

Gendered Indigenous Practices in Food Production Processes: A Myth or Reality in Sustaining Rural Livelihoods?

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ABSTRACT The marginalization of women and indigenous knowledge systems by hegemonic Western power/knowledge and traditional African practices account for challenges faced in rural areas in realizing sustainable livelihoods. This paper will describe and analyze the indigenous practices and gender relations interface in food production processes in Khambashe rural households, South Africa. Data was gathered through a mixed-methods approach and analyzed through content analysis and Social Statistical Package of Social Sciences. The paper illustrates a double edged sword as an outcome. The indigenous knowledge and gender relations interplay can operate to enhance the likelihood of achieving sustainable rural livelihoods and hence food security. On the other hand, the negative outcome is that women's traditional knowledge faces epistemological exclusion. The discriminatory cultural practices and Western hegemonic practices impede the proper utilization of indigenous knowledge. The subjugatory gender relations should be redressed as they deter the full potential of women and the indigenous knowledge they possess to inform sustainable rural development.