge Management in the Modern-Day Library and Information Services". They examined IK management process in four academic libraries in Lagos State, Nigeria. They used purposive sampling method to select four government owned tertiary institutional libraries in Lagos State. They used Cochran (1963) sample size table formula to determine sample size of 115 respondents from the total population (135). They adopted descriptive survey design and make used of questionnaire and interview for data collection. Their findings revealed that IK was available in the selected academic libraries and health information was the main reason for using IK in the selected academic libraries. They further revealed that all the four academic libraries have no IK policy and the challenges facing the management of IK in the selected academic libraries are the lack of relevant ICT resources that can be used to preserve IK in the libraries. They recommended that library management should make fund available for the libraries to acquire necessary ICT tools that can be used to preserve IK.

Furthermore, Faboyede and Simpson (2025) conducted a on "Indigenous Ecological Knowledge of Nigerian Communities on Plant Responses to Environmental Stressors". They examined how indigenous communities in Nigeria perceive plant behavioral patterns through local knowledge, observations, and beliefs. They used an ethnobotanical approach to explores oral traditions, folklore, and practical applications of plant behavior in indigenous settings. They highlighted how traditional knowledge informs sustainable environmental management, conservation, and the use of plants in medicine, agriculture, and cultural rituals. Their study underscores the relevance of traditional ecological wisdom in contemporary botanical and environmental research and recognizing these perspectives preserves cultural heritage while fostering an inclusive understanding of plant-environment interactions. They recommended that this approach advocates for integrating indigenous perspectives into scientific discourse, policy-making, and conservation efforts to achieve a more holistic view of plant adaptation and ecology.

Beyond Nigeria, Singh-Pillay and Madlala (2026) conducted a study on "Legitimising Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a Pathway to Sustainable Development". They used a qualitative case study to examines the integration of IKS into Grade 8 Natural Sciences ecosystem teaching in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Their research addressed two questions: what IK is integrated into ecosystem teaching, and how teachers accomplish this integration. They collected data through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis from six Natural Sciences teachers across three schools in the Pinetown district during 2024. Their findings revealed that teachers successfully integrated indigenous agricultural practices, including controlled burning, rotational cropping, organic fertilization, and polyculture systems, positioning this as legitimate scientific knowledge that provides empirically validated environmental solutions. Their research extends cultural border-crossing theory and collateral learning approaches by demonstrating practical classroom applications that enable students to navigate multiple knowledge systems without cognitive conflict. Their findings contribute to decolonising environmental science education by providing transferable frameworks for authentic IKS integration, demonstrating connections to Sustainable Development Goals (2, 4, 12, 13, 15), and documenting pathways toward cognitive justice.

Similarly, Kom and Nethengwe (2024) conducted a study on "Indigenous and Local Knowledge: Instruments Towards Achieving SDG2: A Review in an African Context". Their study seeks to

review African indigenous and local knowledge in farming systems that are used as instruments for the achievement of sustainable development. Their study envisioned the idea of sustainable development in the context of indigenous and local knowledge as a potential for achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2. They also emphasize the necessity of a radical investigation of IK practices for a more effective local farming system in the African setting that is inclusive and driven by the indigenous community to harness the untapped riches of IK. They stated that Local and Indigenous knowledge are regarded as knowledge systems possessed by cultural groups and, based on their experience and adaptability to local culture and environment, it is important for development, particularly in food security. They concluded that by urging further potential investigation into whether indigenous and traditional knowledge systems as tools can be used to accomplish Sustainable Development Goals in practice.

Furthermore, Chigwada and Ngulube (2023) conducted a study on "Librarians' Role in the Preservation and Dissemination of Indigenous Knowledge". They used a qualitative study with 20 librarians in Zimbabwe, who were purposively selected. Interviews and observation were used to collect data, which was analysed using thematic content analysis. Their findings revealed that libraries preserved IK in the form of poetry, folklore, drama and artefacts; demonstrated traditional dances; and sometimes recorded live sessions and special collections. They identified ethical issues as the major challenge being faced when documenting IK. They recommended that librarians actively work with indigenous communities in IK projects to avoid resistance from knowledge holders.

Also, Ncube et al. (2025) conducted a study on "Government support for indigenous knowledge for sustainability in Southern Africa". They assessed how the governments of South Africa and Zimbabwe support the use of IK to sustain livelihoods. They used a qualitative case study approach and gathered data through interviews and document analysis. Also conducted interviews with government officials and chose two from each department or ministry using purposive sampling, and a total of 10 participants were used for the study by the researchers. They analysed National Development Plans (NDPs) and IKS policies to gather information on government support for the use of IK for sustainable livelihoods. They used thematic analysis and content analysis approaches for data analysis. Their findings show that the South African government had implemented various mechanisms to support the use of IK for sustainable livelihoods while little efforts were made in Zimbabwe. They concluded that South African government formulated policies that support the use of IK to sustain livelihoods, while IK policy formulation and implementation in Zimbabwe was not evident.

Lwoga, Ngulube and Stilwell (2010) conducted an empirical study in Tanzania on "Managing Indigenous Knowledge in Selected Communities". They found that while IK was widely practiced in agriculture and health, there were weak institutional frameworks for documentation and preservation. They also revealed that oral transmission remained the dominant mode of knowledge sharing, thereby increasing the risk of knowledge loss. They recommended stronger collaboration between libraries and local knowledge holders to enhance systematic preservation. Mhlongo and Ngulube (2020) examined the "Role of Libraries in the Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge in African Contexts". They found that although librarians recognized the importance of IK, limited funding, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and lack of policy guidelines constrained effective management. Their findings emphasized the need for institutional policies and digital repositories to safeguard indigenous resources.

Mapara (2009) explored "Indigenous Knowledge Preservation Strategies in Zimbabwe". The study found that community participation was critical for successful knowledge documentation initiatives. The study highlighted that participatory approaches improved trust between communities and information institutions, thereby enhancing knowledge sharing.

Beyond Africa, Joshi (2021) investigated "Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Traditional Ecological Practices in India". The research explores the pivotal role of Indigenous Environmental Knowledge (IEK) in promoting sustainable development, with a specific focus on traditional ecological practices in India. It investigates the profound wisdom and time-tested practices of indigenous communities in India, highlighting their significance in addressing contemporary environmental challenges. Through a comprehensive analysis of case studies, ethnographic research, and ecological data, it also elucidates the holistic nature of IEK and its potential to contribute to global sustainability goals. The research underscores the need for cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and the synergy between indigenous wisdom and scientific advancements by examining the integration of traditional knowledge systems into modern environmental policies and practices. The findings emphasize the importance of recognizing and respecting IEK as a valuable resource for achieving sustainable development.

Also, Sarkhel (2016) conducted a study on "Strategies of Indigenous Knowledge Management in Libraries". The study explores how the indigenous knowledge can best be managed in the libraries in order to contribute positively to the community. The paper answers what roles the library professionals can play in the management and preservation of IK? While highlighting the IFLA mandate towards the management and preservation of IK, different activities associated with the management of IK such as, collection, recording and documentation, organization, preservation and storage, dissemination and networking are discussed. It concluded that library professionals need to be proactive in devising strategies for the management and preservation of IK with the help of their professional knowledge and skills in order to ensure access to this valuable resource.

Collectively, these empirical studies indicate that while IK plays a pivotal role in sustainable development, its preservation within formal institutions such as public libraries remains limited. Common challenges include inadequate documentation, weak policy support, limited ICT infrastructure, and insufficient collaboration with indigenous communities. However, the literature consistently suggests that strengthening community-based information services in public libraries can enhance IK preservation and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development outcomes. These also provide verified research evidence showing how IK contributes to community resilience, sustainable natural resource management, adaptive strategies, and development outcomes across multiple contexts.

2.1 Research gap and original contribution

Despite growing scholarly recognition of indigenous knowledge systems as valuable resources for sustainable development, questions remain concerning how public libraries operationalize their responsibilities for documenting, preserving, and disseminating such knowledge through community-based information services. Existing literature has examined indigenous knowledge management, digital preservation, cultural heritage conservation, and the role of libraries in supporting indigenous

knowledge systems (Mdhluli et al., 2021; Cámara-Leret and Bascompte, 2021). However, there is a need for context-specific empirical evidence examining the availability of indigenous knowledge resources, the extent of their documentation and preservation, the provision of community-based information services, community participation, and the institutional challenges affecting these activities within the Kwara State Public Library context. In particular, understanding the relationship between institutional preservation practices and community engagement is important for determining whether public library services adequately support the continuity and practical application of indigenous knowledge. This study addresses this gap by providing an empirical assessment of indigenous knowledge management and community-based information services in Kwara State Public Library. Its original contribution lies in bringing together five interrelated dimensions of indigenous knowledge management within a single institutional assessment: resource availability, documentation and preservation, community-based information service provision, community participation, and operational challenges. The study provides context-specific evidence that can inform improvements in indigenous knowledge preservation, community engagement, and information service delivery by examining these dimensions collectively. The findings also offer practical insights for library administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders seeking to strengthen the contribution of public libraries to culturally responsive and locally grounded sustainable development initiatives.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine indigenous knowledge systems and community-based information services for sustainable development in Kwara State Public Library, Nigeria. The study population comprised all the 15 librarians working in the library, and total enumeration sampling was used to invite all the librarians to participate. Thirteen (86.6%) valid questionnaire responses were obtained and included in the analysis. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire organised into five dimensions: availability of indigenous knowledge resources, documentation and preservation, community-based information services, community participation and engagement, and challenges affecting indigenous knowledge management. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Library and Information Science to establish its content validity, while its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.78, indicating acceptable internal consistency. The questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers, which allowed for proper clarification of the study's purpose to respondents. Data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations to summarise respondents' assessments and response the five research questions. Ethical standards such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly upheld throughout the study.

4. Data Analyses and Results

Table 1. What are the Types of Indigenous Knowledge Resources Available?

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev. (σ)
The library has adequate materials on traditional agricultural practices.	4 (30.8)	6 (46.2)	2 (15.4)	1 (7.7)	3.00	0.88
Oral histories and folklore are documented and accessible in the library.	3 (23.1)	4 (30.8)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.62	0.96
Materials on indigenous crafts, skills, and technologies are available in the library.	2 (15.4)	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.54	0.94
Indigenous health and herbal medicine resources are available in the library.	4 (30.8)	4 (30.8)	3 (23.1)	2 (15.4)	2.77	1.01
The library holds resources on indigenous environmental and natural resource management practices.	3 (23.1)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	2 (15.4)	2.69	0.98
The library collects and preserves local language materials related to indigenous knowledge.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
The library provides access to materials on local cultural heritage and traditions.	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	1 (7.7)	2.92	0.89
The library collects and preserves religious scripture/materials related to indigenous knowledge.	3 (23.1)	4 (30.8)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.62	0.96
Grand Mean = 2.70						

The data presented in Table 1 reveal the extent to which different types of indigenous knowledge (IK) resources are available in the Kwara State Public Library. The grand mean of 2.70 indicates a moderate level of availability of indigenous knowledge materials in the library. Specifically, the statement “The library has adequate materials on traditional agricultural practices” recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 3.00), suggesting that respondents generally agree that agricultural-related indigenous knowledge resources are relatively available. Similarly, materials on local cultural heritage and traditions also recorded a relatively high mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.92), indicating that cultural resources are fairly accessible within the library. However, other areas show lower levels of availability. For instance, local language materials related to indigenous knowledge recorded the lowest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46), implying that such resources are insufficiently collected and preserved. Likewise, materials on indigenous crafts, skills, and technologies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54) and oral histories and folklore ($\bar{x}$ = 2.62) suggest only moderate availability, indicating gaps in documenting and preserving these forms of knowledge. Furthermore, indigenous health and herbal medicine resources ($\bar{x}$ = 2.77) and environmental and natural resource management materials ($\bar{x}$ = 2.69) show moderate presence, reflecting partial inclusion of these important knowledge domains in the library’s collection. The availability of religious or spiritual materials related to indigenous knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 2.62) also falls within the moderate range.

Table 2. What is the Extent to Which Indigenous Knowledge is Documented and Preserved?

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev. (σ)
Oral indigenous knowledge is recorded and archived by	2	4	5	2	2.46	0.93

the library.	(15.4)	(30.8)	(38.5)	(15.4)		
Indigenous knowledge resources are properly catalogued and organized for easy access.	2 (15.4)	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.54	0.94
The library has adequate facilities for preserving indigenous knowledge materials.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
The current level of preservation of indigenous knowledge in the library is satisfactory.	1 (7.7)	4 (30.8)	6 (46.2)	2 (15.4)	2.31	0.85
There are policies guiding the documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge in the library.	1 (7.7)	3 (23.1)	6 (46.2)	3 (23.1)	2.15	0.90
Indigenous knowledge resources are systematically documented in the library.	1 (7.7)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	2.23	0.93
The library uses digital technologies to preserve indigenous knowledge.	2 (15.4)	3 (23.1)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	2.31	0.98
Oral religious knowledge (e.g., sermons, lecturers, etc.) are recorded and archived by the library.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	4 (30.8)	3 (23.1)	2.38	0.96
Grand Mean = 2.36						

The data in Table 2 present the extent to which indigenous knowledge (IK) is documented and preserved in the Kwara State Public Library. The grand mean of 2.36 indicates a low to moderate level of documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge within the library. Specifically, the statement “Indigenous knowledge resources are properly catalogued and organized for easy access” recorded the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54), suggesting that respondents perceive some level of organization of available resources, although not sufficiently strong. Similarly, oral indigenous knowledge being recorded and archived ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) and availability of preservation facilities ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) also fall within the moderate range, indicating partial efforts in documentation and preservation. However, several key areas recorded relatively low mean scores, reflecting notable gaps. The statement “There are policies guiding the documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge in the library” had the lowest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.15), indicating a lack of formal policy frameworks. Likewise, systematic documentation of indigenous knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 2.23) and use of digital technologies for preservation ($\bar{x}$ = 2.31) suggest insufficient adoption of structured and modern preservation approaches. Furthermore, the perception that the current level of preservation is satisfactory ($\bar{x}$ = 2.31) indicates general dissatisfaction among respondents. The recording and archiving of oral religious knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 2.38) also remain limited, further highlighting gaps in capturing diverse forms of indigenous knowledge.

Table 3. What are the Community-based Information Services Provided in Support of Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Development?

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev. (σ)
The library conducts workshops and training related to indigenous knowledge practices.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
The library collaborates with local communities to share indigenous knowledge.	3 (23.1)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	2 (15.4)	2.69	0.98
Exhibitions and cultural events are organized to showcase indigenous knowledge.	2 (15.4)	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.54	0.94

The library organizes outreach programs to promote indigenous knowledge.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
The library provides access to information that supports sustainable development using indigenous knowledge.	3 (23.1)	4 (30.8)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.62	0.96
Mobile library services are used to disseminate indigenous knowledge to rural communities.	1 (7.7)	3 (23.1)	6 (46.2)	3 (23.1)	2.15	0.90
Indigenous knowledge is integrated into user education and information literacy programs.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
Grand Mean = 2.48						

The data in Table 3 show the extent to which community-based information services are provided by the Kwara State Public Library to support indigenous knowledge (IK) and sustainable development. The grand mean of 2.48 indicates a moderate but relatively weak level of service provision, suggesting that while some efforts exist, they are not sufficiently developed or consistent. Among the items, "The library collaborates with local communities to share indigenous knowledge" recorded the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.69), indicating that respondents perceive some level of engagement between the library and community members. Similarly, access to information that supports sustainable development using indigenous knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 2.62) reflects moderate provision of relevant information services. However, several service areas recorded lower mean scores. For instance, workshops and training related to indigenous knowledge practices ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) and outreach programs to promote indigenous knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) indicate that such initiatives are not regularly or effectively implemented. Likewise, exhibitions and cultural events ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54) and integration of indigenous knowledge into user education programs ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) suggest only moderate engagement in promoting indigenous knowledge through structured library activities. The lowest mean was recorded for mobile library services used to disseminate indigenous knowledge to rural communities ($\bar{x}$ = 2.15), indicating a significant weakness in extending services beyond the library to underserved populations. This suggests that rural outreach, which is critical for indigenous knowledge dissemination, is largely inadequate.

Table 4. What is the Level of Community Participation and Engagement Related to Indigenous Knowledge Systems Facilitated?

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev. (σ)
There is strong collaboration between the library and the community in preserving indigenous knowledge.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
The library provides platforms for community members to share their knowledge.	2 (15.4)	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	2 (15.4)	2.54	0.94
Community members actively contribute indigenous knowledge to the library.	1 (7.7)	4 (30.8)	6 (46.2)	2 (15.4)	2.31	0.85
Awareness of indigenous knowledge services provided by the library is high among community members.	1 (7.7)	3 (23.1)	6 (46.2)	3 (23.1)	2.15	0.90
The library engages local knowledge holders (e.g., elders, artisans, farmers) in its programs.	2 (15.4)	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	2.46	0.93
Community members participate in library-organized indigenous knowledge activities.	2 (15.4)	3 (23.1)	6 (46.2)	2 (15.4)	2.38	0.87

Grand Mean = 2.38

The data presented in Table 4 reveal the level of community participation and engagement in indigenous knowledge (IK) activities facilitated by the Kwara State Public Library. The grand mean of 2.38 indicates a low level of community participation and engagement, suggesting that community involvement in indigenous knowledge initiatives is generally weak. Specifically, the statement "The library provides platforms for community members to share their knowledge" recorded the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54), indicating that such platforms exist to some extent. Similarly, "There is strong collaboration between the library and the community in preserving indigenous knowledge" ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) and "The library engages local knowledge holders (e.g., elders, artisans, farmers) in its programs" ($\bar{x}$ = 2.46) show moderate but insufficient levels of engagement between the library and the community. However, several indicators reflect weak participation. Community participation in library-organized indigenous knowledge activities recorded a mean of ($\bar{x}$ = 2.38), while community members actively contributing indigenous knowledge to the library scored ($\bar{x}$ = 2.31), indicating limited direct involvement of community members in knowledge-sharing processes. The lowest mean was recorded for awareness of indigenous knowledge services provided by the library ($\bar{x}$ = 2.15), suggesting that many community members are not sufficiently aware of the indigenous knowledge-related services available. This low awareness likely contributes to the overall weak participation observed across other indicators.

Table 5. What are the Challenges Encountered in Managing and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Sustainable Development?

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev. (σ)
Lack of ICT facilities affects the documentation of indigenous knowledge.	5 (38.5)	5 (38.5)	2 (15.4)	1 (7.7)	3.08	0.90
Indigenous knowledge is difficult to document due to its oral nature.	4 (30.8)	6 (46.2)	2 (15.4)	1 (7.7)	3.00	0.88
Inadequate funding limits the preservation of indigenous knowledge in the library.	6 (46.2)	5 (38.5)	1 (7.7)	1 (7.7)	3.23	0.86
Limited collaboration with local communities hinders indigenous knowledge preservation.	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	1 (7.7)	2.92	0.90
Language barriers affect the documentation and dissemination of indigenous knowledge.	3 (23.1)	6 (46.2)	3 (23.1)	1 (7.7)	2.85	0.85
Lack of government policies affects the management of indigenous knowledge.	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	3 (23.1)	1 (7.7)	3.00	0.93
There is a shortage of trained personnel to manage indigenous knowledge resources.	4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	3 (23.1)	1 (7.7)	2.92	0.90
There is low awareness of the importance of indigenous knowledge among stakeholders.	3 (23.1)	5 (38.5)	4 (30.8)	1 (7.7)	2.77	0.89
Grand Mean = 2.97						

The data presented in Table 5 show the challenges encountered in managing and promoting indigenous knowledge (IK) systems in the Kwara State Public Library. The grand mean of 2.97 indicates that respondents generally agree that there are significant challenges affecting the effective documentation, preservation, and dissemination of indigenous knowledge. Among the identified chal-

lenges, inadequate funding limiting the preservation of indigenous knowledge recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 3.23), indicating that financial constraints are the most critical impediment to effective IK management in the library. Similarly, lack of ICT facilities affecting documentation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.08) and both difficulty in documenting IK due to its oral nature and lack of government policies affecting management ($\bar{x}$ = 3.00 each) were strongly agreed upon by respondents, showing that technological and policy-related issues significantly hinder indigenous knowledge preservation efforts. Other challenges, such as limited collaboration with local communities ($\bar{x}$ = 2.92) and shortage of trained personnel ($\bar{x}$ = 2.92), also indicate moderate to high agreement, suggesting that human resource capacity and community engagement are insufficient. Furthermore, language barriers ($\bar{x}$ = 2.85) and low awareness of the importance of indigenous knowledge among stakeholders ($\bar{x}$ = 2.77) reflect additional constraints that affect effective communication, documentation, and utilization of indigenous knowledge resources.

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provide important insights into the availability, documentation, dissemination, community engagement, and challenges associated with Indigenous Knowledge (IK) within the Kwara State Public Library, as well as its implications for sustainable development.

The study revealed a moderate level of availability of indigenous knowledge resources in the library. Resources related to traditional agriculture and cultural heritage were relatively more available than others. This finding aligns with the view of scholars such as Mhlongo and Ngulube (2020), who noted that while public libraries in developing countries may hold some indigenous knowledge materials, such resources are often fragmented and not comprehensively developed. It also supports the view of Ogunkeyede et al. (2023) that many public libraries in developing contexts still hold limited but unevenly distributed indigenous knowledge collections, with stronger emphasis on cultural and agricultural materials compared to other domains such as health or environmental knowledge. Similarly, Owolabi et al. (2021) revealed that indigenous knowledge resources in Nigerian public libraries are often not adequately represented or systematically organized, although agriculture, medicine, and cultural heritage materials tend to dominate available collections. In addition, earlier study confirm that IK resources in many public libraries remain incomplete and unevenly documented, largely due to funding constraints and weak acquisition systems, which affects the breadth of available indigenous knowledge materials (Adeniyi & Subair, 2013).

Findings also showed a low to moderate level of documentation and preservation, indicated a weak institutional structures for managing indigenous knowledge and the absence of strong policy frameworks and limited use of digital technologies reflect systemic gaps in preservation practices. This is consistent with Ogunkeyede et al. (2023), who emphasized that although indigenous knowledge is widely recognized as valuable for sustainable development, its preservation in many African libraries remains fragmented and poorly structured due to absence of comprehensive policies and standardized documentation frameworks. Also, Sarkhel (2016), who emphasized that failure to formally document indigenous knowledge increases the risk of its gradual loss. The findings also supports

the report of Owolabi et al. (2021) that many public libraries in Nigeria and other developing contexts still face significant challenges in documenting indigenous knowledge due to inadequate infrastructure, limited ICT integration, and weak institutional support systems. Similarly, Chigwada and Ngulube (2023) revealed that technological obsolescence, inadequate funding, and lack of digital preservation tools continue to hinder effective indigenous knowledge management in libraries, resulting in poor documentation and restricted access to IK resources. Lwoga, Ngulube, and Stilwell (2010) observed that indigenous knowledge in many African contexts remains largely undocumented due to reliance on oral transmission and weak institutional support. The result also supports

Furthermore, the study found that community-based information services are provided at a moderate but insufficient level. Activities such as collaboration with communities and exhibitions exist but are not robust or consistent. This aligns with Ogunkeyede et al. (2023) that libraries attempt to support indigenous knowledge dissemination through community engagement activities, such efforts are frequently inconsistent and underfunded, reducing their effectiveness in promoting sustainable development outcomes. Similarly, Chigwada and Ngulube (2023) reported that public libraries in developing contexts often engage in limited and irregular community-based programmes, with weak continuity in outreach, exhibitions, and participatory knowledge-sharing initiatives due to resource and capacity constraints. In addition, Kom and Nethengwe (2024) indicated that effective community-based information services require strong institutional collaboration and sustained engagement with local knowledge holders, which is often lacking in many public library systems in Africa. Also, Mapara (2009) who stressed that effective indigenous knowledge dissemination depends heavily on active community participation and structured outreach programs. The limited use of mobile library services further reflects weak rural outreach, which contradicts the expectations of public libraries as community-centered institutions (IFLA, 2020).

Also, the findings indicated a low level of community participation, suggesting weak engagement between the library and indigenous knowledge holders. Awareness of library services was particularly low. This supports Osuchukwu and Udeze (2021), who argued that libraries must actively engage communities to preserve cultural heritage effectively. Similarly, Ogunkeyede et al. (2023) revealed that indigenous knowledge preservation depends heavily on active involvement of local communities but many public libraries still experience low community awareness and minimal participation in knowledge-sharing programmes, which weakens the effectiveness of IK initiatives. Reyes-García et al. (2013) noted that indigenous knowledge systems thrive only when communities are actively involved in knowledge creation and sharing processes. The result also reflects. In addition, research highlights that sustainable indigenous knowledge systems require continuous interaction between libraries and community custodians of knowledge such as elders, artisans, and farmers; however, this collaboration is often underdeveloped in many African library settings (Kom & Nethengwe, 2024). Chigwada and Ngulube (2023) reported that community participation in indigenous knowledge initiatives within library systems is often limited due to weak outreach strategies, inadequate sensitization, and poor engagement structures between libraries and local knowledge holders.

Lastly, the study revealed that respondents agreed strongly that multiple challenges hinder indigenous knowledge management. The most significant challenges identified were inadequate funding, lack of ICT facilities, and weak policy frameworks. This agrees with Ogunkeyede et al. (2023), who

emphasized that weak institutional and policy frameworks, combined with limited financial support, continue to undermine the capacity of public libraries to effectively manage and promote indigenous knowledge for sustainable development. Similarly, Ilori et al. (2021) highlighted that ICT limitations and inadequate staffing significantly affect indigenous knowledge preservation efforts in libraries. Furthermore, Chigwada and Ngulube (2023) found that the management of indigenous knowledge is significantly affected by resource constraints and inadequate digital infrastructure, which hinder proper acquisition, storage, and dissemination of indigenous knowledge materials in library systems.

Collectively, the findings indicated that although the Kwara State Public Library has some involvement in indigenous knowledge management, its efforts remain limited, fragmented, and under-developed. This weak integration reduces the potential of indigenous knowledge to contribute effectively to sustainable development goals such as education, environmental management, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. The findings reinforce the argument that public libraries can play a transformative role in sustainable development only when supported by adequate funding, policy frameworks, ICT infrastructure, and strong community partnerships.

6. Conclusion

This study examined Indigenous Knowledge (IK) systems and community-based information services for sustainable development, focusing on the role of the Kwara State Public Library. The findings reveal that although indigenous knowledge resources exist within the library, their availability is only moderate, with stronger representation in areas such as agriculture and cultural heritage compared to other domains like local language materials and traditional crafts. The study further established that the documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge are weak and largely unstructured, with limited use of ICT tools and an absence of strong policy frameworks to guide systematic management. Community-based information services were found to be moderately provided, but they remain insufficient in scope, particularly in rural outreach and structured engagement activities. In addition, the level of community participation and engagement in indigenous knowledge initiatives was found to be low, indicating weak awareness and limited involvement of local knowledge holders in library programmes. The study also identified several challenges hindering effective indigenous knowledge management, including inadequate funding, lack of ICT infrastructure, shortage of trained personnel, weak policy support, and limited collaboration with local communities. The study concludes that while the Kwara State Public Library has the potential to serve as a key institution for the preservation and promotion of indigenous knowledge, its current practices are not fully developed to support sustainable development objectives. Strengthening institutional capacity, improving funding, enhancing ICT integration, developing supportive policies, and fostering stronger community partnerships are essential for improving indigenous knowledge management and maximizing its contribution to sustainable development.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to enhance the role of the Kwara State Public Library in the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) for sustainable development:

1) The government and relevant stakeholders should increase funding allocated to public libraries to support the collection, documentation, digitization, and preservation of indigenous knowledge resources.
2) The library should be equipped with adequate ICT facilities such as computers, scanners, audio-visual recording tools, and digital storage systems to support the effective documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge.
3) Clear policies should be formulated at institutional and governmental levels to guide the systematic documentation, management, and protection of indigenous knowledge in public libraries.
4) The library should strengthen collaboration with local communities, especially elders, artisans, farmers, and other knowledge holders, to ensure active participation in indigenous knowledge documentation and sharing activities.
5) Mobile library services and outreach programmes should be expanded to rural communities to improve access to indigenous knowledge resources and encourage wider participation.
6) Indigenous knowledge should be systematically integrated into user education programmes, exhibitions, workshops, and information literacy activities to promote awareness and utilization.
7) The library should intensify awareness campaigns to educate the public on the importance of indigenous knowledge and available services, thereby encouraging greater community involvement.
8) Public libraries should collaborate with universities and research institutions to support the documentation, validation, and preservation of indigenous knowledge for sustainable development.

8. Limitations of the Study

The study had some limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the study was restricted to Kwara State Public Library, limiting the extent to which the findings can be generalised to other public libraries in Nigeria or other African contexts. Second, although total enumeration sampling was adopted, only 13 valid responses were obtained out of possible 17. This relatively small number of respondents may limit the diversity of perspectives captured and, if the eligible population was larger, may introduce non-response bias. Third, the study relied on questionnaire responses from librarians, which reflect their reported assessments and may not fully represent the experiences of community members, traditional knowledge holders, or other library users. Fourth, the study employed a descriptive survey design and descriptive statistical techniques; therefore, it described existing practices and perceived challenges but could not establish causal relationships variables. Finally, the study did not independently assess the completeness of indigenous knowledge collections, the effectiveness of preservation technologies, or measurable changes in community well-being. Despite these limitations, the findings provide context-specific

insights into indigenous knowledge management and community-based information services in the institution studied. Future research could address these limitations by including multiple public libraries, larger respondent groups, indigenous knowledge holders, and community members, alongside interviews, observations, and assessments of measurable service and development outcomes.

Statements and Declarations

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