



Exploring Indigenous Epistemologies: Voices, Challenges, and Enriching Indigenous Knowledge of The Kamar of Chhattisgarh State

¹Bhumika Raj Sonwane, ²Ashok Pradhan

¹Research Scholar, ²Professor

¹School of Studies in Anthropology

Pandit Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Abstract:

This study examines the indigenous epistemologies of the Kamar tribe in Chhattisgarh state, emphasizing their distinctive viewpoints, problems, and contributions to the knowledge systems. The research analyzes traditional practices, oral histories, and cultural narratives to comprehend the intricate framework of Kamar thinking that shapes their worldview. The Kamar tribe's epistemologies provide an all-encompassing worldview that integrates environmental, spiritual, social, and cultural aspects. This body of knowledge has evolved through oral traditions and presents unique viewpoints on the world that can enhance anthropological discourse and yield insights into Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). These systems sharply contrast with the frequently segmented and hierarchical paradigms common in Western cognition, scientific investigation, and Ontological frameworks. By examining the Kamar epistemologies outside colonial viewpoints, we get a deeper comprehension and appreciation of tales that were previously considered trivial or valueless. This initiative entails a transformation from viewing IKS via colonial views to prioritizing the viewpoints, voices, experiences, and knowledge of the Kamar people. This research also seeks to articulate the viewpoints of Kamar women and identify the obstacles they face in safeguarding their indigenous knowledge. Using qualitative approach, purposive sample methods and a varied representation of the indigenous perspectives of the Kamar community, hence enhancing the validity and dependability of the findings.

Keywords: Indigenous epistemologies, Indigenous ontology, Traditional practices, Oral histories, Indigenous women.

I. INTRODUCTION:

The indigenous epistemology is characterized by its locality, contextuality, and profound integration within the ecological systems of the respective communities. It denotes the distinctive framework of knowledge and the methodologies of understanding the world that have been cultivated by indigenous populations over extensive periods. A critical criterion involves the fundamental divergence between Indigenous Knowledge (IK) systems and conventional scientific paradigms of knowledge, alongside their respective epistemological approaches. According to Roberts & Wills (1998), “Indigenous epistemologies is to “know” something is to locate it in time and space, and to consider it holistically as part of an overarching cosmic order in which individual persons, tribal communities, all other animate and inanimate things, and even knowledge itself are interrelated”. This notion is echoed in the referenced tribal maxim: “to know oneself” encompasses an awareness of one’s tribal territory, including the hills, rivers, trees, rocks, fish and wind. Recognizing these interconnections provides a conceptual framework for understanding how all entities both living and non-living, constitute a singular “family tree” or “taxonomy of the universe”. The cultural, spiritual, and ecological contexts of indigenous communities serve as the foundational roots of these knowledge systems, mirroring their profound relationship with the land, their ancestors, and the natural environment. It encapsulates the myriad ways in which indigenous people perceive, construct, and disseminate knowledge. The foundation of this knowledge is established through oral traditions, rituals, and quotidian practices. These epistemological frameworks yield critical insights into sustainable living practices, ethical governance, and the resilience of communities. It is not a straightforward task to categorically define indigenous epistemologies as x, y, and z. Their integration of indigenous epistemologies into mainstream discourse is imperative, as aboriginal perspectives amalgamate the social, political, and spiritual dimensions intrinsic to indigenous epistemologies (Nakata, 2002 & 2007; Baskin, 2005). These framework contest prevailing narratives by accentuating relational knowledge, the welfare of communities, and the collaborative creation of knowledge through lived experiences. It possesses transformative capacity for addressing contemporary dilemmas such as environmental sustainability and decolonization. Acknowledging and honouring these systems of knowledge not only safeguards cultural diversity but also provides crucial insights into tackling urgent global challenges. Tribal women, elders, and leaders, who act as stewards of this knowledge, harbor a profound sense of obligation to preserve and transmit it across generations. Elevating the significance of tribal epistemological approaches and integrating them into foundational discourses underscores the notion that tribal or indigenous epistemology is inherently distinct from contemporary western epistemologies (Sunepsungla, 2005). An alternative interpretation may incorporate a religious dimensions in healing, elucidating a historical narrative of how European incursions influenced perceptions and practices during the colonial era. Various pathways exist to elucidate the influence of foreign methodologies on African healing practices, scientific inquiry, international health policies, and territorial legislation (Luddeckens & Schrimpf, 2018). Ani (1994) offers valuable contexts for a critical examination of the nature of epistemologies within postcolonial frameworks. The emergence of post-colonial and postmodern theories has spurred the development of IK research (Morgan, 2003), which presents an abundant repository for exploring Indigenous theories and epistemologies. Morgan further illustrates how IK differs from western scientific thought. He argues that postmodern and postcolonial theories, along with Eastern philosophies, drove the 'new age' of inquiry into IK that began in the 1960s. Some research work in African contexts (Emerole et al., 2001; Fakudze, 2003b; Asabere-Amaeyaw&Anamuah-Mensah, 2003) provides evidence of the existence of indigenous worldviews as characteristically rational, spiritual, and mystical.

The epistemologies of the *Kamar* promote a comprehensive worldview that intricately interconnects the myriad elements of existence. Their holistic perspectives encompass a diverse array of components, taking into account environmental, spiritual, social, cultural, economic, and religious dimensions, all of which are

intricately linked with ecology, flora, fauna, spiritual entities, and ancestral legacies. Across generations, this system of knowledge has been meticulously developed through oral traditions. Such a tradition offers distinctive perspectives on the world that can substantially enrich anthropological discourse and provide insights into IK, including Indigenous ecological knowledge, healing methodologies, spiritual and cosmological beliefs, technological advancements, social structures, and governance frameworks. Each of these dimensions contributes significantly to the richness and resilience inherent in IKS. This stands in stark contrast to the frequently compartmentalized and hierarchical paradigms prevalent within western thought, scientific inquiry, and ontological frameworks. Colonial systems have historically imposed a hierarchical organization of knowledge, dismissing these epistemologies as “primitive” or “unscientific”. The associated IK and epistemologies serves as a form of epistemic resistance to colonial worldviews. The processes of colonization have long disrupted IK, ensuring a widespread erasure of the pivotal role played by Indigenous women in transmission of knowledge. They embody their knowledge through rituals, agricultural practices, ceremonies, cultural events, education and training endeavours. The repercussions of colonization have frequently resulted in diminished rights and protections for these women, constraining their roles in local governance, traditional medicinal practices, healing and socio-religious activities.

In this inquiry, we investigate the voices that safeguard the IK of the Kamar and consider how their epistemologies can enrich both local and global discussions. By exploring their indigenous epistemologies beyond the colonial perspectives, we will engage in a profound understanding and appreciation of all narratives that have previously deemed insignificant or devoid of value. We recognize and offer the knowledge system that colonial authorities have historically marginalized or suppressed. This endeavour involves a paradigm shift from interpreting IK through colonial lenses to centering into perspectives, voices, experiences, and wisdom of the Kamar. This paper primarily underscores the epistemologies of the Kamar tribe through their IK system and elucidates how it can offer alternative avenues for individuals from other communities to comprehend and relate to the world beyond the constraints of Western paradigms. This challenge Anthropologists to integrate diverse perspectives and collaboratively forge knowledge with communities rather than impose externally derives frameworks. The study aims to learn from their strategies pertaining to sustainability, resilience, and community well-being. Additionally, the research highlights the challenges faced by the Kamar women in preserving their IK, particularly in the face of patriarchal structures that restrict their participation in decision-making and governance. In spite of these challenges, they persist in advocating for their knowledge systems and to empower themselves and their communities. The kamar epistemologies challenge colonial interpretations of knowledge, advocating for a paradigm shift that centers their voices and experiences. This contrasts with Western paradigms that have historically marginalized indigenous perspectives, often imposing external on indigenous communities. This study highlights to delve into the indigenous epistemologies of the Kamar and to explore their world beyond the Western paradigms and also aims to give voice to the perspectives of the Kamar women and find out the challenges they face in preserving their indigenous knowledge.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The study aims to explore the indigenous epistemologies of the Kamar tribe beyond the constraints of Western epistemologies and colonial perspectives. This approach addresses a significant gap in existing research, which has often interpreted indigenous knowledge through a colonial lens. The research seeks to center the perspectives, voices, experiences, and wisdom of the kamar people. This represents a shift from traditional anthropological approaches that have often imposed external frameworks on indigenous communities. Kamar knowledge system in it's entirety, encompassing social, cultural, religious, and spiritual practices. This holistic approach addresses the limitation of previous studies that may have compartmentalized

indigenous knowledge. It gives voice to the kamar women's perspectives and explores the challenges they face in preserving their indigenous knowledge. This focus addresses a gap in understanding the gendered aspects of IKS. The study contributes to the broader effort of decolonizing knowledge by recognizing and elevating indigenous epistemologies that have been historically marginalized.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Chhattisgarh, recognized as the twenty-eighth (28th) state of India, is geographically located in the central region of the nation, encompassing an area of 135,192 km² (52,199 square miles) and hosting a population of 25,540,196 according to the Census of India Report from 2011. The establishment of the state occurred on November 1st 2000. Forest constitutes a significant portion, accounting for 44% of the states local area. Chhattisgarh is endowed with rich and distinctive forest resources along with diverse biodiversity. It ranks as the third-largest forested area in India and experiences a tropical climatic condition. The North-Eastern segment of Chhattisgarh is predominantly characterized by hilly terrain, with the hilly regions exhibiting the highest concentration of tribal communities, which constitute up to 30.60% of the overall population. These communities primarily reside in the dense forested areas of Chhattisgarh. The state's demographic composition includes thirty seven (37) scheduled tribes and five (05) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

(i) Population and Sample:

The present study was conducted in the Gariaband and Dhamtari districts within the state of Chhattisgarh. The Kamar is one among five PVTGs of Chhattisgarh state. The *Kamar* is an endogamous group; they have a distinct cultural identity, often associated with their deep connection to forests and indigenous knowledge system. They have rich tradition of medicinal plants for healing, and vast knowledge of oral tradition including folklore, folk song, and folk tales essential to their identity. According to the Census of India Report (2011), the total population of the Kamar tribe was recorded at 26,530 individuals. In the Gariaband district, the population was documented at 16,220 comprising 8004 males and 8216 females. While in the Dhamtari district, the population totaled 6331 comprises of males and 3127 comprises of females.

(ii) Data and Sources of Data:

In the course of their investigation endeavours, the researchers augmented their primary data through the incorporation of an array of secondary sources, which are instrumental in providing a historical context and facilitating a broader and more nuanced perspective on the subject matter at hand. Thereby, creating a rich tapestry of information that contributes to a more holistic understanding of the Kamar cultural practices and knowledge systems.

(iii) Theoretical Framework:

The research endeavour was meticulously executed within the geographical confines of the Gariaband and Dhamtari districts located in the state of Chhattisgarh, regions that are well-documented as the traditional habitats of the Kamar a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) of Chhattisgarh. Thereby, allowing for a comprehensive examination and profound understanding of the unique cultural and social dynamics associated with this indigenous community. This particular focus on the Kamar facilitates an extensive exploration into the specific contextual framework that characterizes their existence, encompassing their intricate social

structures, beliefs, and practices. The research methodology adopted is qualitative in nature, which is deemed highly suitable for delving into epistemological frameworks and indigenous knowledge systems, thus enabling an enriched understanding of their worldview.

Qualitative research is predicated upon an interpretative assumption and presupposes that subjectivity within research will remain a constant. The postulation of subjectivity and the interpretative essence of qualitative research suggest a relational methodology to inquiry. Reflexivity is the term frequently employed within a multitude of qualitative research paradigms to denote to relational. Indigenous methodologies were employed to investigate the rationale behind action, epistemology and philosophy. Indigenous qualitative methodologies such as proverbs, metaphors, myth and narratives. This chosen method empowers the researchers to engage in a thorough investigation of cultural subtleties and to develop a contextual comprehension of the nuances that inform the Kamar's indigenous practices and knowledge systems. In executing this research, purposive sampling techniques were employed, which resulted in the careful selection of 183 respondents hailing from 26 villages across two aforementioned districts, thereby ensuring a diverse representation of the Kamar community. The focal point of this research was directed towards Cultural Specialization Experts (CSE), who are recognized as the principal custodians of indigenous knowledge, *Mukhya*, the community leader, women's of the kamar, and other notable members of this community, ensuring that the study captures a wide spectrum of indigenous insights. Moreover, the research exhibits a high degree of cultural sensitivity by systematically documenting oral traditions and incorporating local linguistic terms, which is of paramount importance for accurately capturing and conveying the essence of indigenous knowledge in all its complexity and richness. The methodological framework of the study is comprehensive, encompassing various such as surveys, archival research, and semi-participatory methods, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and visual recordings, all of which serve to cross-verify the findings and mitigate potential biases, ultimately leading to a more robust and reliable outcome.

IV. RESULT & DISCUSSION:

4.1 Ecological Knowledge of the Kamar and Related Epistemologies:

Through their indigenous epistemologies, they actively engage in the conservation and preservation of the fruits, soil, plants, animals, and other elements present in their ecological system. They maintain that adherence to the natural laws is pivotal for the attainment of *aatma-gyaan*, or self-knowledge. According to Cultural Specialization Expert (CSE) in Kamar, it is posited that mango trees requires elevated temperatures for optimal growth, which consequently facilitates fruit production during the months of March and April. A notable delay of one month in maturation of mangoes has been observed in recent years. This phenomenon suggests alterations in ecological conditions, which are profoundly impacting nature and its resources. Furthermore, it is believed that failing to adhere to the natural laws impedes their ability to achieve *aatma-gyaan* (self knowledge) within their ecological context. "Their contentment derives from their close association with nature and their commitment to traditional systems. We are prepared to disseminate all knowledge we possess, which can be utilized for commercial or service-oriented purposes. We are employing Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in a service-oriented framework, thereby contributing to the well-being of our mother Earth. We shall exclusive share our traditional ecological knowledge with those who aspire to engage in a path of service. The dissemination of our insights into significant knowledge is of paramount importance. Our elders possessed extensive wisdom. Our knowledge system encompasses all dimensions of our social, cultural, religious, economic, and spiritual practices, including *tantra* and *mantra*". This profound comprehension of local ecology stands as a testament to their enduring relationship with their

environment. It not only accentuates the Kamar's worldview but also plays an instrumental role in shaping their collective identity.



Figure: 1 Indigenous knowledge of their ecology

4.2 In the context of Forest Fires:

The Cultural Specialization Expert (CSE) believes that, “In order to safeguard the forest from conflagration, we reside within the forest for the duration of three months, spanning from March to May. This is primarily due to the fact that the forest is most susceptible to igniting during the month of March-May, when desiccated foliage detaches from the trees and accumulates in designated areas. The excessive heat can induce a spark within the accumulated leaves, resulting in the combustion of numerous trees in conjunction with the dry foliage”. Additionally, smaller flora and grasses is used in suppressing the ignition by the Kamar. Consequently, to ensure the preservation of their forest, they opt to inhabit in the forest itself. In instances of fire outbreak, they endeavor to quell the flames utilizing small verdant plants.



Figure: 2 kamar fire technique

4.3 Indigenous Knowledge of ‘Chua’:

Through their intricate knowledge system, they have constructed freshwater swamps, which they designate as ‘Chua’ (traditional well) in *Kamari* dialect. They engineer ‘Chua’, which is smaller in size than a traditional well, in proximity to a river, lake, canal, or similar water bodies. Typically, these structures are established in regions characterized by a high water table and diminished run off. The water level within these swamps is subject to fluctuations due to seasonal flooding and precipitation events. Initially, they eliminate the surface water that has accumulated, and within a span of 15-20 minutes, freshwater reemerges, allowing them to fill

the water in their containers. Subsequently, this water is utilized for purposes such as drinking, bathing, and laundering. The women of Kamar are responsible for retrieving potable water from the traditional well. In the *kauhabahara* village, the smaller wetland is referred to as *jhirri*, while the more expansive one is termed '*Dodngi*'. The '*Chua*' is integral to their cultural practices, exemplified by the employment of its water in death rituals and the veneration it receives during religious observances. Consequently, the locality in which it is deemed sacred thereby is safeguarding the flora that exists in its vicinity.



Figure: 3 '*chua*' traditional well



Figure: 4 fetching water from '*chua*'

4.4 Indigenous Knowledge and the epistemology of the Kamar Women:

Kamar women have held vital roles as knowledge-keepers in the form of oral tradition, and they equally transfer their knowledge in the form of folk songs, folk dance, folk lore, etc. Their role often shapes their authority, and their ecological stewardship. The patriarchy's marginalization naturally challenges their knowledge systems. Kamar women embody their knowledge through rituals, agricultural practices, ceremonies, cultural events, and training endeavours. The repercussions of patriarchy have frequently resulted in diminished rights and protections for these women, constraining their roles in local governance, traditional medicinal practices, healing and socio-religious activities. It has long disrupted the Indigenous Knowledge of the Kamar women by undermining their roles and contributions in societies. This culminates in the forfeiture of invaluable knowledge they possess concerning local ecosystems, medicinal flora, agriculture, and community welfare. They are also primary custodians of IK, tasked with transmitting it through generations. They also advocate that their land is not just a physical space but a source of identity, culture, and sustenance, but land ownership is hardly found among Kamar women. In certain instances, women held the position of head of the family, yet they delegated the task of decision-making to either their son or another male family member. However, their role in local governance, traditional medicines, traditional healers, and socio-religious activities is limited and restricted. Gender-based expectations restrict them access to resources by preventing them fully participating in knowledge sharing activities. They are often restricted from participating in

religious ceremonies due to the belief that “if their shadows fall on the traditional healers, healer’s power will become ineffective”. They are not given any position in tribal council.

In the present context, Kamar women are trying to pave their active role in local governance. They hold autonomy in both households and in the socio-political activity in the community, and they are making an effort so that their voices in communal decision-making are also heard. Their involvement in producing, selling, and trading bamboo handicrafts highlights their economic aspect. They have an effective role in agriculture, water conservation, and collecting minor forest produce, which reflects deep-rooted ecological knowledge. They are central figures in preserving and teaching this wisdom, which includes understanding of local ecology, use of medicinal plants, and ancestral respect. Their role is deeply ecological; managing natural resources and sustaining their families through ecological knowledge is a form of empowerment that reinforces their place in the community. Although they have unrestricted access to education and healthcare, their lack of interest and ignorance hinder their ability to fulfill societal roles and improve their quality of life. They actively participate in resource management activities such as land use, crop rotation, seed storage, and household budgeting, demonstrating a high degree of independence. They bear the primary duty of raising their children and providing informal training and education, which shapes the values and knowledge inherited by the subsequent generation. This role is crucial in the formation and preservation of cultural values. Overall, the suppression of the Kamar women not only deprives community’s critical knowledge but also perpetuates gender inequality, obstructing social and cultural development. Empowering and acknowledging their IK is imperative for fostering sustainable and inclusive societies.



Figure: 5 kamar women weaving basketry

5. The Epistemological Context of the Kamar:

The epistemologies of the Kamar are distinguished by an integrative worldview that intricately weaves together environment, spiritual, social, cultural, and religious dimensions. This intricate interrelation is fundamentally anchored in their ecological systems and oral traditions, which underscore the interconnected relationships among all entities, both animate and inanimate. In contrast, Western scientific epistemologies frequently adopt a reductionist framework, segmenting knowledge into separate disciplines. Although Western scientific paradigms are also subject to evolution, they often strive for universal principles that can be broadly applicable in various contexts. This endeavour for generalization may inadvertently disregard the importance of localized knowledge and cultural subtleties, which can result in the misinterpretation of indigenous practices and beliefs. Such knowledge is primarily disseminated through formal education and written documentation, potentially creating barriers to access and comprehension for individuals outside the academic realm. In contrast, the Kamar people predominantly depend on oral traditions for the transmission of

knowledge, fostering a communal approach to learning and understanding. This methodology underscores the significance of lived experiences and collective wisdom, enabling a dynamic and adaptive knowledge system. Western scientific methodologies addressing sustainability frequently emphasize technological solutions and policy frameworks, which may inadequately address the cultural and spiritual dimensions of environmental stewardship that indigenous knowledge can offer. The Kamar's relationship with their ecological environment is fundamental to their ontological framework. They regard the land, flora, fauna, and spiritual entities as essential elements of their existence, mirroring a profound connection to their ecological context. Kamar epistemology is characterized by its locality and contextuality, emphasizing the synthesis of knowledge within ecological systems. This approach contrasts with conventional scientific paradigms that frequently categorize knowledge into distinct compartments. Knowledge within the Kamar community is predominantly transmitted through lived experiences and communal wisdom in high regard, which are often neglected in Western epistemologies. Western epistemologies highlight relational knowledge, wherein understanding is derived from the interconnectedness of individual with their community and environment. This approach diverges from the individualistic methodologies prevalent in Western epistemologies, which often prioritize abstract reasoning and detachment from the community. There exists an epistemic resistance to colonial worldviews, which challenges, acknowledges, and elevates their perspectives within contemporary discourse. The ontology encompasses cultural and spiritual beliefs that inform their understanding of reality. This stands in stark contrast to Western ontology, which often prioritizes materialism and empirical evidence at the expense of spiritual or metaphysical considerations.

V. CONCLUSION:

Examining the epistemological frameworks of the Kamar community beyond the colonial perspective necessitates the acknowledgement and appreciation of knowledge systems that have historically been neglected by colonial authorities. This methodology recognizes their distinctive modalities of understanding the cosmos, which are frequently grounded in profound relationships with the land, communal ties, and, thereby accentuating their viewpoints, lived experiences, and accumulated wisdom. By affirming the legitimacy, we initiate a process of dismantling the enduring legacy of colonial knowledge frameworks that continue to prevail in academic discourse, policy formulation, and global governance, while simultaneously fostering a pluralistic paradigm that incorporates their insights. We endeavor to explore and integrate Kamar IKS into broader dialogues concerning sustainability and ecological stewardship. Such integration may furthermore yield alternative paradigms of coexistence and well-being. This intricate interrelation of ecological systems and cultural practices fundamentally informs Kamar's comprehension, engagement with, and interpretation of the natural environment. It underscores the reciprocal dynamics between ecological contexts and cultural values, beliefs, and practices. The epistemologies of the Kamar women encapsulate a framework wherein identity, community and nature amalgamate into a cohesive entity. Frequently serving as custodians of oral traditions, they possess the capacity to restore cultural memory and pride, thereby challenging the narratives imposed by the colonial histories. The acknowledgement of women's roles within their societal structure, notwithstanding certain constraints, unveils, a complex interplay of relationships. They embody their knowledge and occupy a pivotal position in rituals and cultural events. Their modes of knowing serves as a reminder of the significance of valuing ecological balance, communal resilience, and interconnectedness as fundamental components of empowerment. Kamar women have enriched the discourse on the intersectionality of gender, sovereignty, identity, and knowledge by advancing decolonization efforts. The recognition and elevation of indigenous women's position as leaders and knowledge custodians can contribute to the dismantling of gender biases and affirm the value of their contributions. The ontological and epistemological perspectives of the Kamar people reflect a holistic, interconnected, and contextually relevant

understanding of existence and knowledge, which markedly contrasts within Western paradigms. Acknowledging these distinctions is crucial for cultivating more inclusive approach to knowledge production and comprehension. Integrating the Kamar epistemologies with Western scientific paradigms can enrich discussions on sustainability, resilience, and community well-being. By recognizing the validity of indigenous knowledge systems, we can foster a more pluralistic approach that values diverse perspectives and collaborative knowledge creation. By engaging and encouraging Indigenous knowledge system of the Kamar, voices, and perspectives can become more inclusive, ethically grounded, and culturally sensitive.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The indigenous epistemologies of the Kamar people are local, contextual, and deeply ingrained in their ecology. This study includes only a small part of the research held among the Kamar, Gariaband, and Dhamatari districts of Chhattisgarh state, India. It is important to understand the findings discussed above as a partial contribution to the study's broader goals.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

This endeavor would not have been possible without the help and support of the Kamar people of the Gariaband and Dhamtari districts. The authors are deeply indebted to the Kamar for willingly sharing their indigenous ecological knowledge. The Indian Council of Social Sciences and Research, New Delhi, funded the project under ICSSR Research Projects "Special Call for Studies of the Culture and Geography of the Scheduled Tribes of India" (project ID ICSSR-RST-2022-728). The project's title is "Traditional Knowledge, Traditional Technology, and Epistemology Regarding the Salvaging Nature of Kamar PVTG in Chhattisgarh." Finally, I would like to thank all the Kamar elders and old age groups for sharing their experiences. Without their contribution, this research would not have been possible. A preliminary version of this study was presented at IUAES 2024 WAU Congress, Johannesburg, South Africa.

References:

1. Ani, M. (Internet Archive). (1994). *Yurugu: An African-centered critique of European Cultural thought and behavior*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press. <https://archive.org/details/yuruguafRICANCEN0000anim>
2. Asabere-Ameyaw, & Anamush-Mensah. (2006). Taboo Systems and Rituals—A Simple Technology for Environmental Resource Management: The Case of the Dagaaba and Mamprusis of Ghana. *Journal of Development Alternatives and Area Studies*, 25(1-2), 104-115. <https://www.econbiz.de/Record/taboo-systems-and-rituals-a-simple-technology-for-environmental-resource-management-the-case-of-the-dagaaba-and-mamprusis-of-ghana-asabere-ameyaw/10007632418>
3. Bartlett, R.A. (2000). BRINGING THE BRIGHT LAND INTO BEING [Ph.D Thesis, Department of Geography, University College]. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10124509/1/bringing-the-bright-land-into.pdf>
4. Baskin, C. (2005). Centering Aboriginal Worldviews in Social Work Education. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 34(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1326011100004014>
5. Dawson, A.S., Toombs, E., & Mushquash, C.J. (2017). Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/1.18584/iipj.2017.8.2.5>
6. Emereole, H.U., Munyadzwe, T.N., Ntingana, C.M., & Mosimakoko-Mosalakgoko, T.B. (2001). Rationalisation And Science Instructional Implications of Some Superstitious Beliefs about Natural

- Phenomena In Botswana. *Journal of the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 5(1), 65-84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10288457.2001.10756130>
7. Fakudze, C., Ohunniyi, M., & Rockford, K. (2003b). Cognitive Border Crossing: A Case of Swaziland High School Students. In *The Pursuit of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education* (pp. 58-62). Western Cape: School of Science and Mathematics Education.
 8. Fakudze, C., Oguniyi, M., & Rockford, K. (2003a). The Nature of Worldviews held by Swazi High School Students. In *The Pursuit of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education*. Western cape: School of Science and Mathematics Education.
 9. Kovach, M.(2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (1st ed.). University of Toronto Press. <https://dokumen.pub/indigenous-methodologies-characteristics-conversations-and-contexts-9781442612112-1442612118-9781442640429-1442640421.html>
 10. Luddeckens, D., & Schrimpf, M. (2018). *Medicine-Religion-Spirituality: Global Perspective on Traditional, Complementary, and Alternative Healing* (1st ed., Vol. 13). Transcript Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839445822>
 11. Morgan, D.L. (2003). Appropriation, Appreciation, Accommodation: Indigenous Wisdoms and Knowledge in Higher Education. In M. Bray (Ed.), *Comparative Education: Continuing Traditions, New Challenges, and New Paradigms* (Vol. 1, 35-49). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-1094-8_3
 12. Nakata, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Interface: Underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information and information systems. *IFLA Journal*, 28(5-6), 281-291. <https://dpi.org/10.1177/034003520202800513>
 13. Nakata, M. (2007). The Cultural Interface. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 36(S1), Article S1. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1326011100004646>
 14. Roberts, R.M., & Wills, P.R. (1998). Understanding Maori Epistemology: A Scientific Perspective. In *Tribal Epistemologies*. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/978-0429431517-4/understanding-maori-epistemology-roma-mere-roberts-peter-wills>
 15. Sunepsungla. (2005). *Foundationalism versus Tribal epistemologies* [Ph.D Thesis, North-Eastern Hill University]. <https://shodhganaga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/60546>