



Research Article

Intergenerational transmission of feminist indigenous knowledge in Nigeria: A study of cultural continuity and change

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The intergenerational transmission of feminist indigenous knowledge (FIK) in Nigeria represents a critical area of study that explores the mechanisms through which traditional feminist values, practices, and wisdom are passed down through generations, ensuring continuity while adapting to societal changes. The study provides insight into FIK, then explores its historical continuity of FIK, the role of women as custodians and transmitters of FIK in Nigeria, and critical historical events among feminists in Nigeria that have influenced cultural change and continuity and the contemporary continuity and change. The study adopted a qualitative approach. Five Nigerian Indigenous women from Osun State purposively participated in this study. Osun State is rich in Yoruba cultural traditions, especially about FIK. The semi-structured interview guide was used to generate the data, which was analyzed thematically. The study concluded that FIK remains vital in Nigeria's cultural and social fabric. Still, its future transmission faces significant challenges, requiring deliberate efforts to sustain its relevance.

Keywords: Community resilienc, cultural continuity, feminist indigenous knowledge, Nigeria, transmission

1. Introduction

Nigeria's various ethnic groups have historically operated within patriarchal structures; yet, women have played significant roles as nurturers, instructors, and transmitters of essential knowledge. The contributions of women to sustaining the cultural values of historically patriarchal societies are the central focus of FIK. According to Aluede and Okakah (2022), FIK in Nigeria embodies the traditional wisdom, practices, and worldviews of Indigenous Nigerian women, reflecting a profound connection to the environment, community, and cultural heritage. This body of knowledge offers unique insights into gender roles, social justice, and empowerment, challenging colonial logic and settler colonialist ideals (Huuki & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2023).

The intergenerational transfer of Indigenous knowledge is essential for maintaining cultural legacies and fostering community resilience. Indigenous knowledge models in Nigeria emphasize a holistic understanding of illness causation, incorporating spiritual dimensions alongside physical symptoms, while also underscoring the importance of healthy living in preventing disease (Aluede & Okakah, 2022). Women frequently occupy pivotal roles in local economies through farming, trading, and artisanal crafts. They possess extensive knowledge of local agriculture, medicinal plants, and sustainable environmental practices. Indigenous African women are often custodians of traditional medicine, using herbal and healing practices to treat illness and sustain health.

In African societies, women play crucial roles in rituals and ceremonies—such as childbirth, marriage, and funerals—and are key to maintaining cultural continuity and social cohesion. Female elders, in particular, serve as storytellers who preserve and transmit history, values, and moral lessons through oral narratives, songs, and dances. However, colonial influences and modernization disrupted these traditional systems. Colonial policies diminished women's cultural roles, while Western education marginalized Indigenous knowledge (Abimbola et al., 2023).

Western representations of African societies often erased or distorted women's contributions to Indigenous practices, especially in leadership, spirituality, and labor.

As Bakare-Yusuf (2003) notes, the introduction of European economic systems privileged male labor, relegating women to informal or undervalued positions despite their central roles in pre-colonial economies. The imposition of Western ideologies further devalued Indigenous practices, including non-gendered social systems, thus curtailing African women's autonomy and agency.

Despite these challenges, Nigerian women have continued to preserve and transmit their cultural heritage, demonstrating resilience in the face of external pressures and social transformation. FIK remains indispensable to Nigerian culture, influencing agriculture, healthcare, environmental conservation, and social organization. Preserving these traditions through the study of knowledge transmission is vital to prevent their loss to globalization (Hangshing, 2019). Examining the transmission of FIK not only validates women's contributions but also strengthens intergenerational ties and fosters identity and belonging—essential for sustaining cultural practices and addressing contemporary environmental challenges.

Most existing research on Indigenous knowledge in Nigeria focuses broadly on ethnic or regional groups. There has been limited attention to women's knowledge systems or feminist perspectives within specific Indigenous communities such as Osun State, where such knowledge is actively preserved or evolving. Hence, this study investigated the mechanisms of FIK transmission across generations in Nigeria, explored the impact of socio-cultural changes on its continuity, and assessed the implications of these changes for cultural identity and community resilience.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Historical Continuity of FIK in Nigeria

FIK in Nigeria encompasses diverse beliefs and cultural norms maintained and transmitted by women across various regions. These knowledge systems are embedded in daily life and reflect a deep understanding of local environments, practices, and community needs. Examples are provided in the subsequent section.

2.1.1. Farming methods

Women in Southern Nigeria, particularly within the Yoruba and Igbo communities, practice crop rotation, intercropping, and organic fertilization as part of sustainable traditional farming methods (Olumba & Olumba, 2024; Onoh et al., 2023). These techniques enhance soil fertility and agricultural productivity. Women are also highly skilled in the cultivation and processing of cassava, producing staple foods such as tapioca, *fufu*, and *garri*. Their expertise includes traditional methods of peeling, fermenting, and drying cassava to ensure safety and edibility. Igbo women, in particular, possess specialized knowledge in planting, harvesting, and storing yams, which they process into products like yam flour and pottage. In Northern Nigeria, women have preserved traditional dryland farming practices suited to arid climates, including the use of drought-resistant crops and soil conservation techniques such as *zai* pits—small planting basins that retain water (Aderinoye-Abdulwahab et al., 2024). These women play a critical role in seed selection and preservation, maintaining the genetic diversity and resilience of crops such as millet, sorghum, and groundnuts.

2.1.2. Medical care and herbal remedies

Women also serve as traditional health practitioners. In Hausa culture, elder women known as *Ungozoma* possess deep knowledge of labor and postpartum care. They employ herbal remedies and traditional techniques to ensure the well-being of mothers and infants, using plants like neem (*Azadirachta indica*), moringa (*Moringa oleifera*), and baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) to treat malaria, gastrointestinal ailments, and skin disorders (Sumankuuro et al., 2022). Similarly, women in Southern Nigeria utilize herbs such as scent leaf (*Ocimum gratissimum*), bitter leaf (*Vernonia amygdalina*), *Uziza* (*Piper guineense*), and *Ogbono* (*Irvingia gabonensis*) to manage illnesses like respiratory infections, digestive issues, and malaria (Chijindu et al., 2020). Traditional birth

attendants in these regions assist during childbirth and provide postpartum care, including herbal baths and massages, based on Indigenous knowledge (Aworinde et al., 2020).

2.1.3. Arts and crafts

Women in Northern Nigeria, particularly in Kano and Katsina, are renowned for their mastery of weaving and dyeing techniques. They produce *adire* (indigo-dyed fabric) and elaborate embroidery, sustaining these traditions through generations (Benjamin, 2024). Yoruba women are especially noted for creating *adire*, a resist-dyed textile with cultural significance (Igbekele & Aihie, 2023). In Akwete, Abia State, women weave the traditional *Akwete* cloth, known for its complex patterns and use in ceremonial attire. These textiles are handcrafted with natural dyes and intricate designs (Onwuakpa & Ononeme, 2016). Igbo women also excel in jewelry making and beadwork. These artisanal crafts serve both functional and symbolic purposes, acting as sources of income and expressions of identity and status.

2.1.4. Social and community leadership

Women hold important leadership roles in various communities. In many Igbo societies, the *Omu* or market queen oversees trade activities, resolves disputes, and represents women's interests (Achebe, 2021). Groups such as the *Umuada* (Daughters of the Land) play influential roles in community decision-making and social governance (Clark, 2018). Similarly, the *Iyaloja* in Yoruba communities leads women's market associations and contributes to community-level policymaking (Osunyikanmi, 2017). These structures provide platforms for women to engage in leadership and influence socio-economic development.

2.1.5. Learning and skill development

Through storytelling, songs, and oral traditions, women transmit moral lessons, cultural values, and communal histories. They also play a central role in teaching younger generations practical skills such as cooking, weaving, pottery, and basketry, ensuring the continuity of Indigenous practices and identity (Swinbank, 2021).

2.2. Role of Women as Custodians and Transmitters of FIK in Nigeria

The preservation, adaptation, and dissemination of Indigenous knowledge often depend significantly on the roles played by women—particularly in the domains of practices, rituals, and customs that sustain communal life. Women serve as essential agents in the intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage, ensuring that traditional knowledge endures through time. Their contributions can be examined across three interconnected dimensions: social and cultural contexts, knowledge domains, and transmission mechanisms.

2.2.1. Social and cultural contexts

In many Nigerian communities—especially those with matrilineal traditions—women function as vital custodians of cultural and spiritual knowledge. They are instrumental in maintaining genealogical records, performing traditional rituals, and preserving oral narratives that shape communal identity. As primary storytellers, women pass down folktales, songs, and proverbs that encode moral lessons and cultural values (Chingiz, 2024). These narratives often serve not only to reinforce identity but also to contest patriarchal norms by asserting female agency and promoting intergenerational solidarity (Chingiz, 2024).

Women also play a central role in rites of passage, including childbirth, marriage, and initiation ceremonies, where they transmit the meanings and practices associated with these cultural milestones (Solomon, 2023). Through such ritual participation, women reinforce values of strength, resilience, and communal belonging—principles that align with feminist indigenous perspectives.

2.2.2. Knowledge domains handled by women

Women are the primary custodians of traditional medicinal knowledge, particularly regarding the identification, cultivation, and application of indigenous plants. Research shows that women farmers play a critical role in producing and conserving these plants, which are essential not only for community health but also for economic resilience (Mbelebele et al., 2024). Their deep understanding of medicinal properties and sustainable agricultural practices contributes significantly to food security and ecological balance (Kola, 2022).

In rural areas, women often utilize wild edible plants, which are crucial for household nutrition and biodiversity conservation (Caballero-Roque et al., 2024). Women also preserve cultural identity through traditional crafts such as weaving, pottery, beading, and ceramics. These activities are not merely artistic but serve educational purposes, linking younger generations to their cultural roots (Scherrer et al., 2023). Younger women acquire these skills through observational learning, apprenticeship, and hands-on participation—working alongside seasoned craftswomen or assisting elders in farming, which also enables the transfer of sustainable land use practices and crop management strategies.

2.2.3. Mechanisms adopted by women in the transmission of indigenous knowledge

Women utilize a range of informal educational strategies to pass on Indigenous knowledge. These mechanisms emphasize experiential learning and foster both practical skills and cultural values (Tang & Othman, 2023). Ceremonial events—such as puberty rites—serve as key moments for the transmission of moral and cultural teachings. According to Schroeder et al. (2022), such rituals guide young people through adolescence, equipping them with knowledge about adult responsibilities, community expectations, and local customs.

Initiation traditions in many Nigerian communities symbolize the transition from childhood to adulthood, during which crucial lessons about gender roles, social conduct, and communal obligations are conveyed. Women are central figures in these rites, often tasked with educating younger members about womanhood, familial roles, and broader societal norms. Cultural festivals also provide opportunities for this transmission, as women teach younger generations traditional songs, dances, handicrafts, and culinary practices.

Additionally, women's organizations such as the *Iyaloja* (market women leaders) and *Umuada* (Igbo women's association) serve as platforms for intergenerational dialogue, community problem-solving, and cultural preservation (Achebe, 2021; Osunyikanmi, 2017). These associations offer structured spaces where women can mentor younger members, share knowledge, and collectively engage in community affairs. Frequent market days further serve as social hubs where women exchange information related to health, trade, and daily living, thereby reinforcing communal ties and enhancing collective resilience.

2.3. Key Historical Events among Feminists in Nigeria That Have Influenced Cultural Change and Continuity

Several historical events have played crucial roles in shaping feminist thought and activism in Nigeria. These moments reflect both continuity and transformation in cultural and political life, highlighting how women have consistently challenged dominant systems and preserved Indigenous knowledge systems.

2.3.1. Aba Women's Riot (1929)

Also known as *Ogu Umunwanyi*, the Aba Women's Riot was a landmark anti-colonial movement led by Igbo women in Eastern Nigeria. The protest was a response to British colonial taxation and administrative policies (Afolabi & Akeem, 2022; Uchendu & Okonkwo, 2021). This movement demonstrated the political agency and collective strength of women, as they mobilized against oppression and asserted their roles in community governance. The legacy of the Aba Women's Riot continues to inspire feminist activism and underscores women's influence in promoting social change and gender equality (Jike, 2010).

2.3.2. *Market women's associations (1960s–1970s)*

During the post-independence era, women traders—particularly in urban centers like Lagos—formed associations to protect their economic interests and bolster their social influence. These groups helped stabilize economic exchanges and enforced trade agreements independently of formal state systems. Grossman (2020) notes that these associations fostered local economic development by maintaining trust and cooperation among traders.

2.3.3. *Kudirat Abiola's activism (1990s)*

Kudirat Abiola emerged as a central figure in Nigeria's pro-democracy struggle against military dictatorship. Her activism, which led to her assassination in 1996, highlighted both the courage and vulnerability of women in political resistance (Aluko, 2020). Her legacy continues to resonate within feminist and human rights movements, serving as a powerful example of political engagement and sacrifice.

2.3.4. *#BringBackOurGirls Movement (2014–present)*

Launched in response to the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls by Boko Haram in Chibok, the *#BringBackOurGirls* campaign became a global advocacy movement. It drew international attention to gendered violence, insecurity, and the right to education for girls in Nigeria. The movement demonstrated the intersection of feminism, education, and national security, and mobilized both local and global actors to fight for the rights and protection of women and girls.

These events illustrate the continuity of Indigenous resistance practices and the adaptation of feminist activism to modern challenges. Together, they shape the trajectory of feminist knowledge systems and cultural transformation in Nigeria.

2.4. **Contemporary Continuity and Change**

Recent developments in Nigeria demonstrate a dynamic blend of cultural continuity and innovative change, especially through efforts to preserve and revitalize FIK. These initiatives span cultural, educational, grassroots, and scholarly domains.

2.4.1. *Revitalization and reclaiming traditions*

Efforts to reclaim and reintegrate traditional knowledge systems—especially those that empower women—are gaining momentum across Nigeria. For instance, the Nigerian Women Agro-Allied Farmers Association (NIWAAFA) supports rural women in shea butter production using Indigenous techniques (Asogwa et al., 2020; Kabir & Adebola, 2024). Similarly, the “Iyalode Project” revives the historical role of the *Iyalode*—a traditional Yoruba female leader—in community decision-making and conflict resolution (Olu-Owolabi et al., 2024; Opesemowo & Adekomaya, 2024; Opesemowo & Odumosu, 2023).

Incorporating tradition into modern education, the Girls' Coding Program by the Women's Technology Centre (W.TEC) embeds storytelling and cultural elements into its tech-based curriculum, making digital education more relatable and inclusive (Defriend & Cook, 2023). The Nsibidi Institute further promotes traditional knowledge through the study of Indigenous writing systems like Nsibidi, emphasizing cultural pride and continuity (Onabanjo, 2011).

2.4.2. *Educational initiatives*

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has begun revising national curricula to include Indigenous knowledge, such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa language instruction, with a focus on women's roles in literature and folklore (Yewande & Olawunmi, 2023). Universities such as Obafemi Awolowo University and the University of Ibadan have introduced programs that explore Indigenous knowledge systems through feminist lenses, recognizing women's contributions to cultural transmission (Akpa-Inyang & Chima, 2023).

In addition, community-based educational programs like Reproductive Health Education and Family Planning (RHFP) integrate traditional health knowledge with modern education, highlighting women's central roles in community health practices.

2.4.3. Grassroots women's movements and advocacy

A number of grassroots feminist movements are actively promoting gender equality and women's rights in contemporary Nigeria. Market March organizes public awareness campaigns to combat sexual harassment in market spaces (Chiluwa, 2024). The Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NUTF) advocates for gender-sensitive policies and supports female political candidates (Sultan, 2023). The Feminist Coalition focuses on gender justice, economic empowerment, and fundraising for women's rights initiatives. These groups collectively foster safer environments for women, enhance political participation, and advocate for systemic change.

2.4.4. Research and documentation

Academic and community-based institutions are increasingly investing in the documentation of feminist knowledge systems. The Centre for Gender and Social Policy Studies at Obafemi Awolowo University conducts research on women's contributions to Indigenous knowledge and social equity. The project Reclaiming the Feminine Voice in Nigerian Oral Traditions collects and analyzes folklore, proverbs, and oral histories from a feminist perspective. Likewise, the Feminist Research Center at the University of Lagos conducts interdisciplinary studies on gender, culture, and feminist practices in Nigeria.

These documentation efforts ensure that FIK systems are not only preserved but also recognized as legitimate and valuable in both academic and community contexts.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study employed an exploratory qualitative research design, utilizing a focus group discussion with Indigenous women to explore the dynamics of intergenerational transmission of FIK. This approach was chosen to elicit diverse perspectives and lived experiences, enabling an in-depth understanding of how FIK is preserved, practiced, and transferred across generations.

3.2. Participants

The population for the study comprised all women residing in Osun State, Nigeria. The target group included women from communities with established traditions of Indigenous knowledge practices, particularly those actively involved in festivals, rituals, or traditional leadership roles. Participants were selected to reflect intergenerational perspectives on the transmission of FIK. The sample consisted of two generational cohorts: Elder women (aged 50 and above) who serve as custodians and transmitters of Indigenous knowledge, and Younger women (aged 20–49) who are learners and recipients in the transmission process.

A stratified purposeful sampling strategy was employed to ensure balanced representation across age groups. The final sample included three elder women and two younger women, selected based on their active involvement in cultural practices and their relevance to the study's objectives. This composition was intended to provide insight into both the mechanisms and challenges of intergenerational knowledge transmission.

3.3. Instruments

A discussion guide was developed to facilitate the focus group discussions and ensure consistency in data collection. The guide was designed to elicit in-depth responses related to the intergenerational transmission of FIK, as well as issues of cultural continuity and change within the participants' communities.

The guide focused on three central themes aligned with the study's objectives. First, it examined the mechanisms by which FIK is passed down through generations, including informal education,

ritual practices, storytelling, and apprenticeship. Second, it explored the impact of socio-cultural changes—such as modernization, migration, education, and religion—on the transmission, evolution, and survival of FIK. Third, it investigated how these cultural shifts influence identity formation and the resilience of local communities.

The instrument encouraged open-ended responses, allowing participants to share their personal experiences, knowledge systems, and perceptions freely. This ensured a rich and nuanced understanding of the dynamic role of women in sustaining Indigenous knowledge.

3.4. Data Collection

Data were collected through a combination of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Sessions were scheduled in consultation with participants to ensure convenience and comfort. All discussions took place in a conducive and private setting, allowing for open and uninterrupted dialogue.

The focus group discussions followed a semi-structured format guided by the discussion instrument and lasted for approximately ninety minutes, with five-minute breaks every 25 minutes. Each session began with a fifteen-minute introduction that included a warm welcome, an explanation of the study's purpose, and a presentation of the ground rules for respectful and inclusive participation. The sessions concluded with a fifteen-minute summary of the key ideas discussed, a prompt for any additional thoughts, and expressions of appreciation for participants' time and contributions.

Audio recorders were used to capture the discussions and interviews, while field notes were taken to document non-verbal cues, contextual observations, and spontaneous insights that added depth to the verbal responses.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method suited for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data. The analysis began with the researcher listening to the audio recordings and reading through the transcripts multiple times to become thoroughly immersed in the data and to identify initial patterns. From this process, initial codes were generated by labeling relevant segments of the text that corresponded to the research questions.

Subsequently, related codes were grouped into broader categories and emerging themes. These themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately reflected the data. Redundant or overlapping themes were removed, while others were merged or renamed as appropriate. Each theme was then clearly defined and aligned with the guiding research questions.

Findings were reported by elaborating on each theme and incorporating direct quotes from participants to support and illustrate the interpretation of results. To ensure the reliability and validity of the analysis, the researcher employed triangulation by cross-verifying participant responses, observing non-verbal behaviors, and addressing ethical considerations. This process helped to confirm the trustworthiness and credibility of the identified themes.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

Given the study's engagement with Indigenous communities and the exploration of culturally significant knowledge, ethical sensitivity was paramount. Prior to data collection, the researcher sought and obtained formal permission and approval from relevant community authorities, ensuring that all activities were conducted with cultural respect and legitimacy.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. The purpose, procedures, and potential outcomes of the study were communicated using culturally appropriate language and formats, ensuring participants fully understood their role in the research. Participation was entirely voluntary, and every effort was made to minimize power imbalances or undue influence that might arise from expectations imposed by community leaders. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants were strictly maintained throughout the study. No identifying information was

disclosed, and all data were handled with the utmost care to protect participants' identities and the integrity of the knowledge shared.

4. Findings

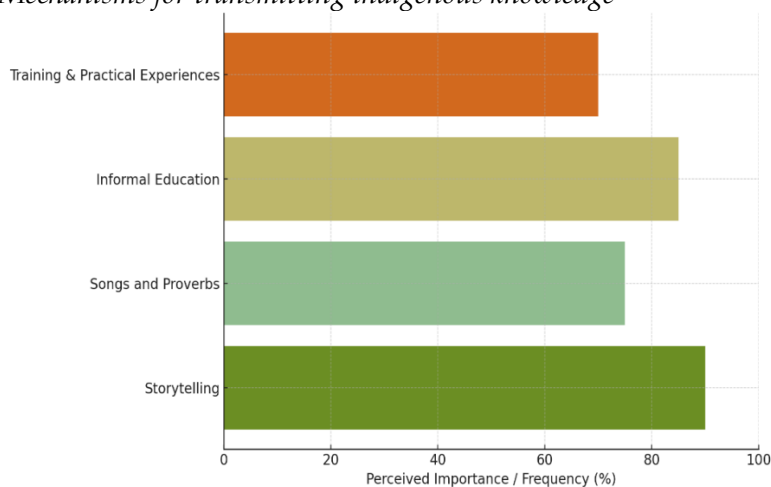
The presentation of results follows the sequence of the research questions posed in the study. Themes were used to organize and articulate the perspectives, experiences, and insights of participants regarding the intergenerational transmission of FIK and its role in cultural continuity and transformation.

4.1. Mechanisms through which FIK is transmitted across Generations

The mechanisms through which FIK is transmitted based on the findings from the participants include storytelling, songs and proverbs, training and practical experiences, and informal education (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Mechanisms for transmitting indigenous knowledge



Participants described a variety of mechanisms through which FIK is transmitted across generations in Osun State, including oral storytelling, songs and proverbs, hands-on training, and informal education within family structures.

Oral storytelling emerged as a fundamental mechanism. One participant reflected on the legacy of her mother's role in preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge:

Ooh, you just reminded me of my late mother. May the Lord rest her soul. She was a custodian of cultural knowledge learned from her mother. She gathers us in her local kitchen to share stories... These story-telling sessions often happen in the evening when she returns from the market. The interactive nature of her oral storytelling allows us to engage with narratives by asking questions or providing reflections, reinforcing the lessons being shared (Participant 5, personal communication, 2024).

Such storytelling not only educates but also reinforces cultural identity by preserving the narratives of powerful women, goddesses, and historical figures—such as Osun, Oya, and Moremi—who are portrayed as leaders and protectors. These stories were noted to often challenge patriarchal norms while reinforcing women's roles in decision-making and community leadership.

In addition to stories, participants emphasized the use of songs and proverbs as key carriers of cultural wisdom. One participant noted that “most of the stories of feminist deities and historical figures I know are encapsulated in songs and proverbs” (Participant, personal communication, 2024). Proverbs and chants were described as short, memorable, and rich with meaning, allowing lessons about women's roles, virtues, and resilience—especially those associated with Yemoja, Oya, and Osun—to be passed down in daily conversations.

Experiential learning and apprenticeship were also cited as essential. A traditional healer explained that her knowledge of medicinal plants, midwifery, and Indigenous healing practices was acquired through observation and direct practice under her mother's guidance. Similarly, Participant 4 stated that "FIK can be transmitted through training and practical experiences" (Participant 4, personal communication, 2024). Skills such as beading, weaving, and ceramics are learned by assisting more experienced women and through repeated practice.

Informal education, particularly within the home, was another critical theme. This mode of transmission is often subtle yet effective, rooted in day-to-day interactions. Participant 2 explained, "I learned cooking and home management through familiarity and by observing my mother while doing it" (Participant 2, personal communication, 2024). Such informal processes ensure the preservation and adaptation of cultural practices, bridging traditional values with contemporary life.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the intergenerational transmission of FIK in Osun State occurs through culturally embedded mechanisms that blend oral traditions, embodied practices, and familial mentorship. These methods not only sustain knowledge but also strengthen identity, resilience, and continuity within the community.

4.2. Impact of Socio-Cultural Changes on the Continuity of Transmission of FIK

Findings from the study reveal that socio-cultural changes—particularly Westernization, urbanization, formal education, and technological advancement—have exerted both positive and negative influences on the continuity of FIK in Osun State.

Participant 4 expressed concern over the decline of traditional practices due to Western influence:

Olaju ti ba gbogbo e je, meaning Westernization has spoiled everything. New cultural norms, beliefs, and practices brought forth by globalization and Westernization frequently clash with traditional Indigenous knowledge (Participant 4, personal communication, 2024).

Many forms of FIK are increasingly regarded as "backward" or "unscientific" by Western standards. For instance, the replacement of traditional healing and agricultural techniques with modern medicine and industrial farming reduces the perceived relevance of Indigenous practices, resulting in diminished transmission across generations.

Additionally, while Western values promoting gender equality have expanded women's access to education and economic opportunities, they have also had unintended consequences. Traditional roles central to FIK systems—such as herbalism, midwifery, and spiritual leadership—are increasingly devalued or neglected. As Participant 4 implied, these shifts may unintentionally weaken Indigenous systems where women have historically held knowledge authority.

Participant 5 highlighted the disruption of traditional knowledge pathways due to urban migration:

I have three children who are not currently with me, even though they are not married. Younger generations are moving from rural to urban regions for more excellent economic prospects..." (Participant 5, personal communication, 2024).

The movement of young women away from their communities interrupts the intergenerational exchange that typically occurs through close daily contact, communal rituals, and mentorship by elders. At the same time, their exposure to diverse cultural influences in urban environments may lead to hybrid knowledge systems that integrate Indigenous and modern practices. While this adaptability can ensure the survival of some elements of FIK, it may also erode its distinctive features and spiritual depth.

Participant 2 noted the impact of formal education, particularly its Western orientation, on the erosion of FIK:

It is good to learn, but Nigeria's formal education system, which is mainly based on Western curricula, sometimes disregards or minimizes Indigenous knowledge, including feminist viewpoints. The customary wisdom passed down by our ancestors may be lost on younger generations when they pursue formal education (Participant 2, personal communication, 2024).

This prioritization of scientific rationality and secular frameworks may marginalize the holistic and spiritual components that are integral to FIK systems. However, participants also acknowledged positive developments brought by technological advancements.

Participant 3 emphasized the preservation potential of digital tools, stating that digital archives, social media, and online platforms are increasingly used to document and share FIK traditions (Participant 3, personal communication, 2024). These platforms serve as alternative channels for knowledge transmission, ensuring that rituals, practices, and oral traditions can be retained and accessed even amid socio-cultural transformation.

In sum, while socio-cultural changes pose significant challenges to the continuity of FIK, they also offer new opportunities for adaptation, innovation, and preservation. The findings underscore the need for intentional efforts to balance modern influences with the safeguarding of Indigenous knowledge systems rooted in cultural identity and gendered community practices.

4.3. Implication of Socio-cultural Changes in Continuity and Transmission of FIK on Cultural Identity and Community Resilience

The findings reveal that socio-cultural changes have significant implications for both cultural identity and community resilience in the context of FIK transmission. While such changes – driven by urbanization, globalization, formal education, and technology – pose challenges, they also present opportunities for cultural revitalization and innovation.

4.3.1. Cultural identity

Participants reported that the erosion of FIK threatens the cultural distinctiveness and ancestral rootedness of their communities. Participant 1 noted:

Communities may see a deterioration of their cultural identity as feminist Indigenous knowledge systems are eroded by urbanization, globalization, and Western influences. A group may feel less connected to its ancestral roots and less like it belongs if its traditional customs, rituals, and knowledge are lost (Participant 1, personal communication, 2024).

Such losses can result in diminished community cohesion and weaken the symbolic markers that define a group's heritage and worldview. Participant 2 added that young people, particularly those who relocate to urban areas or are educated in Western-oriented schools, may suffer from cultural disorientation:

Younger generations may experience identity crises... They could become perplexed about their cultural identity and place in their community due to being torn between conventional ideals and contemporary influences (Participant 2, personal communication, 2024).

This dynamic often results in hybrid identities, where traditional and modern values coexist. While hybridization reflects adaptability, it can also dilute core cultural elements and reduce collective empowerment. However, Participant 4 provided a more optimistic perspective, explaining that integrating new ideas and technologies into traditional systems allows communities to adapt FIK to contemporary realities. This approach not only ensures cultural survival but can also redefine identity in more gender-equitable terms, challenging patriarchal norms and reinforcing inclusive interpretations of heritage.

4.3.2. Community resilience

The participants emphasized that the continued transmission of FIK plays a vital role in strengthening community resilience. Participant 5 observed that migration and urbanization have disrupted social structures and communal bonds, resulting in fragmented knowledge-sharing networks:

Social structures essential for a community's resilience have been upset... It has led to the deterioration of shared knowledge and communal links, making it more difficult for communities to respond to problems as a group (Participant 5, personal communication, 2024).

Nevertheless, the persistence of FIK – particularly through the agency of women – has helped mitigate these disruptions. Women, as custodians of traditional wisdom, not only preserve cultural

practices but also serve as anchors for community values and decision-making. Through intergenerational transmission, they help future generations navigate contemporary challenges while remaining connected to their cultural origins.

A striking example is the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005. The annual Osun Festival, which celebrates the goddess Osun, continues to affirm Yoruba spirituality and the central role of women as priestesses and spiritual leaders. According to participants, the global visibility of the festival – now broadcast on social media – has expanded its impact and reinforced the relevance of FIK in both local and global contexts.

These findings suggest that the future of Indigenous feminist knowledge will depend on communities' ability to balance cultural continuity with innovation. By embracing adaptation while protecting core traditions, communities can ensure that FIK remains a dynamic and empowering force – preserving identity, enhancing resilience, and inspiring future generations.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

This study explored the intergenerational transmission of FIK and its continuity and change. Three themes were generated for the study. The first theme was titled "*Mechanisms*." It was discovered that a significant portion of the participants disclosed that storytelling is one of the primary ways to transmit FIK across generations. This corroborates Hausknecht et al.'s (2021) findings that storytelling is a foundational practice in Indigenous cultures, where elders share knowledge through narratives encapsulating history, values, and teachings. Indigenous feminisms emphasize the importance of intergenerational dialogue, where stories reflect the unique experiences of Indigenous women, addressing issues of sexism and cultural resilience (Anderson, 2020). Digital storytelling initiatives have emerged, allowing Aboriginal youth to create and share their stories, thus reinforcing their cultural identity and connection to traditional knowledge (Edmonds et al., 2022). Storytelling is a common way for women to transmit knowledge. Through storytelling, women in various communities gather to recount tales of their ancestors' bravery and emphasize the significance of respecting their environment, fostering a deep connection to nature and heritage. Storytelling is vital for transmitting FIK across generations, fostering cultural continuity and identity. This method preserves traditional narratives and empowers younger generations to engage in heritage actively.

Participants reported that FIK in Nigeria, particularly in herbal medicine and midwifery, is effectively transmitted through training and practical experiences, as evidenced by the roles of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) and female producers. TBAs are pivotal in managing pregnancy complications among Indigenous women and employ both physical and metaphysical strategies based on their training and experiences (Arukwe et al., 2024). Also, traditional skills like beading, weaving, and ceramics are taught through training. Younger women gain knowledge by assisting more seasoned craftspeople and practicing and observing as they go. Through practical experience, farming techniques and information regarding sustainable practices, soil conservation, and crop management are passed along. Additionally, FIK is transmitted through familial networks, particularly from mothers to daughters. This transmission encompasses essential skills such as cooking, childcare, and home management, and this corroborates the findings of Gareau (2023), who stated that mothers play a crucial role in teaching daughters about practices, ensuring that cultural values are maintained across generations.

A significant concern of the participants was the influence of forces such as globalization, urbanization, education, and technology, which affected how FIK was preserved, adapted, and transmitted across generations. These changes have led to both the erosion and revitalization of FIK, depending on the context and the community's responses. The shift to urban settings often results in a disconnection from traditional practices, diminishing the transmission of Indigenous knowledge (Gareau, 2023). Educational reforms incorporating Indigenous epistemologies have legitimized previously marginalized knowledge, fostering a resurgence of feminist Indigenous practices (Park, 2022). Programs that integrate Indigenous perspectives into nursing and other fields exemplify how education can revitalize and adapt Indigenous knowledge for contemporary

contexts (Moore, 2023). While these forces can threaten Indigenous knowledge, they also present opportunities for revitalization through community resilience and adaptive practices. The challenge lies in balancing modern influences with the preservation of traditional wisdom.

Participants reported that the erosion of FIK systems due to urbanization, globalization, and Western influences significantly impacts community cultural identity. This confirms the findings of Suzack et al. (2011), who revealed that urbanization often leads to the dilution of traditional practices as individuals migrate to cities, resulting in a fragmented cultural identity. The marginalization of conventional knowledge systems threatens the sustainability of cultural practices that have historically defined communities (Nijar, 2013). Conversely, some argue that integrating diverse influences can lead to a dynamic cultural evolution, allowing communities to adapt and thrive in a changing world. However, this perspective often overlooks the profound loss of unique cultural identities accompanying such changes.

The study reveals the profound importance of Indigenous knowledge systems, particularly those rooted in feminist traditions. This knowledge is passed down through ceremonies, oral histories, artwork, and community gatherings. Nonetheless, urbanization, globalization, and Westernization affect the transmission processes. FIK has been diluted and occasionally lost as a result of these causes, especially as newer generations grow more alienated from their cultural origins. Many communities have persevered in maintaining and modifying their feminist Indigenous practices despite these obstacles, particularly in areas like Osun State. Women played a crucial role in preserving these traditions, and there is evidence of resilience and continuity. However, a discernible change exists in how younger generations understand and apply this knowledge as they reframe classic feminist principles to fit modern social contexts.

The study concluded that FIK remains vital in Nigeria's cultural and social fabric. Still, its future transmission faces significant challenges, requiring deliberate efforts to sustain its relevance.

6. Future Implications

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations have been proposed to support the preservation, adaptation, and transmission of FIK in Nigeria, particularly in the face of socio-cultural change.

To ensure the sustainability of FIK across generations, oral histories, rituals, and traditional practices should be systematically preserved using multimedia platforms. As younger generations increasingly engage with digital content, utilizing formats such as video documentaries, audio recordings, and digital archives will make Indigenous knowledge more accessible and relatable to them.

Community leaders and elders have a critical role to play in fostering intergenerational dialogue. Mentorship programs should be organized where older women can share their experiences, feminist wisdom, and life skills with younger women. These initiatives can serve as culturally grounded platforms for empowerment and knowledge transfer, reinforcing the role of women as custodians of cultural heritage.

Gender advocates and feminist organizations are encouraged to promote gender-inclusive cultural practices by challenging and adapting patriarchal norms that may limit women's agency. This includes advocating for the transformation of cultural traditions that conflict with human rights principles, thereby ensuring that FIK evolves in alignment with contemporary understandings of equity and justice.

Given the widespread influence of global media on younger audiences, FIK should be disseminated through modern digital platforms such as social media, podcasts, and YouTube. These channels can be harnessed to present Indigenous feminist narratives in formats that resonate with the current generation, facilitating broader engagement and appreciation.

Educators and curriculum developers are urged to integrate FIK into primary and secondary education curricula. This inclusion would promote awareness, respect, and appreciation for Indigenous heritage among students, strengthening cultural identity and continuity from an early age. Moreover, educational materials should highlight the roles of women in preserving cultural

knowledge and showcase stories of strong female leaders from various Nigerian ethnic groups. Doing so will reinforce positive role models and elevate the historical contributions of women in national consciousness.

Finally, cultural exchange initiatives between Nigerian communities and other African societies with strong Indigenous feminist traditions should be encouraged. Such exchanges could revitalize traditional practices, foster mutual learning, and promote a pan-African approach to feminist Indigenous knowledge. These initiatives would contribute to building solidarity among African communities and reinforce the shared value of Indigenous women's leadership in cultural preservation.

These recommendations reflect the study's broader implication that the future of FIK in Nigeria depends on the active collaboration of communities, educators, policymakers, and advocates to ensure its dynamic continuity and relevance in a rapidly changing world.

Data availability: The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Ethics statement: Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time without any repercussions. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were ensured throughout the research process.

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