The influence of actor-network theory on knowledge construction in Africa

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ABSTRACT

This paper has been drawn up to stimulate debate towards a re-view of processes leading to knowledge construction and how these processes shape, especially policy knowledge in Africa. The main assumption is that the intellectualisation of knowledge construction by African and other scholars (as influenced by the actor-network theory) has largely addressed foreign rather than local (African) realities and interests. Such intellectualisation, I argue, has inevitably led to the production of largely Euro-centric and Americanised forms of knowledge, which add little (if any) value to the notions of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Drawing from the domain of the actor-network theory, I therefore challenge African intellectuals to be well grounded in and reflect upon circumstances under which we are producing various forms of knowledge.

Key words: intellectualisation; knowledge; actor network theory; local (African) reality; Euro-centric; and Americanised.