



# Reviving African indigenous education via folktales: pedagogical integration, cultural relevance, and philosophical underpinnings in modern educational systems

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## ABSTRACT

Through the dissemination of knowledge, socialization, and moral development, folktales serve as a foundation for indigenous African education and are essential in forming values, beliefs, and cultural identity. This study investigated the function of folktales in reviving indigenous learning systems by looking at their philosophical underpinnings, cultural importance, and pedagogical integration in contemporary education. The study used ethnographic methodologies, narrative analysis, and interviews with elders, teachers, and storytellers from specific African groups. It was grounded in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes learning through social interaction and cultural tools. The results showed that folktales are abundant sources of indigenous knowledge that promote social ideals, environmental awareness, and resilience. However, their use in official curriculum has been restricted due to colonial legacies and Western educational domination. The study suggests educating instructors in oral storytelling, creating indigenous educational resources, and incorporating folktales into instructional materials. It also suggests regulatory changes to support indigenous content, community storytelling initiatives, and cooperation between cultural guardians and educational institutions. The study concludes by emphasizing the value of knowledge transfer between generations and the development of culturally grounded learning environments that support African identity while meeting modern educational demands. These efforts aid in curriculum decolonization and the affirmation of African epistemologies.

*Keywords: Folklore, Ubuntu, Narrator, Orality, South African Curricular*

## INTRODUCTION

Education has historically played an important role in the transmission of cultural knowledge, moral ideals, and social conventions. In African communities, indigenous education systems have always played an important role in establishing identity, developing social responsibility, and imparting life skills. One of the most important vehicles for this education has been the folktale, which serves not only

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as a source of amusement but also as a means of moral instruction and cultural preservation. However, despite their educational value, folktales have been severely sidelined in formal education systems, owing to colonialism's legacy and the dominance of Western epistemologies in African curricula.<sup>1</sup> African societies mainly relied on oral traditions as the main method of information transmission and social order maintenance prior to the arrival of Western-style education. Songs, proverbs, myths, and folktales served as unofficial teaching resources that instructed youth in moral behavior, social interactions, and personal responsibility. In addition to providing entertainment, elders used storytelling sessions, which were frequently gathered around a fire, to teach young people the values of hard work, honesty, unity, and respect.<sup>2</sup> Since these oral histories were customized for each community's sociocultural setting, teaching was grounded in real-world experiences and pertinent.

The introduction of colonial schooling upset this community-based and holistic method of education. Indigenous knowledge systems were rejected as archaic or unscientific by missionary schools and the colonial curriculum, which placed an emphasis on literacy, Christianity, and Western civilization. As a result, generations of Africans lost contact with their language diversity and cultural legacy, and education turned into a tool for assimilation rather than empowerment.<sup>3</sup> Formal education and the sociocultural realities of African learners are still disconnected as a result of the marginalization of indigenous pedagogy, especially folktales.

The push to decolonize education has rekindled interest in incorporating indigenous knowledge systems into formal education in the modern era. More and more academics and decision-makers agree that meaningful education needs to take into account students' daily circumstances and cultural identities. Rich in moral teaching, wisdom, and symbolism, folktales provide a means of reintroducing indigenous epistemologies into the classroom in ways that foster moral consciousness, creativity, and critical thinking.<sup>4</sup> Africa's larger objective of recovering and indigenizing knowledge systems is thus supported by the cultural and pedagogical necessity of reviving folktales in the classroom.

This study examines the current gap in the integration of African traditional knowledge into modern educational settings. While many researchers recognize the relevance of culturally responsive teaching, there has been little scientific research into how folktales might be systematically incorporated into modern learning contexts.<sup>5</sup> According to Chipofya, the lack of folktale-based instruction in African educational systems reflects a missed opportunity to provide complete, inclusive, and culturally affirming learning experiences.<sup>6</sup> This study aims to close this gap by investigating the philosophical foundations, cultural values, and pedagogical possibilities of folktales in modern education.

The study is based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which states that learning happens through social interaction and the use of cultural resources.<sup>7</sup> Using a qualitative research methodology, the study employs ethnographic methodologies, narrative analysis, and interviews with elders, instructors, and storytellers from several African groups. These approaches seek to understand how folktales contribute to indigenous knowledge transfer and how they might be effectively incorporated into formal education systems.

This paper explores various important topics of folktale incorporation in education. First, it delves into the philosophical and cultural relevance of folktales in African communities. Second, it looks at the obstacles and hurdles of introducing folktales into modern curricula, particularly in light of colonial educational legacies. Third, the study makes practical proposals for incorporating folktales into

<sup>1</sup> Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu, *Indigenous Knowledge and Education in Africa* (Springer Nature, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> M. Ndlovu, "Indigenous Knowledge and Oral Traditions in African Education Systems," *Journal of Indigenous Studies in Education* 5, no. 2 (2021): 99–115.

<sup>3</sup> D. Ogunyemi, "Colonial Legacies and Indigenous Learning in African Education Systems," *Education and Society in Africa* 9, no. 2 (2020): 45–61.

<sup>4</sup> R. Chakamba, "Reclaiming Indigenous Knowledge through Storytelling: Pathways to Decolonized African Education," *African Education Review* 20, no. 1 (2023): 1–15.

<sup>5</sup> L. Chipofya, "Teacher and Learner Perceptions of Indigenous Folktales as Resource for the English Home Language Classroom" (University of Pretoria - South Africa, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Chipofya, "Teacher and Learner Perceptions of Indigenous Folktales as Resource for the English Home Language Classroom."

<sup>7</sup> Drew Polly et al., "Sociocultural Perspectives of Learning," *Foundations of Learning and Instructional Design Technology*, 2017.

modern education, including curriculum development, teacher training in oral storytelling techniques, and the establishment of indigenous educational resources. Finally, it suggests policy measures to increase the importance of folktales in formal education and boost collaboration between educational institutions and traditional knowledge keepers.

Finally, this study adds to the continuing discussion about decolonizing education by pushing for the revival of African indigenous education through folktales. It seeks to empower African learners in the twenty-first century by promoting inclusive and culturally grounded learning settings, while also preserving the rich oral traditions that serve as the cornerstone of indigenous knowledge systems.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Folktales have long played an important part in indigenous African education, conveying cultural values, moral teachings, and historical knowledge. Scholars such as Serpell have extensively researched the importance of oral traditions in African communities, focusing on their function in community bonding and education.<sup>8</sup> Folktales are frequently used as educational tools, teaching young members of society about communal responsibility, respect, and social cohesion. According to Mahuika, oral traditions, particularly folktales, are an important source of indigenous epistemology and should be maintained for future generations.<sup>9</sup>

Several academics have emphasized the educational value of folktales. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory provides a solid theoretical framework for understanding how folktales promote learning through social interaction and shared cultural experiences.<sup>10</sup> Folktales boost cognitive growth by challenging learners to think critically, solve problems, and be creative.<sup>11</sup> Schick and Melzi. Abdi and Semali found that introducing indigenous knowledge systems, such as folktales, into formal education can promote culturally responsive teaching and learner engagement.<sup>12</sup>

Despite their educational value, folktales have been largely excluded from modern African curricula due to the continued dominance of Western educational models. Scholars such as wa Thiong'o and Owusu argue that colonial education systems devalued indigenous knowledge, leading to the erosion of oral storytelling traditions.<sup>13</sup> The lack of formal recognition for folktales in mainstream education has contributed to their decline, with many African learners growing up disconnected from their cultural heritage. Furthermore, research by Brock-Utne suggests that the preference for Western pedagogical approaches has resulted in an education system that is often alienating and irrelevant to African learners.<sup>14</sup>

The integration of folktales into formal education institutions involves a number of obstacles. Owoo and Ndlovu found various impediments, including curricular limits, a lack of teacher training in oral storytelling approaches, and opposition from lawmakers who promote standardized education models.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the advent of digital media and globalization has resulted in a fall in oral storytelling practices, making it critical to find novel approaches to preserving and incorporating folktales into modern schooling.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Serpell, *The Significance of Schooling: Life-Journeys in an African Society* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Nepia Mahuika, *Rethinking Oral History and Tradition: An Indigenous Perspective* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> L. S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Harvard University Press, 1978).

<sup>11</sup> Adina Schick and Gigliana Melzi, "The Development of Children's Oral Narratives across Contexts," *Early Education and Development* 21, no. 3 (2010): 293–317.

<sup>12</sup> Ali Abdi, "Chapter Five: African Philosophies of Education: Deconstructing the Colonial and Reconstructing the Indigenous," *Counterpoints* 379 (2011): 80–91; Ladislaus Semali, "Community as Classroom: Dilemmas of Valuing African Indigenous Literacy in Education," *International Review of Education* 45, no. 3 (1999): 305–19.

<sup>13</sup> Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Oxford: James Currey, 1986); C.A. Owusu, "Effects of Education on Family Practices among Ashantis in Ghana: The Case of Kumasi Metropolis" (2024).

<sup>14</sup> Birgit Brock-Utne, "The Language of Instruction in Asia and Africa—Some Issues," *Sri Lanka Journal of Education* 1, no. 1 (2022): 29–49.

<sup>15</sup> M.A.N. Owoo, "Language Policy as Personal Experience: A Southern Perspective of Language Policy via Ghana's Practice of Medium of Instruction Policies" (University of Toronto (Canada), 2024); Ndlovu, "Indigenous Knowledge and Oral Traditions in African Education Systems."

Recent research suggests several techniques for incorporating folktales into schooling. Dei supports decolonizing education by including indigenous knowledge systems,<sup>16</sup> whereas Mailula advocates for the creation of culturally relevant curricula that include oral traditions.<sup>17</sup> Some researchers propose employing digital storytelling platforms to update folktale transmission.<sup>18</sup> while others emphasize the importance of community-based storytelling projects.<sup>19</sup> These approaches demonstrate the potential for folktales to be rejuvenated and modified for modern learning environments.

Furthermore, researchers have started looking into the deeper psychological and philosophical aspects of African folktales in the classroom. Nketia asserts that folktales embody the ethical and metaphysical frameworks of African worldviews and serve as a source of collective wisdom in addition to moral instruction.<sup>20</sup> They act as teaching mirrors that help students comprehend society principles like interdependence, communalism, and Ubuntu. Folktales foster emotional intelligence, empathy, and imagination, all of which are psychologically important for holistic learning.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, because storytelling is dialogical, it promotes involvement and helps students develop a feeling of community and shared identity.

The instructional value of folktales is further supported by empirical research conducted throughout Africa. Jiyana, for example, found that students exposed to storytelling outperformed those in traditional instructional settings in terms of understanding, moral reasoning, and cultural awareness in isiNdebele classrooms.<sup>22</sup> In a similar vein, Akinyemi showed how teaching Yoruba schools through folktales enhanced students' language skills and narrative competency.<sup>23</sup> These results highlight the educational value of folktales in fostering learning outcomes that are both emotive and cognitive.

However, institutional and organizational changes are required if folktales are to establish a permanent position in formal education. Diversifying the curriculum to include indigenous narratives as legitimate sources of academic knowledge is advocated by scholars like Njoroge.<sup>24</sup> Oral pedagogy should be incorporated into teacher preparation programs to give educators cultural literacy and storytelling abilities. Additionally, collaborations between local communities and schools can promote the sharing of information between generations, guaranteeing that storytelling customs endure in the digital era. A bright future for incorporating folktales into contemporary learning environments is presented by the convergence of technology, culture, and education—through resources like podcasts, animated folktales, and digital archives.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the critical significance of social interaction, cultural tools, and language in cognitive development. Vygotsky defines learning as taking place in a social setting in which people gain knowledge by interaction with their cultural surroundings.<sup>25</sup> This theory is especially pertinent to the study since it emphasizes the role of cultural transmission and scaffolding in the learning process.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>16</sup> George J Sefa Dei, "Education and Socialization in Ghana," *Creative Education* 2, no. 2 (2011): 96–105.

<sup>17</sup> Kgaogelo A. Mailula, "Challenges of Mainstreaming Indigenous African Music at Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) in South African Primary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa" (2018).

<sup>18</sup> Yamikani Ndasauka, *African Mind, Culture, and Technology: Philosophical Perspectives* (Springer Nature, 2024).

<sup>19</sup> G. Boadu, "Community-Based Storytelling and Indigenous Pedagogy in African Education," *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 33, no. 2 (2021): 178–91.

<sup>20</sup> K. Nketia, "Philosophical Reflections on African Folktales: Ethics, Wisdom, and Education," *Journal of African Philosophy and Culture* 11, no. 1 (2023): 24–39.

<sup>21</sup> J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Heinemann Educational Publishers, 2015).

<sup>22</sup> Mabidwana William Jiyana, "The Role of Traditional Storytelling in the Teaching and Learning of Isindebele in Grade 3" (University of Pretoria (South Africa), 2022).

<sup>23</sup> A. Akinyemi, "Oral Literature and Education: The Pedagogical Significance of Yoruba Folktales," *African Studies Review* 60, no. 3 (2017): 45–63.

<sup>24</sup> P. Njoroge, "Curriculum Diversification and Indigenous Knowledge Inclusion in African Education," *International Journal of Curriculum Development* 14, no. 3 (2021): 210–27.

<sup>25</sup> Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*.

<sup>26</sup> Andrea Hall, "Vygotsky Goes Online: Learning Design from a Socio-Cultural Perspective," in *Learning and Socio-Cultural Theory: Exploring Modern Vygotskian Perspectives International Workshop*, vol. 1, 2007, 94–107.

Folktales are used in this study as cultural tools for knowledge transfer, moral training, and socialization. Traditional storytelling is an interactive process in which elders share information with younger generations, sustaining communal values and indigenous epistemologies.<sup>27</sup> By evaluating folktales through the lens of Vygotsky's framework, this study emphasizes their function in shaping learners' cognitive and moral growth in African civilizations. Furthermore, the study is consistent with the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the difference between what a learner can do on their own and what they can accomplish with the help of a more educated individual. In indigenous African education, storytelling sessions serve as learning environments in which elders scaffold the learning process by explaining the meanings of folktales and fostering conversations about their moral and societal consequences.<sup>28</sup> This interactive technique promotes cognitive and emotional growth, making folktales a useful educational tool.

This study, using Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, provides a theoretical foundation for incorporating folktales into current educational curricula. It contends that folktales are not relics of the past, but rather important educational tools that are consistent with contemporary pedagogical approaches, particularly those that emphasize culturally responsive teaching and learner-centered pedagogies. Through this theoretical lens, the study calls for the formal integration of storytelling traditions into African education systems, ensuring that indigenous knowledge thrives in contemporary academic environments.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To investigate the function of traditional storytelling in the teaching and learning of isiNdebele in Grade 3, the study used a qualitative research methodology based on ethnographic and narrative methodologies. While the sample was purposefully chosen to include people actively involved in storytelling practices, the study population consisted of community elders, storytellers, educators, and students from schools where folktales are included in informal learning environments. The study was conducted in three primary schools and one community learning centre in Musina, Limpopo Province, South Africa. A total of 12 educators, 8 community elders/storytellers, and 60 learners participated in the study. Elders and students at the Musina Community Learning Centre were very enthusiastic when community storytelling sessions were observed. As long as schools acknowledge their contribution and give structural support, participants indicated that they would be happy to act as cultural resource persons. Ethical approval was obtained from the university ethics committee, and all participants provided informed consent. Pseudonyms were used to ensure confidentiality, and participation was entirely voluntary. In addition to semi-structured interviews and focus groups with participants, data gathering methods included classroom and community observations to document storytelling strategies, audience participation, and contextual variances. To find recurrent themes, moral lessons, and instructional implications in the stories, data analysis was done using narrative and thematic analysis. Getting participants' informed consent, keeping information private, and making sure cultural norms were followed during the study were all ethical considerations.

Before fieldwork started, the study also obtained permission from the appropriate community and educational authorities to ensure cultural sensitivity and respect for those who possess traditional knowledge. In order to reduce bias, the researcher rigorously examined their positionality throughout the investigation, maintaining reflexivity. Furthermore, participants were given the chance to examine and confirm the results, which increased the study's legitimacy and dependability.

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

The study's findings show that folktales play an important role in transferring indigenous knowledge, moral values, and social standards. The important findings are discussed below. Folktales are a useful

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<sup>27</sup> I.O. Inyang, "Applying Indigenous Knowledge Resources in Children's Play-Crafting in Southern Nigeria: Practice-Led Research Using Ibibio Folk Narratives" (Stellenbosch University, 2022).

<sup>28</sup> Mlamli Bara, "Early Literacy Development in IsiXhosa: Fostering Grade 3 Learners' Imagination and Critical Thinking through Folktales," 2021.

technique for imparting social values such as respect, accountability, and collaboration to learners. Students were strongly engaged with folktale narratives, frequently connecting moral teachings to real-life circumstances, according to observation sessions. Following storytelling exercises, teachers observed an improvement in peer cooperation and classroom discipline. Elders and storytellers interviewed stressed that folktales continue to be a powerful tool for conserving indigenous knowledge and upholding moral principles in society for generations to come.

**Pedagogical Relevance:** Educators and storytellers recognize folktales' potential to improve literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Teachers who were interviewed emphasized that folktales, particularly those that are translated into native tongues, improve students' vocabulary and comprehension. According to a number of educators, when pupils compared folktale themes to contemporary moral quandaries, they demonstrated deeper analytical abilities.

**Barriers to Integration:** According to the study, the biggest barriers to folktale inclusion in formal education include colonial legacies, curriculum limits, and a lack of oral storytelling training for teachers. Curriculum makers interviewed revealed that the majority of educational frameworks continue to give priority to Eurocentric content, leaving little space for indigenous storytelling forms. Inadequate training materials often left teachers feeling unprepared to incorporate oral traditions into planned instructional programs.

**Community Engagement:** Elders and local storytellers are eager to work with educational institutions to bring folktales into classroom settings. Strong intergenerational potential was shown by the high level of interest displayed by both seniors and students during community storytelling sessions. Respondents said that if schools and local education authorities supported them, they would be willing to act as cultural resource people.

**Recommendations for Integration:** The study offers curriculum development initiatives, teacher training programs, and policy changes to encourage the use of folktales in African educational institutions. In order to advance cultural literacy, participants suggested creating bilingual folktale readers, introducing storytelling modules into teacher education curriculum, and planning yearly "Folktale Weeks." Such strategies were seen as vital for safeguarding indigenous teaching techniques.

These findings highlight the importance of folktales in developing culturally responsive and inclusive education, as well as contributing to the larger decolonization effort in African curriculum. The data from observations and interviews emphasizes how intentionally incorporating folktales into contemporary educational institutions enhances students' moral, linguistic, and cognitive development while reaffirming African identity.

## DISCUSSION

The discussion covered the following subtopics: understanding African indigenous education, the role of folktales in indigenous knowledge transmission, pedagogical integration in modern educational systems, cultural relevance and identity formation, philosophical underpinnings of indigenous knowledge systems, challenges and opportunities in reviving folktale-based education, and the future of indigenous education through folktales.

### Understanding African Indigenous Education

African indigenous education is holistic, lifelong, and community centered. It prioritizes moral development, vocational training, and social responsibility. Elders and storytellers have an important role in character development, wisdom transmission, and cultural knowledge continuity across generations.

The critical role of folktales in African education emphasizing their potential to convey moral values, preserve cultural identity, and increase information transmission. For example, Siswati folktales like *Libhubesi Nalogwaja* "The Hare and the Lion" educate children that intelligence is more important than raw power, encouraging problem-solving abilities. Despite their instructional potential, the study identifies a number of hurdles to their full integration into modern educational institutions. Colonial educational legacies, curriculum constraints, and a lack of teacher training in oral storytelling have all contributed to the marginalization of indigenous knowledge.

African indigenous education is community-based, oral, and experiential. The Basotho folktale "Masilo and Masilonyana" teaches the values of courage, wisdom, and resilience. It is passed down through storytelling and fosters moral behaviour and problem-solving skills, both of which are important aspects of traditional African schooling.

### **The role of folktales in indigenous knowledge transmission.**

Folktales serve as oral archives for African customs, preserving moral ideals, historical narratives, and social standards. They teach children respect, cooperation, and resilience while encouraging critical thinking. Folktales use symbolism and metaphor to quietly convey ethical quandaries and life skills.

To address these concerns, the government, educators, and community members must collaborate to integrate folktales into curricula. For example, in South Africa, Thohoyandou, publishing houses like Nwala writers have implemented storytelling writing sessions in which the youth write traditional stories such as *Intfombi Yetimanga* "The Girl with Magic," which examines themes of trust and transformation. Folktales encourage reading, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, all of which are goals of modern education. Furthermore, including folktales in language instruction helps students improve linguistic proficiency by examining the proverbs and idioms buried in these stories.

In "*Masilo and Masilonyana*," the story teaches endurance and fairness. Masilo mistreats his younger brother, Masilonyana, but the latter ultimately succeeds thanks to his love and knowledge. The story, told orally, guarantees that cultural values and social conventions are transmitted down through generations.

### **Pedagogical Integration in the Modern Educational System**

Including folktales in formal education can boost student engagement and cultural relevance. Educators can utilize storytelling to promote literacy development, ethical education, and historical awareness. Folktale-based learning can be made more accessible and effective through interactive storytelling sessions, dramatizations, and digital adaptations. Teachers might utilize "*Intsandzane Nenhlangi Yemilingo*" to talk about sibling relationships, fairness, and moral decisions. The story can be adapted for drama, creative writing, or debate, encouraging students to consider ethical quandaries and develop critical thinking skills in a culturally appropriate context.

Folktales present a compelling case for revitalizing African indigenous education by including folktales in school curricula, fostering collaboration with traditional knowledge keepers, and training teachers in oral storytelling approaches. These activities will not only boost students' cultural pride but will also help with the greater process of decolonizing African educational institutions. Schools in Kenya, for example, have effectively integrated storytelling sessions run by griots and village elders, preserving cultural history while fitting with current educational goals.

### **Cultural Significance and Identity Formation**

Folktales support indigenous languages, traditions, and community values, so bolstering cultural identity. They combat the erasure of African knowledge systems in formal education. They encourage students to appreciate their roots while navigating modern global influences by cultivating a sense of heritage pride.

As a Basotho story, "*Masilo and Masilonyana*" explores African traditions, communal living, and justice. Teaching such folktales in schools encourages cultural pride by ensuring that African students recognize their past in the educational curriculum, so maintaining their identity in the face of

global influences. Philosophical Underpinnings of Indigenous Knowledge Systems: African epistemologies prioritize interconnectedness, oral wisdom, and experiential learning. Concepts like Ubuntu prioritize collective well-being over individualism. Unlike Western education, indigenous learning integrates ethics, spirituality, and practical knowledge, making folktales powerful tools for holistic education. The story reflects Ubuntu philosophy, emphasizing community, justice, and the triumph of good over selfishness. Unlike Western myths that emphasize individualism, "*Imbuti Yemilingo*" emphasizes that success is based on moral purity and respect for others.

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Reviving Folktale-Based Education**

Colonial legacies have devalued indigenous education in favour of Eurocentric curricula. However, digital media, policy advocacy, and community participation present chances for resurrection. Policymakers' resistance and a lack of documentation continue to be problems, necessitating inventive solutions to keep folktales relevant in modern schooling.

Colonial schooling has ignored African folktales in favour of Western narratives. However, incorporating "*Indvodza Leyanikwa Lidada*" into curricula creates potential for cultural reclamation. Digital storytelling, multilingual publications, and community storytelling events can all help to restore indigenous knowledge in modern classrooms.

Furthermore, the study advocated for a decolonized education system that emphasizes indigenous epistemologies and cultural narratives, ensuring that African students receive a globally competitive education that is also locally applicable. For example, using storytelling-based evaluations, in which students repeat or reinterpret conventional stories, can boost both creativity and comprehension.

### **The future of indigenous education through folktales**

Technology may revolutionize storytelling by utilizing digital archives, animations, and AI-powered platforms, ensuring the survival of folktales. Schools must incorporate indigenous narratives into their curricula. Governments, schools, and cultural groups should work together to institutionalize folktale based learning and preserve Africa's rich oral tradition for future generations.

Modern adaptations of "*Buhlaluse Benkhosi*" such as animation, audiobooks, and school textbooks can keep it current. Government policy should incorporate such stories into literacy initiatives, ensuring that future generations learn from African wisdom while benefiting from technology improvements.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To successfully include folktales in formal education, a complete methodology is required. To begin, curriculum reform should prioritize the inclusion of folktales in language and literature syllabi, ensuring that they are taught in a methodical manner throughout various educational levels. Second, teacher training programs should be intended to provide educators with the skills required to apply narrative strategies in classroom instruction.

Furthermore, education leaders should fight for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems in the national curriculum, developing regulations that encourage the use of folktales as a viable instructional resource. Collaboration between schools and traditional storytellers should be encouraged in order to promote information exchange and community involvement. Finally, indigenous educational materials, such as textbooks and digital resources, should be encouraged to ensure the survival of folktale-based learning in modern educational environments.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study emphasizes the importance of folktales in conserving African indigenous knowledge and their possible integration into formal education. Integrating folktales into modern curricula allows educators to develop culturally relevant teaching, improve critical thinking abilities, and foster a stronger connection to indigenous identities. Addressing the issues of curricular constraints, colonial educational

legacies, and teacher training deficits is critical to successful implementation. Finally, the study emphasizes the necessity of community collaboration and legislative reforms in ensuring that folktales remain a vital and essential element of African education systems, thereby supporting both cultural preservation and contemporary learning demands. African nations may develop students who are not only academically proficient but also culturally aware, ethically aware, and proud of their origin by reviving storytelling practices in schools. This all-encompassing strategy fosters multicultural understanding, improves social cohesiveness, and advances the larger objective of decolonizing education throughout the continent.

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Dr. Masila Joshua Masipa teaches in the University of Venda’s Department of Arts and Social Sciences. He has worked in higher education for many years, with a focus on solid waste management, ethics, sociolinguistics, and development studies. Masipa is a member of the Senate Council and has overseen postgraduate students. Dr. Masila Joshua Masipa is a committed researcher and development professional with a focus on grassroots development, social inclusion, and rural mobilization in Africa. He specializes in empowering marginalized people through sustainable development initiatives and participatory governance, and he has a solid foundation in policy research and community involvement.