

Abida Bano

Hegemony and Decolonising Research Praxis

A Researcher's Journey in the Peripheries of Pakistan

Introduction

British colonisation has significantly damaged South Asian cultures, languages, and religions. In the Indian subcontinent, at the expense of local knowledge systems, the British Empire created an alternative (with the English language at the centre) to promote the empire's global expansion. Macaulay's *Minutes on Education* (1835) declared the indigenous knowledges of the Indian subcontinent as useless for British rule and its colonial governance system; thus, the English education system had to replace the local systems of learning to achieve the empire's objectives. Taking on the British empire's deliberate actions to forcefully homogenise the diverse cultures, religions, languages and ethnicities in India, Mubarak Ali notes that Macaulay's speech eliminated the salience of indigenous knowledges to promote British corporate and economic interests.¹ Under British rule, the job market required English as a lingua franca, undermining the importance of learning the local languages of Persian and Sanskrit. Persian remained the court language in India well into the 18th century but was eventually replaced with English. Henceforth, the hierarchy of Western knowledge was set discursively since it was the only way to get a job.² To foster the development of Britain, indigenous knowledge systems were substituted with those colonial rulers thought could achieve the empire's economic and political objectives.

Since research methodologies are tools for knowledge production, it is crucial to understand how colonial knowledge systems perpetrated and maintained the hegemony of Western epistemologies and research methodologies and continue to do so. Despite achieving political independence in 1947, the Western education system persists across the independent states of British India (including pre-1947 Pakistan and India). Subsequently, Talbot notes that colonial legacies are consistently present as critical discourses and practices in Pakistan's institutional

¹ Ali 2017, 16.

² Ibid.

and cultural orders.³ Thus, hegemonic colonial practices are perpetuated in education and research without much scrutiny.

State of the art on decolonising research methodology(/-ies) theorises significant obstacles, puzzles, and coping methods beyond a toolbox approach in developing critical knowledge production. Proponents aim to build more egalitarian, non-hegemonic, and inclusive research tools to be shared between partners from the global North and South. According to Santos, capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy – which function in unison and asymmetrically – are the current forms of dominance.⁴ As the academic system becomes more and more neoliberal, it renders the colonial past and patriarchal authority within the university and other sites of knowledge creation even more apparent. The continuity of hierarchical structures and hegemonic research practices in universities demonstrates that an anti-imperial global South is distant, if not impossible. In addition, it is true that, in attempting decolonisation, we struggle to see beyond our fields’ ‘hegemonic eye.’⁵ Many who are part of global South academia and have received training in the Western education systems can hardly see past the Western research principles. However, Keet suggests that by placing epistemic justice at the centre to disrupt disciplines, critical questions must be asked to challenge the hegemonic Western discourses on knowledge creation and research and make innovation possible.⁶

The endeavour of decolonisation began as an anti-racist, anti-imperialist, and anti-hegemonic resistance movement.⁷ More specifically, decolonising knowledge production aims to undo the “epistemic violence”⁸ caused by the colonialism project, ending the dominance of Western epistemologies and revitalising the local institutions and knowledge-production sites – delegitimised and deprived of their rights. Moreover, these approaches undermine the Western conceptions of scientific, objective, and rational knowledge and question the dominant research practices in post-colonial contexts. In addition to recognising cultural sensitivities and subjectivities, they place the researcher and research participants (knowledge co-producers) at the centre of the process. The decolonising discourses hold that everyone constructs meaning regardless of their social place.⁹

³ Talbot 2013, 29.

⁴ Santos 2018, 212.

⁵ Santos 2014, 3.

⁶ Keet 2014, 23.

⁷ Maldonado-Torres 2006.

⁸ Darder 2018, 94.

⁹ Darder 2018.

Problematising (neo-)colonial research norms and practices, this chapter illustrates the hegemonic research practices in Pakistani academia and how they affect young early-career scholars' ability to produce locally pertinent knowledge that benefits society.¹⁰ It also describes how the dominant power structures in 'peripheral' Pakistani academia promote neo-colonial practices while marginalising the researcher and maintaining Western epistemic supremacy. Theoretically, this chapter advances our understanding of repressive practices in Pakistani universities and the beyond-the-toolbox approach to responding to such issues.¹¹ There is not much written on the oppressive practices and behaviours that early career researchers and academics encounter at universities in the peripheral regions of Pakistan. I underscore how the senior-junior divide and bureaucratic research bodies interfere with academic freedom in teaching and research.¹² In addition, the relationship between native/local and diaspora researchers, insiders in differing degrees (positionality politics), and how male researchers problematise/challenge Western research ethics during fieldwork in the turbulent Pashtun¹³ areas are also concerns of this chapter.

Positionality(s) and Context

Most of the experiences centred in this chapter occurred in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a peripheral province of Pakistan. Situated in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands, Pashtun areas have borne the brunt of the ongoing war on terror since the 9/11 attacks, enhancing myriad challenges for its people and society. Historically, the state of Pakistan had been reluctant to grant provincial autonomy; therefore, there is an uneasy relationship between the centre and peripheral provinces.¹⁴

¹⁰ See also Fleschenberg 2023.

¹¹ See also the special issue "Negotiating Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts" (2022/2023), guest-edited by Abida Bano, Rosa Cordillera Castillo, Sarah Holz and Andrea Fleschenberg, with case studies from Pakistan (Holz and Bano 2022 as well as Huang 2022), Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, and work on colonial archives with/on the Philippines.

¹² See for some insights from early career researchers the forum "Review Essays, Part 1: Researching in Times of a Pandemic" (Batool et al. 2021, Fleschenberg and Holz 2021, Kalia 2021, Khan 2021 and Zuberi 2021).

¹³ Pashtun refers to the ethnic group dwelling around the Pak-Afghan border. Most Pashtun enjoyed autonomous or semi-autonomous status under British rule.

¹⁴ Leake 2016. After the 18th amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, provincial autonomy was enhanced but the power struggle between the centre and provinces also increased. As a re-

Socio-economic inequalities and regional disparities characterise the Pakistani federal system. Some ethnic-nationalist voices from peripheral provinces have been contesting the inequitable distribution of resources among the regions and growing regional differences. However, the state does not welcome such contestation; thus, studying dissident movements is an understudied subject in mainstream academia in Pakistan. Furthermore, the academic community also mirrors geographic-cum-sociopolitical differences across regions and ethnic groups. The urbanised suburbs of Punjab, the capital – Islamabad, and metropolitan Karachi are home to the ‘elite’ academic community; those residing in the peripheral regions are the intellectual ‘others,’ considered of lower ranks. Another factor adding to the elitism of the privileged ‘academics located in central locations’ is that they are closely connected with the academics and researchers in the global North. In some instances, they work in the global North institutions (diaspora academics) and place themselves above the ones residing and working in Pakistan—one of the vignettes details such an incident. Being dismissed and looked down upon by diaspora academics relocated in the global North is not uncommon, and many could relate to this experience. Therefore, positionality(s) is (are) critical to the researcher’s experiences in this chapter. My positionalities range from an educated ethnic Pashtun woman (insider) to someone who is educated/graduated from a global North university working in a public sector university in the periphery of Pakistan. I faced several challenges, from a graduate student to an early career researcher, during my research journey. I used various coping strategies to overcome those challenges, including negotiations, going along, and doing research sideways¹⁵ for the reflections and explorations that followed.

sult, in terms of how Pakistan’s resources and power are distributed, the Pashtun areas (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) lie on the periphery. Furthermore, under the 31st amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, ex-FATA became a regular part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018. However, there is still a long way to go before the merged districts (the new nomenclature for the former FATA) are mainstreamed due to impeding factors such as poverty, illiteracy, militancy, and terrorism. Ex-FATA was a semi-autonomous region governed by the British Law Frontier Crimes Regulation 1901 (FCR) until as late as 2018. Ahmad 2020.

15 See for a discussion of researching sideways Fleschenberg 2023.

Research Techniques Used: Reflexivity as Decolonising Research Method

In this chapter, I use reflexivity to narrate my interactions as a researcher in diverse research environments. I use a free-flowing approach to capture the rich details of events and the field settings where these interactions occurred. Each vignette highlights a problem associated with producing locally grounded knowledge that is contextually rigorous. Providing examples of decolonised research procedures is challenging because decolonising scholars have yet to suggest a particular research design. Still, they preferred some methods over others, including reflexive grounded theory, and scholarship needs to provide a strategy for decolonising research. However, one method the scholars have used is researchers' reflexivity for drawing attention to and confronting the coloniality and hegemony of Western research praxis.¹⁶ The researcher's reflexivity emphasises active participation in the research process.

As a decolonising research technique, I chose reflexivity for collecting experiences that iteratively shape the trajectory of my research career. Being a researcher is a continuous process of evolving, developing, and changing identities. As Etherington puts it, reflexivity "empowers a researcher to convey the tale of her 'becoming' rather than how she has become."¹⁷ Additionally, reflexivity focuses on intersubjectivity, knowledge colonisation, and ontological, epistemological, and axiological aspects of the self.¹⁸

Though defining reflexivity has its challenges,¹⁹ it is pivotal to feminist research,²⁰ crucial to participatory action research,²¹ and significant to post-structural approaches, ethnography, and hermeneutics.²² Initially, Gouldner defined reflexivity as a tool for analysing the researcher's role in qualitative research.²³ However, with the development of narrative approaches in qualitative research, reflexivity captures more than what is initially conceived. It demands the researcher to go beyond 'looking good'²⁴ and continue self-critique²⁵ and self-

¹⁶ See Russell-Mundine 2012.

¹⁷ Etherington 2004, 15.

¹⁸ Berger 2015.

¹⁹ Colbourne and Sque 2004.

²⁰ King 1994.

²¹ Robertson 2000.

²² Koch and Harrington 1998.

²³ Gouldner 1971.

²⁴ Furman 2004.

²⁵ Dowling 2006.

inspection.²⁶ Personal reflexivity is a moment of “self-awareness,”²⁷ wherein a researcher must acknowledge her relationship to the research process and the participants in the research.²⁸ While conducting research, a researcher remains in the moment at multiple levels (personally and epistemologically), acknowledging the intersubjectivity of the research environment.

I use reflexivity to connect with research actively to unearth deep-seated hegemonic research practices across the Pakistani academic environment in peripheral universities. I use it as an effective research technique that allows me to tell my story alongside the research participants while completing the research process. Reflexivity is a researcher’s active involvement in the research process.²⁹ It also introduces autoethnography, a genre of autobiographical writing and study that emphasises the self and process while connecting the personal and the cultural.³⁰ Also, scholars have identified reflexivity as one of the methods to decolonise research discourses.³¹ In this chapter, I have used reflexivity as a decolonising method to profoundly communicate with my research environment and identify the underlying hegemony of research praxis in the peripheral Pakistani academia. This chapter contains reflexive accounts of this researcher, along with one interview with a male researcher. Hence, I use reflexivity as the primary research method in this chapter. In addition, I have engaged the interview method in one vignette to bring in a male perspective on the hegemonic research practices in the peripheral academia in Pakistan.

The reflexivity approach is constant throughout the chapter except for the last vignette, which features an in-depth interview (IDI) with a male researcher who conducted his research in the same social settings.³² In the interview, I actively listened to the male researcher. At the same time, he shared his reflexivity experiences during his fieldwork in the conflict-sensitive settings of North-western Pakistan. This interview is salient to show the different research approaches of male and female researchers, their diverse research experiences and the conceptual insights regarding research praxis in the volatile context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

26 Colbourne and Sque 2004.

27 Giddens 2013, 22.

28 Horsburgh 2003.

29 Finlay 2002.

30 Ellis and Bochner 2000.

31 See Russell-Mundine 2020; Rhee 2020.

32 Researcher interviews allow scholars to benefit from the experience of other researchers working in a similar field and to fill gaps in research practice or underexplored research areas. I used a reflexive approach in this interview to account for the interviewee’s subjectivities and identity as conceptual insights of his research practice. See Denzin 2001; Bryman and Cassel 2006.

During the interview, the participant was urged to reflect on his research practice, constraints, and opportunities and reflect on the research craft.³³ To acknowledge the subjectivity and identity of the researcher and research process, both research techniques – reflexivity and IDI challenge the hegemony of colonial research praxis and attempt to decentre research methodologies.

Theoretical Connections

Decolonisation attempts to undo the sociocultural engineering that maintains the colonial project, upholding the authority of Western discourses in post-colonial nations. Decolonisation must occur because, as Mignolo rightly points out, colonialism has not ended yet; instead, it has taken new forms.³⁴ Tuhiwai Smith sees “decolonisation as releasing from being a colony, granting independence.”³⁵ Additionally, it continually honours indigenous epistemologies, peoples, voices, lands, and sovereignty over the process.³⁶ Similarly, Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls out the global North’s “epistemicide”³⁷ in the global South, urging the global South to develop alternative epistemologies with intercultural translations.

Decolonising research discourse is premised on the assertion that knowledge and power are co-constitutive, where leverage creates the knowledge to govern and rule.³⁸ Research and methodologies claim to produce objective and accurate knowledge. In the epistemically colonised world, the global South has often been updated about what constitutes “real knowledge, reason, and science.”³⁹ It is important to emphasise that the global South is not a geographical term; instead, it is a symbolic allegory referring to the places on the world map that have suffered coloniality and continue to exist under the colonial matrix of power.⁴⁰ ‘Global South’ has become an alternative term for underdevelopment, referring to a long history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and various socioeconomic transformations that maintain disparities in living conditions and resource availability.⁴¹

³³ Bryman and Cassel 2006.

³⁴ Mignolo 2007.

³⁵ Smith 2021, 13.

³⁶ Denzin et al. 2008.

³⁷ Santos 2014, 94.

³⁸ Foucault and Gordon 1980.

³⁹ Mitova 2020, 196.

⁴⁰ Mignolo 2007.

⁴¹ Dado and Conell 2012.

Santos expands on the idea by referring to the global South as a collection of places, people, and other creatures harmed by capitalism, colonialism, and the insatiable appetite for patriarchy,⁴² the global South has become the focal point of the intellectual struggle against brutality and epistemic erasures committed by Western imperialism and colonialism.

Our frameworks and modes of existence as academics – how we go about being, speaking, listening, knowing, interacting, and seeing – have roots in Euro-American ideals informed by Western knowledge systems.⁴³ According to Mignolo,⁴⁴ there are many different types of coloniality, one of which is the coloniality of knowledge, which upholds the dominance of Western knowledge systems over other knowledge systems worldwide. As a result, even after the formal end of colonial rule, the epistemic hegemony of colonial discourse keeps colonial modes of dominance in place.⁴⁵ Therefore, the ‘scientific’ knowledge generated in and through Western knowledge systems permeates postcolonial knowledge-production sites—research in the West centres notions of scientific objectivity with colonial overtones. Decolonising knowledge production is centred on the drive to correct research-related infractions and regain control of knowledge production, becoming the knowledge contributors. However, this cannot be accomplished without decolonising research techniques.

The epistemic decolonial turn⁴⁶ aims at decolonising the Western canon and epistemology. According to Chiumbu, it can be challenging to illustrate decolonising research.⁴⁷ How is knowledge produced? Who helped create it? Is it useful? What is the relationship between knowledge and its producers? These questions are at the core of the “epistemic decolonial turn.”⁴⁸ Decolonising research approaches exhort us to consider the positionalities of the researcher to the research participants and the “geopolitics of knowledge”⁴⁹ as a whole. The decolonising discourse is a protest against the persisting epistemicide in the global South.⁵⁰ Although decolonising methodologies is not a political strategy of revolution, it does stimulate some revolutionary thought about the roles that

⁴² Santos 2014.

⁴³ Chiumbu 2017.

⁴⁴ Mignolo 2007.

⁴⁵ Grosfoguel 2007.

⁴⁶ Chiumbu quoting Grosfoguel 2007, 1.

⁴⁷ Chiumbu 2017.

⁴⁸ Chiumbu 2017, 1.

⁴⁹ The phrase is Mignolo’s 2005.

⁵⁰ Santos 2014, 1.

knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies, and knowledge institutions play in colonialism and social transformation.⁵¹

In the following two vignettes, drawing on the theoretical perspectives mentioned above, I direct attention to the lack of academic freedom in peripheral academia in Pakistan. In the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the hegemonic role of research boards and the bureaucratic divide between junior and senior faculty members at the departmental level and in interdepartmental relationships testify to the continuous presence of colonial research praxis. These factors are supported by patriarchal expectations that a female academic should be ‘polite, submissive, and ladylike’ (read: unassertive, without agency) at workplaces. Academic freedom is a broad concept with several definitions, including the total autonomy of the institution and academics regarding what they teach, how they teach it, and what the research topics should be.⁵² I operationalise academic freedom as the capability of an academic (professor) to design and provide courses about their area of concentration, supervise students who share their research interests, and select which courses to teach and what research agenda to pursue.

A Junior Female Academic: Another ‘Other’

According to Fakhr,⁵³ the most educated men in academia are not immune to gender blindness. Despite their higher qualifications and working in the relatively liberal spaces of Pakistan’s universities, most senior male professors hold on to the traditional patriarchal and hierarchal workplace practices. One of the gender-biased practices in the peripheral academia in Pakistan is to treat women academics and researchers as ‘juniors’ despite having similar or better credentials than their male counterparts. The senior-junior divide is used as a form of domination (patriarchal and colonial) that drives a wedge amongst staff members and negatively impacts the young female academics emotionally and professionally. It is important to note that the senior-junior divide also affects male junior researchers. However, it is worse for a female junior. In this chapter, ‘junior’ refers to the academic ‘other’ who is underrepresented, marginalised, and often erased from decision-making in research bodies for being female and early career. They

⁵¹ Smith 1999.

⁵² See Anand and Niaz 2022; Marginson 2014; Maldonado-Torres 2011; Albatch 2001.

⁵³ Fakhr 2018.

are placed lower in the hierarchical division between faculty members. Seniority, on the other hand, refers to the unique advantages that a person (mostly male) in academia has over others (according to title, gender, age, and longevity of service). Interacting with a senior male colleague made me realise that these restrictive and retrogressive senior-junior practices curtail female academics' and researchers' academic freedom. Academic freedom is salient to producing contextual decolonised knowledge.

It is usual to choose courses to teach from a pre-approved course catalogue in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, it is a norm that seniors pick up their courses first. Once, during a staff meeting to discuss course allocation, I picked up a graduate course on research methodology for the forthcoming semester. Because I have a deep interest and specialised training in research methods courses, I occasionally prefer to teach a methods course. A few days later, a senior male professor approached me, asking me to drop that course since he wanted to teach it. He asked me to refrain from teaching research methods courses to any programme because they are reserved for him. He clarified that since he had previously taught research methodologies, he could do it comfortably and with little preparation. Besides, he stated it is the prerogative of the 'seniors' to choose courses they like. I felt disturbed by his communication style, which was dominating and condescending. I tried keeping my composure and told him that he could have informed us before the meeting about his interest, and it would have worked out well (he had missed the course allocation meeting). This conversation happened in the tearoom, where we take breaks after classes. It is important to note that before asking me about not teaching the methods courses, he requested other colleagues to leave the tearoom since he wanted to talk to me alone. His body language, facial expression, and authoritative tone deeply troubled me. Hence, I reported the incident to the director.

I thought the director would take my complaint seriously because I was uniquely qualified to teach research methodologies, and students could benefit from it. Also, I had picked up the course first, while my senior colleague's request came later. Ironically, to my dismay, the director (also a male professor) supported my colleague by claiming that he was 'senior' and had many other commitments. The director responded, "Don't overthink his unprofessional way of asking. We all know how he is. Let it go." I had to give up, feeling completely helpless and emotionally upset. This experience was one of several I have had over the years in the same department.

Before the incident, a different senior male colleague who had transferred to our department in the middle of the semester asked to take over my half-completed courses because he claimed he had a prior understanding of my course. He did not want to prepare another course to teach. I had to switch to another

new subject during mid-semester and allow the senior male colleague to continue with my course. Both times, I experienced distress and a professional setback and was made to feel 'Other.' This informal influence over junior academics (co-workers), pushing them to stop teaching courses they select for themselves and ignoring impolite behaviour from seniors are regular features associated with peripheral academic institutions.

Furthermore, it is well-established that most university seniors are men; they hold the most vital decision-making positions at academic institutions.⁵⁴ In other words, Pakistani universities are, by and large, patriarchal enterprises. In many universities, it is customary for 'seniors' to have the first choice in selecting from the approved courses catalogue available in every department. At the same time, 'juniors' must choose from the remaining options, regardless of how uninterested they are in teaching them, for various reasons, including unfamiliarity, relevance to their area of specialisation, or other factors. The right to select one's courses and access higher positions, such as director- or deanships, is still based more on seniority than professional quality, expertise, and up-to-date subject knowledge. Seniors prefer to select the courses they have taught for years and teach them without much preparation, leaving new courses for juniors that require preparation. During the last five years, I have taught seventeen new courses, some related to my expertise, others not. Ironically, these 'seniors' are the members of all research boards that regularly discuss cutting-edge teaching and research approaches, but talking the talk and doing nothing has not gotten us anywhere. In addition, being a 'junior' in academia disqualifies you from making decisions about academic policy and other crucial matters of teaching and research in peripheral universities in Pakistan. The advantage of having the title 'professor,' especially a male professor, is that you will be heard and taken seriously in academic affairs. This hierarchical organisation of universities has adversely affected young faculty and their motivation for innovation in pedagogy and research.

Furthermore, some seniors insist on teaching research methods courses because they are considered light in preparation. This practice has adversely affected the standard of research methods courses taught at Pakistani universities' graduate and undergraduate levels. Research procedures are the basis of knowledge creation, and methods courses become redundant after no new study materials are added to the already taught syllabuses. Adding new debates and approaches to the research methods keeps the courses up-to-date and relevant. On the contrary, seniors rely on their field experiences to share in the class rather than state of the art in the field. During informal interactions with colleagues in

54 Fakhr 2018; Fakhr and Messenger 2020.

the social sciences across Pakistan, it has been revealed that the research methodology courses are considered frivolous. There is no classification of research and teaching universities in Pakistan; thus, all focus on research and teaching simultaneously. Consequently, the knowledge produced in Pakistani universities is flawed, forcing the researchers to keep relying on theories developed in the West.

The colonial practice of bureaucratising academic structures in higher education to uphold ‘seniors’ hegemony is entangled with hegemonic institutional patriarchy, elevating men to positions of power and recognition, whatever their potential, skills, and expertise.⁵⁵ Public universities in Pakistan have been robbed of the potential and energy of young and early-career researchers due to mundane university divisions and hierarchies. ‘Seniors,’ however, who are at the pinnacle of their careers, avoid engaging in intensive teaching; instead, they enjoy sitting in the higher research councils, applying for grants in personal capacities, and enhancing their monetary benefits. As a result, the universities suffer from stagnation. Additionally, in public sector universities, hegemonic and dominant ‘seniors’ prevent younger and early-career scholars from engaging in autonomous research and teaching. It is important to note that most public sector universities do not have teacher evaluations regularly. Hence, there is hardly any talk about the seniors’ contribution to teaching and course updating. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) has also established several criteria for research funding that favour ‘seniors.’ It is almost a dream for an early-career academic to get research funding from the HEC if they do not have a senior as a Principal Investigator (PI). In addition, senior-junior distinctions along gender lines, service duration, or even age amount to retrogressive practices that limit ‘juniors’ and early career academic researchers’ potential, skills, and contribution to knowledge production. In addition, the patriarchal academic environment reifies the colonial legacy of erasure, alienation, and domination at the university. Career women’s struggle with systematic discrimination is a well-researched subject.⁵⁶ Female academics and researchers who challenge such hierarchical structures and domineering practices or speak up for themselves are readily labelled ‘problematic.’

⁵⁵ Dlamini and Adams 2014.

⁵⁶ See Ekine 2018; Maphalala and Mpofo 2017.

No Go Areas and Red Lines: An Unexpected Exposé

While doing my M.Phil. at a public sector institution where I was also teaching, I encountered an utterly disappointing hitch. Having just started teaching in a university department and beginning my first and formal attempt at academic research, I wanted everything to be flawless. As a motivated and enthusiastic graduate student, I was eager to start my research on women's experiences, specifically in the context of seeking redress after sexual assault. I strongly felt that this study would significantly contribute to knowledge about the workings of formal and informal institutions and how women experience them in Pakistan. I did not just want to get a degree. I saw my project as the first step toward a long research career. Later, I realised it was just a dream for a female academic researcher because women's experiences are thought by the masculine academy at once unimportant and forbidden to speak about.

My interest in gender and institutions inspired me to develop a research project examining sexual assaults on women that have occurred or were associated with formal and informal institutions (mainly bureaucracy) in Pakistan. It was a clearly defined puzzle, investigating three well-known sexual assault cases that received much media attention because the attacks were purportedly committed in formal and public social settings. This research was bold, both contextually and topically. I was aware of the cultural sensitivity around discussing such issues in academia. However, I moved forward since it was academic research for completing my M.Phil. Additionally, it would add to the scarce literature on the institutions in Pakistan. It is crucial to highlight that, as a brand-new instructor and researcher, I was unaware of the research's 'no-go areas' where powerful institutions or organisations could be the research subject. The topics that could raise questions about the performance of the mighty bureaucratic institutions and its treatment of women in Pakistan are one example of 'no-go areas.'

After meeting all requirements and performing the necessary edits, I submitted the study proposal to the University Research Board for approval. To my disappointment, the university's research board rejected it. I was shocked and had no idea why this outcome. Completely unaware of what happened, I waited for communication from the research board outlining my proposal's shortcomings. At that time, a student would not present her research proposal to the research board in person; instead, the research supervisor would do so.⁵⁷ According to the unofficial comments made by the board members to my supervisor, "The research

⁵⁷ The practice has changed now, and students present their research proposals to the board in the presence of their research supervisor.

topic does not come under the area of political science, and students of political science should study matters relating to politics and leave the gender issues to the gender studies students.” The research boards comprise ‘senior specialists’ from all faculties; their decisions cannot be challenged. There is no way to disagree with their judgement or appeal their decision. The only way forward was to write another research proposal and present it again.

Consequently, I suspended my research on this topic. However, I thought there should be a way to persuade the research board members about the significance of this research study to change their minds. The isolation of the traditional political science discipline from gender studies and relegating the issues that affect women to a separate discipline is particularly problematic. Additionally, my suggested research would impact several ‘sacrosanct’ organisations (police, military), which still firmly adhere to colonial customs and legacies and are crucial to the country’s establishment. They have inherited bureaucratic authoritarianism from the British Empire and religiously maintain the colonial legacy to date. Talbot notes that India and Pakistan continued the ‘steel frame’ bureaucracy instituted by the colonials to maintain law and order in British India.⁵⁸ Bringing the state’s powerful institutions under scrutiny through research was risky for university boards, which often work in tandem with bureaucracy (national and provincial). Deeply neo-colonial in structure, some institutions are sacred and holy cows, having a royal status in the country; therefore, a slur on their name would not be acceptable otherwise. Moreover, who is a graduate student or an early career researcher to challenge the hegemony of the state’s institutions and the integrity of its members? This is how I try to make sense of the rejection of my proposed research project. Another revelation was the gendered nature of ‘disciplines,’ which in this case was that political science has nothing to do with gender issues. The sequestering of issues that affect women to ‘gender studies’ and keeping them firmly out of the ‘political’ sciences (see below for further discussion).

Also, I heard later that some board members strongly objected to my use of the words ‘sexual assault’ in my description of the topic, which paved the way for complete rejection. Board members stated that using the term ‘sexual assault’ is ‘inappropriate’ and sends the wrong message about our norms and culture. The issue’s sensitivity is unquestionable, but asking difficult questions produces critical knowledge. However, red lines, no-go areas, and institutional hurdles in a research culture promote inauthentic, unreliable research lacking contextual realities and rigour. Moreover, they undermine researchers’ academic freedom to

⁵⁸ Talbot 2013, 29.

explore their areas of interest, deterring them from conducting critical contextual studies to address the problems within the state and social organisations.

Since the British Empire was more interested in maintaining law and order than ensuring democratic representation, it developed bureaucracy and military institutions rather than democratic structures.⁵⁹ As a result, we now have a weakened, imperfect, and ineffective democratic system comprised mainly of (elite) families previously favoured by the British Empire for their excellent job of ‘serving British interests.’ These families were rewarded with lands and wealth, giving them political clout among the populace, which still holds in postcolonial times. Additionally, the state institutions are becoming more potent by the day, restricting academic freedom and reducing public forums for discussion and voicing opposition. In Pakistan, the government’s suppression of dissent has led to the rise of social movements in the peripheries of Pakistan.

In the following vignette, I highlight the risks of multidisciplinary research to early-career researchers and the discrediting attitude of subject experts. This incident happened at a junior scholars’ conference, where I presented a working chapter from the dissertation. One of the subject experts in the audience from the Global North (a member of Pakistan’s diaspora) made very negative comments about my study topic methodology. This exemplary academic interaction illustrates the deep-seated bias of established subject specialists toward interdisciplinary research and area specialisation.

Inter-/Multidisciplinary Approach – A Big No

Interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary are not new concepts anymore.⁶⁰ Transcending discipline boundaries has proved its worth by advancing knowledge and speaking newly to shared problems in the social and behavioural sciences. However, disciplinary boundaries persist, and so does its fierce guarding. Insistent disciplinarity also impedes the vital importance of colonised people and women to every disciplinary field and the potential of their experiences and criticisms under the very foundations of those fields, i.e., Western knowledge.

Some time ago, I received a travel grant to present a chapter from my dissertation at a junior scholars’ conference in the US. The chapter discussed why

⁵⁹ Talbot 2013, 30–31.

⁶⁰ Kessel and Rosenfield 2008; Pratiwi and Supriatna 2020.

Pakhtunwali (a set of informal institutions) remains a durable and ubiquitous code to which Pashtuns still adhere. Anthropologists and sociologists have mainly generated scholarship on the Pashtun ethnic group.⁶¹ I used several studies (anthropology and sociology) as data sources in my chapter. In addition, I addressed the subject by conducting in-depth interviews (IDIs) with local academic experts working on Pashtuns. One of the audience members, an anthropology expert, did not receive my attempt well and came out strongly against my methodological approaches. He explicitly said that interdisciplinary research is less pure and that junior scholars should stick to their respective fields. Also, multi/interdisciplinary work would not establish a scholar's position in the academic community.

Furthermore, he commented on the content that most research on Pashtuns portrays them as victims, harming Pakistan's reputation and humiliating the scholars, originally Pakistanis, who reside and work at the institutions in the global North (i.e., diaspora scholars like himself). It was objectionable that everyone in the room took notice of his comments. I was confused because he made such a long comment without signposting if this was a question or comment. The power dynamics between a well-known and influential figure in the discipline in the West and a novice researcher, a woman who also happened to be of Pashtun ethnicity, were unequal. It severely affected my confidence as a motivated junior scholar. I wondered what had upset them so much. What is it that I cited anthropologists' writings, or did they object to the topic of my study or both? Later in the evening, a global North academic (white) with extensive fieldwork experience in India remarked, "I am sorry about what happened during your presentation today, but interdisciplinary research is not advised if you do not want trouble like this again."

In this event, two factors are worth noting. Firstly, such "disciplinary scolding/disciplining" discourages young scholars from conducting interdisciplinary research within the social sciences. In decolonial terms, this disciplining of the young researchers comes from hegemony in the field. Secondly, the paranoia of diaspora scholars living in the West with the image of their native country and feeling obligated to justify themselves by denouncing area-studies scholarship that they think makes them 'look bad' (probably in response to the challenges of their subject position as global South diaspora scholars working in the West). Interdisciplinarity is a valuable method for studying shared topics among social

⁶¹ For instance, Fredrick Barth 1959; James Spain 1965; Akbar Sayed 1985; Benedict Grima 1992; and Charles Lindholm 1980, among others.

scientists, despite its inherent challenges, and has been emphasised as an important moving part of New Area Studies and its decolonial approach.⁶²

Regarding diaspora academics' domination over local researchers, particularly in the realm of public scholarship, it is important to note that academics from Pakistan's diaspora face several challenges in Western academia, such as underrepresentation, peripheral status positions plus concerns with their academic reputation within the broader racialised academic hierarchies and neo-liberal, imperial geopolitics of knowledge production. Being connected to Western knowledge systems gives them an advantage with local academics and researchers while juggling authenticity concerns in the global North academia/diaspora. It seems improbable that the contextual knowledge and research would advance by smearing local researchers. Taking a cue from Foucault, this is one of the causes of the marginalisation, suppression, and obliteration of local knowledge(s).⁶³

In the last vignette, I present an individual in-depth interview with a male researcher who has extensive experience in conducting fieldwork in the conflict zones of the North-western part of Pakistan. This interview illustrates a male researcher's challenges in navigating the conflict-sensitive parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In doing so, I show a male researcher's perspective on the standardised research protocols such as IRBs (developed in the Anglo-Saxon academia) and their inadequacy in fieldwork in the research participant's context. This anecdote contrasts with some of my personal experiences as a researcher in the volatile Pashtun context. My experiences as a female fieldwork researcher highlight concerns like 'how fieldwork is gendered and patriarchal' in Pashtun society, which devalues a female researcher's autonomy and dissuades her from demonstrating 'agency and autonomy.'⁶⁴ Fieldwork is a gendered experience, and

62 It is accurate to say that scientific disciplines are built on specialisation and have their own epistemological and methodological underpinnings that allow them to examine their objects. However, this rigidity should not become a religion because that would prevent knowledge from progressing, which is the case in social and behavioural sciences (Jacobs and Frickel 2009; Lele and Norgaard 2005; Klein 1990). For a discussion of New Area Studies, see: Derichs, Heryanto and Abraham 2020; Fleschenberg and Baumann 2021; Houben, Guillermo and Macamo 2020; Jackson 2020; Rehbein, Kamal and Asif 2020; as well as Knorr, Fleschenberg, Kalia and Derichs, eds. 2022. Special Issue "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia," *IQAS* 51, no. 3–4, as well as the edited volume: Knorr, Lina, Andrea Fleschenberg, Sumrin Kalia, und Claudia Derichs. 2022. *Local Responses to Global Challenges in Southeast Asia: A Transregional Studies Reader*. Both feature also Pakistani / South Asian scholars (in diaspora or not) with comments on this matter.

63 Foucault 2020; Pattaon et al. 1979.

64 Holz and Bano 2022; see also Fleschenberg and Castillo 2022.

opening up discussion on gendered/sexual(ised) treatment is necessary to equip (novice) researchers to deal with situations in which gender comes to the fore.⁶⁵ In addition, it is crucial to pay attention to the experiences of male academics in patriarchal situations.⁶⁶ Patriarchy is a social system of power and hegemony that expects women to act and behave a certain way. Hence, a female researcher's experiences could differ from those of male researchers. It is important to bring a male researcher's perspective to show how conducting research is gendered in traditional social contexts such as Pakistan. Holz and Bano (2022) have also highlighted the women researchers' ordeals in Pakistan.

Research Ethics in Volatile Research Settings: Fixity or Fluidity

Here, I focus on the following question: How do local male researchers educated in Western research institutes like me tackle hegemonic Western research ethics when conducting fieldwork studies in the volatile Pashtun region? To have a male researcher's perspective on the issue, I interviewed SA⁶⁷, a journalist, professor and fellow researcher, about his research practice, ethical dilemmas, and coping mechanisms.

SA's 'research field' in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and former FATA is located at the intersection of a post-conflict scenario and a conflict zone due to a precarious political situation marred by militancy and extremism for the last three decades. It is a particularly active conflict zone due to the ongoing US War on Terror and Pakistan's military operations in the tribal districts. To highlight the disruptions of fieldwork in conflict zones and to provide direction for researchers in similar research environments, it is necessary to extract some insights from the messy experiences of fieldwork. The effects of emotional labour – sharing in the suffering of others, feeling drained by what one witnesses and is powerless to change, and discomfort about one's privileged position – have already been recognised in research dealing with sensitive conflict topics.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ See Clark and Grant 2015; Klotz 2017.

⁶⁶ See Rahat Shah in Batool et al. 2021, 445–51; Khan 2021.

⁶⁷ To maintain the anonymity of the researcher, I shall use these alphabets with his permission to refer to his narrative. SA is a male mid-career academic researcher with good fieldwork experience in the Pashtun region. He is a graduate of Global North academy and was trained in Western research ethics.

⁶⁸ Schulz et al. 2022. See also the diverse (inter-)disciplinary contributions in the special issue

SA noted that, while studying at a US university for a Ph.D., he looked at various research approaches, including ethnography, and discovered that everything was written from a Western researcher's point of view. Western researchers travel to developing nations for intriguing research questions and their potential answers. However, since they come from the outside world, their ethical concerns differ from those of the local researchers in the field. In contrast, local researchers familiar with the cultural nuances of particular social and political contexts face several challenges due to Western research protocols. For local and foreign researchers, it is logical to have a flexible research ethics protocol to cope with difficult situations that may arise during research. He noted, "I work and live in a militarised region where researchers face substantial risks, where Western research ethics do not fully account for those risks. Thus, I must make judgments as I go."⁶⁹

He gave an example to illustrate how he is discouraged by the 'suspicion' and 'distrust' in his social interactions, forcing him to improvise the ethical research code he learned. He visited his daughter's school one day to make a tuition deposit, he saw a warning note posted on the principal's door that said, "منع ہے پښتو بولنا" (*Speaking Pashto is prohibited*)." It was a shocking revelation for him. Knowing that children are forbidden to speak their mother tongue (Pashto) at the school premises pained him deeply. Since Pashto plays a vital role in who he is, he wishes to transmit his mother tongue to his children. It wasn't very comforting for him to live in his hometown and have his language taken away from his child. He instantly thought of taking a picture of the notice but considered ethical concerns regarding the lack of formal permission from the school administration. Western research ethics would suggest getting formal consent from the school administration before taking a picture. After thinking and negotiating with himself, he was convinced that taking a photo was not a violation of privacy, as it was a public noticeboard. In this case, the school administration could ask him to leave the premises. The school administration also does not take the visitors' privacy into account. When he arrived on the school grounds, he was immediately under surveillance due to CCTVs in place, without his knowledge or consent.

on "Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts," edited by Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg 2022/2023, for a pandemic-related review of global north-centred knowledge productions on research methods and ethics see Fleschenberg and Holz 2021.

⁶⁹ For example, the IRB protocols emphasize the research participant's safety as a priority and would not say much to a researcher about navigating difficult situations. A researcher in the conflict fieldwork is vulnerable and exposed. Thus, a set standard may jeopardize his existence and study.

Although it is fair to be concerned about security in volatile Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is unethical to videotape someone without their permission. He could not take Western research standards at face value and uphold them when his identity was threatened. Barring his child from speaking his mother tongue attacked his identity. Language relates to identity, nation, region, and religion in Pakistan.⁷⁰ There is a history of systemic marginalisation of local languages at the expense of English (colonial legacy) and Urdu (national language).⁷¹ Thus, this notice was not simple; he interpreted it as a deliberate representation of the state's hegemonic discourses. The research would dictate to make his act of taking photos known to the school administration since it was their premises. Nevertheless, in that case, it was unlikely for him to do so, he shared. Western research ethics are not a monolith, and there are examples of veiled research in unusual circumstances. However, those trained in the US academia know that their commonplace IRBs have little help in the contextualised complexities of research in conflict-sensitive settings.⁷² He said, "It is not about what I like or dislike about the standard research ethics of Western education. It is only that they are less relevant in this context, sometimes not helpful at all." Therefore, despite fighting within, he shot the photo as evidence of how Pashtuns are still subjected to prejudice in practice in their homeland. He was aware of the risk he took, but it was vital for him as a researcher. In conflict zones, life, security, well-being, and identity are at risk and looking the other way is not an option when you are an insider researcher. Additionally, the historical oppression of the Pashtun ethnic group dates to the colonial era.⁷³ This incident and many other interactions demonstrate that working as a researcher in the volatile Pashtun region is "suppressive and depressing," and the emotional cost must be recognised. As Datta⁷⁴ puts it, a researcher must recognise the persistent oppression and domination of colonial research training and incorporate an ethical understanding in his/her research. SA also asserted that the research review boards in the global North institutions emphasise the safety and privacy of research respondents,⁷⁵ which is reasonable, especially when regular people have been brutalised in the name of research.⁷⁶ However, they do not speak to aspects where the local researcher might have to act proactively or improvise, depending on their risk. SA stated:

⁷⁰ Ashraf, Turner and Laar 2021.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Wessells 2015.

⁷³ See Yousaf 2021; Borthakur 2021; Khan et al. 2021.

⁷⁴ Dattta 2017.

⁷⁵ See Johansson 2014, Lisiak 2015, Kloth 2017.

⁷⁶ See Smith 1999.

In the field, I question and reason and create a logic of ethics, which is also my contribution to research methods. I have enough books to understand ethical research. Still, for the lack of guidance for a particular context, I could devise my research strategy and write about it for other researchers. When I understand what I am doing is justified, I do not consider myself unethical or ignorant of Western research standards; instead, I contribute to the limited version of research ethics to make it functional beyond the Western hemisphere.

Similarly, SA is intrigued by warning signs near airports and military garrisons in Pakistan. He referred to a particular one that stated. “خبردار! قریب آنے پر گولی ماری جائیگی.” (*You will be shot if you approach this area*).” According to him, these warning signs aid in the subject formation of local people. As a researcher residing in the Pashtun regions, he was inspired to snap images of these examples of the discursive hegemony of the state’s ideological apparatuses and utilise them in his research. SA was particularly concerned about the excessive militarisation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In response to my inquiry about whether he has any moral hesitations regarding Western-centred research ethics while working in his research settings, he responded:

Established Western research ethics is still determining what I might encounter in the field. However, I need more adequate guidance, so I improvise, rethink, and reformulate research ethics as I collect data in conflict. I tell myself that what I know and experience, the people sitting in the IRBs have no idea about it. Research is a uniform, homogenising experience for them, but that is not the case here.

Why is “research ethics outside the conventional Western research ethics” necessary? (My interjection)

Being an insider, I pick subtle cues, gestures, and symbols and navigate the field accordingly. Research should not be centralised and hegemonised, or we would do more harm than good. In attempting to decolonise research methodologies, I take it upon myself to fight for my place and narrative in the community of scholars from the global North. The research uniform with colonial badges is belittling and undermining and does not help produce my knowledge.

Decolonial research is a way to confront and resist the Western construction of power and supremacy in developing critical knowledge. Therefore, going by his (local) version of research ethics, it is ethical to devise a contextual research strategy to navigate the field. It is crucial to uphold ethics of care, establish limits, and prioritise well-being above continual endurance since our research and personal safety are important.⁷⁷ SA stated:

⁷⁷ Kloß 2017.

I am contributing to this well-founded knowledge out there. Suppose the rest of the world acknowledges when I publish. Why shouldn't they consider the variety of contexts, variety of study settings, and complexity of the research field? I intentionally assert my space and identity and find it ethical to choose what I should study, when, how, and where. That would be my epistemic emancipation, I suppose.

In this vignette, distortions of the researcher's identity (language) and the region's militarisation are moments when he contests Western research ethics' applicability and utility and makes a fair case for acting according to the situation. Also, in the first instance mentioned, he was not in a researcher role formally. Still, he saw an opportunity to collect a vital piece of data for his research and collected it. Using this incident, we can argue that in environments marked with violence and repression, a researcher must opt for a course of action outside the domain of standardised Western research ethics. Researchers have noted various difficulties with upholding ethical conduct standards when conducting research involving conflict settings.⁷⁸

Pakistan is a multi-lingual and multicultural country; its inhabitants speak 77 languages.⁷⁹ As mentioned, the colonial legacy is embedded in Pakistan's social and institutional structures and continues to homogenise diverse communities and ethnicities. Through ideological discursive processes like schooling, the centralising Pakistani state homogenises ethnic populations, including Pashtuns, Sindhis, Balochis, and Saraikis.⁸⁰ A deeper issue highlighted in this vignette is the researcher's responsibility to challenge the ongoing erosion of Pashtun identity by emphasising speaking English or Urdu in educational institutions.

Decolonial research is responsible for justice for marginalised/oppressed/vulnerable people. Unfortunately, standardised Western research ethics do not account for these hegemonic context constraints. Research ethics might suggest that a researcher stays away from risky situations but does not suggest how to navigate them if necessary. Scholars also agree that working with multiple cultures and contexts characterised by violence and instability raises contentious issues, including authority and consent, secrecy, trust and benefit, hazards to researchers, and possible harm to participants.⁸¹ In global North academia, the institutional review boards attempt to uphold institutional interests and the researcher's autonomy through research ethics protocols. However, it may be crucial for researchers working in volatile situations to maintain their adapt-

⁷⁸ See Black 2003.

⁷⁹ Ashraf, Turner and Laar 2021.

⁸⁰ Khan et al. 2020.

⁸¹ See Zwi, Groove, Mackenzie et al. 2006.

ability and capacity to react quickly to ethical or methodological dilemmas in fieldwork.⁸²

SA's personal and collective identity is constantly threatened in the narrative, compelling him to downplay standardised Western research ethics protocols. For many Pashtuns, Pashto is not just a language but a symbol of identity. Tariq Rehman⁸³ observes that as a political strategy, the Pakistani "elite" has seized English as their "cultural capital," representing the "upper" class while disadvantageously affecting the underprivileged to retain their hegemony as a continuation of colonial heritage. As a result, local languages are fading away. Due to the dominance of English among the elite and Urdu's use as the primary language of communication among the educated urban populace, some local languages have already become extinct.

Finally, it is paradoxical that standardised Western research ethics and norms emphasise the security and safety of researchers and study participants in ideal circumstances while neglecting the vulnerabilities, hazards, and difficulties researchers face in unstable and oppressive environments.⁸⁴ It would be too naïve to think that a researcher is a robot, a programmed individual who would navigate, investigate, and explore their field as told. Our personal and professional selves as researchers must resist rather than endure. Those manuals, suggestions, rules, and restrictions make a practical toolbox but are inadequate when the researcher is confronted with contextual politics and hegemonic structures in conflict-sensitive settings. One way to decolonise research and empower marginalised discourses is to empower the local researcher (insider) to devise their own research strategy per their research conditions and complex social environment. In the spirit of epistemic emancipation, leaving the decisions to the researchers themselves is a risk worth taking.⁸⁵

⁸² For a discussion on research ethics as decolonial praxis and the messy politics thereof, see: Castillo, Rubis and Pattathu 2023; Dilger and Castillo 2022; as well as Sökefeld, Ruby and Gu 2023.

⁸³ Rehman 2010, 239.

⁸⁴ Chong 2008.

⁸⁵ See Castillo this volume; Nizaruddin this volume; Castillo, Rubis and Pattathu 2023; Fle-schenberg and Kamal 2023; as well as Sökefeld, Ruby and Gu 2022.

Final Thoughts

The incidents and interactions shared in this chapter illustrate the persistent coloniality of knowledge systems, the hegemony of Western epistemologies and research methodologies and colonial frames of domination in universities in the peripheries of Pakistan. Academic research culture often insists on hierarchies and patriarchal norms, rendering younger and female academics/researchers helpless. Additionally, women often have fewer prospects for professional advancement or growth in post-colonial nations, including Pakistan. They are either underrepresented in many organisations or operate on the periphery of organisational life and academic hierarchies. In Pakistan, in all fields of work, whether in private businesses or educational institutions, women's standing has always been inferior to men's.⁸⁶ Although the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) claims in a policy statement to support gender equality in academic institutions,⁸⁷ the reality is quite different. The first two vignettes illustrate the discrepancy between theory and practice.

Pakistani universities implement research norms and practices informed by the colonial past, thus making universities a neo-colonial site of knowledge production. Mignolo,⁸⁸ citing Fanon, addressing the coloniality of knowledge caused by neoliberalism, calls for decolonising knowledge and being. As a key site of knowledge production and consecration, the university is responsible for deciding which histories and topics are 'valuable' to research and disseminate.⁸⁹ Since genuine knowledge is not created in a vacuum but rather by universities via a discursive flux inside a power framework, intellectuals from the global South must focus on contextual realities. To decolonise knowledge production, decolonising the university is a prerequisite. Datta argues that decolonising research methodologies creates empathetic educators and researchers;⁹⁰ hence, it is highly required to decolonise research and researchers, i.e., academia. This is not to say that standardised Western research ethics should be shunned or discarded. Still, there has to be room for appropriation, contextualising, and improvising as per the field realities and power dynamics in place across shifting positionalities.

Decolonisation is a call to stop relying on dominant Western knowledge systems and their products and liberate epistemology and research methodo-

⁸⁶ Shaukat and Pell 2016.

⁸⁷ Fakhr and Messenger 2020.

⁸⁸ Mignolo 2007.

⁸⁹ Gebrial 2018.

⁹⁰ Datta 2017.

logies from deep-seated colonial influence to disrupt the status quo. The commitment and task of decolonisation is a complex route but instead contains a multitude of challenges. Paramount among these is institutional decolonisation. For example, while the university is recognised as a critical site of knowledge production, it is one of the most westernised institutions in Pakistan. Recent student and faculty movements to decolonise higher education and diversify curricula have gained popularity in the global North. Examples include Rhodes Must Fall Oxford's (RMFO), Georgetown University's Plans to Atone for the Slave Past, and campaigns by the UK's National Union of Students called "Why Is My Curriculum White?"⁹¹ and "#LiberateMyDegree."⁹² Similar steps are underway in South African academia, Kenya, North and South Americas and elsewhere.⁹³ However, we do not see such a resistance movement in Pakistani educational academies.

As this chapter shows, Pakistani academic and research institutions are westernised, but what are the repercussions? In Mbembe's words,⁹⁴ the Westernisation of educational institutions means following a Western theoretical model that establishes the epistemic hegemony of the canon of the West by generating discursive scientific practices (research ethics is one) and marginalising other modes of knowledge production. The perpetual inculcation of the 'right' (Western) way of 'research' and how a researcher should carry themselves only reproduces the colonial culture of knowledge production, not original, contextual, and indigenous knowledge. In my experience, the priority and significance of research standards established by Western academic institutions fail to consider local research conditions.⁹⁵ The prevailing research protocols have been established globally under imperialism; thus, they are unlikely to negotiate volatile circumstances in the global South. To perform "cognitive justice,"⁹⁶ it is imperative to decentre research methodologies and research ethics.

Furthermore, another obstructive feature of Pakistani research culture is that dominant and famous researchers, both local and abroad (diaspora), overpower young and early career researchers and discredit their work through domineering, patronising attitudes when engaging with their approaches and research topics. Diaspora academics with expertise in the field and located in the global North have more visibility in the Western academic networks; their word carries

91 Students' Union Bournemouth University "Why Is My Curriculum White?" <https://www.subu.org.uk/mycurriculum/>.

92 Bhabra, Gebrial and Kerem 2020.

93 See Vorster and Quinn 2017; Gordon 2020; Oland, Hart and Frink 2020.

94 Mbembe 2015.

95 See Holz and Bano 2022; see Sökefeld, Ruby and Gu 2023, Batool et al. 2021 and Zuberi 2021.

96 Santos 2008, 1; Castillo, Rubis and Pattathu 202; Thajib 2022 as well as Sakti and Taek 2023.

weight and influence. Due to their association with the Global North's academy, they hurry to judge local researchers on their choice of topics, methodologies and case selection. On the contrary, in the spirit of decolonisation, they should instead encourage local researchers to create contextually relevant scholarship.

Furthermore, a local researcher's sensitivities, vulnerabilities, and strategies for dealing with hegemonic research practices in knowledge creation⁹⁷ are also disregarded by a totalising rhetoric of standardised Western (Anglo-Saxon specifically) research ethics. For example, most students and early career researchers pursue their research in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia, where IRB protocols are a typical requirement to conduct research in one's context. IRBs are helpful but cannot be implemented universally. Being a post-colonial nation (contested term), we as academics and researchers must approach pedagogies and research critically and question the coloniality of knowledge production in Pakistani universities. In addition, combining the epistemic perspectives of regional knowledge partners would successfully challenge the dominant Western canon. The primary responsibility for contesting the Western epistemological coloniality and making connections between academic forums and researchers to respond to epistemic injustices falls on scholars from/in the global South. Hence, to recreate knowledge, a decolonial researcher is not someone for whom research is a mere academic initiative; instead, they must be thoroughly experienced and politically committed. Dismantling basic mechanics of colonial thinking and challenging self-created hegemonic authority are the first steps in overthrowing patronising knowledge experts locally and in the West. Only through epistemic decolonisation can we re-centre knowledge geographically and historically.⁹⁸

To transform the future, it is imperative to undo the legacies of the past. We observe severe flaws in how universities are run and how knowledge is produced in the global South. Decolonial researchers have been trying to respond to and

⁹⁷ See Baykan 2023; Huang 2022; Fleschenberg and Castillo 2022. The social world does not function uniformly. All societies have codes, norms, cultural sensitivities, and sensibilities. Having diverse and pluriverse research ethics protocols for fieldwork in volatile contexts is logical. For instance, Pashtun culture, like other cultures, has its peculiarities that may not be researchable under universalised research protocols developed in the West. One example would be that in rural Pashtun society, accessing women without the permission of their male family members is offensive. When native researchers who understand the nuances of society and culture are not under pressure to adhere to Western research standards, they can more effectively negotiate their study settings.

⁹⁸ Another vital area where colonial frameworks thrive is academic publishing. There is hardly any space for the global South scholars to publish in the well-reputed journals in the global North. For the lack of space, I could not exhaustively discuss this theme.

remedy the situation. However, changing a mutating entity from another age and epoch is challenging. Understanding the nuanced idea of decolonisation is difficult; it calls upon academics and researchers to fundamentally rethink how they should teach and research.⁹⁹ Mbembe,¹⁰⁰ drawing on Ngũgĩ's book *Decolonising the Mind*,¹⁰¹ argues that decolonisation is not about closing the doors on European or other traditions; it means that the centre must be distinctly redefined. Keet suggests, "Only if we view the 'decolonisation of knowledge' as the collective processes by which disciplinary practices are successful in working against the inscribed epistemic injustices of all knowledge formations, can we claim a commitment towards epistemic justice."¹⁰² The transformed future of a decolonised epistemic world would be a decentred one where the West is not the unifocal centre of knowledge, but 'Others' knowledges, knowledge creators/contributors and knowledge-creation practices are given their due place at the very centre(s).

Bibliography

- Afolabi, Olugbemiga Samuel. 2020. "Globalisation, Decoloniality and the Question of Knowledge Production in Africa: A Critical Discourse." *Journal of Higher Education in Africa / Revue de l'enseignement Supérieur En Afrique* 18, no. 1: 93–110.
- Ahmad, Sohail. 2020. "The FATA merger with Khyber–Pakhtunkhwa: Governance challenges and development opportunities." In Ali and Hussain, 33–44.
- Albatch, Philip G. 2001. "Academic Freedom: International Realities and Challenges." *Higher Education* 41: 205–19.
- Ali, Ghulam, and Ejaz Hussain, eds. 2020. *Perspectives on Contemporary Pakistan: Governance, Development and Environment*. First Edition. Routledge advances in South Asian studies. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge. DOI: 10.4324/9781003007784.
- Ali, Syed Mubarak, ed. 2017. *Barre Sagheer me Tarikh Naveesi k Rujhanat*. Fiction House: Lahore.
- Allwood, Jens S., Olga Pombo, Clara Renna, and Giovanni Scarafile. 2020. *Controversies and Interdisciplinarity: Beyond Disciplinary Fragmentation for a New Knowledge Model*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Anand, Kusha, and Laraib Niaz. 2022. "The Precarious State of Academic Freedom in Higher Education: The Case of India and Pakistan." In *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, eds. Ralph W. Wood and Sariya Cheruvallil-Contractor, 30: 281–98. Boston: Brill.

⁹⁹ Vorster and Quinn 2017.

¹⁰⁰ Mbembe 2015, 17.

¹⁰¹ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1986.

¹⁰² Keet 2014, 35.

- Ashraf, Muhammad Azeem, David A. Turner, and Rizwan Ahmed Laar. "Multilingual Language Practices in Education in Pakistan: The Conflict between Policy and Practice." *SAGE Open* 11, no. 1: 1–14. DOI: 10.1177/21582440211004140.
- Bano, Abida, Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo, Sarah Holz, and Andrea Fleschenberg, eds. 2022. "Negotiating Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts, Part I." Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 53, no. 4.
- Bano, Abida, Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo, Sarah Holz, and Andrea Fleschenberg, eds. 2023. "Negotiating Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts, Part II." Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 54, no. 1.
- Batool, Rahat, Andrea Fleschenberg, Laurent Glattli, Aseela Haque, Sarah Holz, Muhammad Salman Khan, Shulagna Pal, Rahat Shah and Mateeullah Tareen. 2021. "Researching South Asia in Pandemic Times – Of Shifting Fields, Research Tools, Risks, Emotions and Research Relationships." *South Asia Chronicle* 11: 419–67.
- Baykan, Toygar Sinan. 2023. "Power Negotiations in the Field: Ethical and Practical Challenges of Field Research on Party Politics in Hybrid Regime Settings." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg: 59–89.
- Bendix, Daniel, Franziska Müller, and Ziai Aram, eds. 2020. *Beyond the Master's Tools: Decolonising Knowledge Orders Research Methods and Teaching*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Berger, Roni. 2015. "Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research." *Qualitative research* 15, no. 2: 219–34.
- Bhambra, Gurminder K. 2014. "Post-colonial and decolonial dialogues." *Post-colonial Studies* 17 no. 2: 115–21. DOI: 10.1080/13688790.2014.966414.
- Bhambra, Gurminder K., Dalia Gebrial, and Kerem Nişancıoğlu. 2018. *Decolonising the University*. London: Pluto Press.
- Bhambra, Gurminder K., Kerem Nişancolu, and Dalia Gebrial. 2020. "Decolonising the university in 2020." *Identities* 27, no. 4: 509–16. DOI: 10.1080/1070289x.2020.1753415.
- Black, Richard. 2003. "Ethical codes in humanitarian emergencies: from practice to research?" *Disasters* 27, no. 2: 95–108.
- Borthakur, Anchita. 2021. "The Pashtun Trajectory: From the Colonially Constructed Notion on "Violent" Pashtun Tribe to "Non-Violent" Pashtun Tahafuz Movement." *Asian Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 15, no. 3 (July 3): 360–78. DOI: 10.1080/25765949.2021.1992584.
- Bryman, Allan, and Catherin Cassel. 2006. "The researcher interview: a reflexive perspective." *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management* 1, no. 1: 41–55. DOI: 10.1108/17465640610666633.
- Castillo, Rosa Cordillera A., June Rubis, and Antony Pattathu. 2023. "Critical Research Ethics as Decolonial Praxis." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg: 21–37.
- Chilisa, Bagele. 2012. "Postcolonial Indigenous Research Paradigms." In *Indigenous Research Methodologies*, First Edition. 98–127. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Chilisa, Bagele. 2020. *Indigenous Research Methodologies*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks California: SAGE.
- Chiumbu, Sara. 2017. "Why decolonise research methods: some initial thoughts." *Semantic Scholar* <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Why-decolonise-research-methods%3A-some-initial-Chiumbu/d64f2890f0c221922d3ce9233655ca81356923c9>.

- Chong, Kelly H. 2008. "Coping with Conflict, Confronting Resistance: Fieldwork Emotions and Identity Management in a South Korean Evangelical Community." *Qualitative Sociology* 31, no. 4: 369–90.
- Clark, Imogen, and Andrea Grant. 2015. "Sexuality and danger in the field: Starting an uncomfortable conversation." *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford* 7, no. 1: 1–14. <https://www.anthro.ox.ac.uk/jasoonline-2011>.
- Colbourne, Linda, and Magi Sque. 2004. "Split personalities: Role conflict between the nurse and the nurse researcher." *NT Research* 9, no. 4: 297–304. DOI: 10.1177/136140960400900410.
- Dados, Nour, and Raewyn Connell. 2012. "The Global South." *Contexts* 11, no. 1: 12–13. DOI: 10.1177/1536504212436479.
- Darder, Antonia. 2018. "Decolonising interpretive research: subaltern sensibilities and the politics of voice." *Qualitative Research Journal* 18, no. 2: 94–104. DOI: 10.1108/QRJ-D-17-00056.
- Datta, Ranjan. 2017. "Decolonising Both Researcher and Research and Its Effectiveness in Indigenous Research." *Research Ethics* 14, no. 2: 1–24. DOI: 10.1177/1747016117733296.
- Daza, Stephanie Lynn. 2008. "Decolonizing Researcher Authenticity." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 11, no. 1: 71–85. DOI: 10.1080/13613320701845822.
- Denzin, Norman K. 2001. "The reflexive interview and a performative social science." *Qualitative research* 1, no. 1: 23–46. DOI: 10.1177/146879410100100102.
- Denzin, Norman K., Yvonne S. Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 2008. *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*. Los Angeles: Sage. DOI: 10.4135/9781483385686.
- Derichs, Claudia, Ariel Heryanto and Itty Abraham. 2020. "Area Studies and Disciplines: What Disciplines and What Areas?" In "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia," eds. Andrea Fleschenberg and Benjamin Baumann. Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 51, no. 4–3: 35–49.
- Dilger, Hans-Jörg, and Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo. 2022. "Ethics as Embodied Practice: Reflexivity, Dialogue and Collaboration – in Conversation with Prof. Dr. Hansjörg Dilger." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg: 505–18.
- Dlamini, Eunice Tressa, and Jabulile Dorothy Adams. 2014. "Patriarchy: A case of women in institutions of higher education." *Perspectives in Education* 32, no. 4: 121–33.
- Dowling, Maura. 2006. "Approaches to reflexivity in qualitative research." *Nurse Researcher* 13, no. 3: 7–21.
- Dwyer, Sonya Corbin, and Jennifer L. Buckle. 2009. "The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 8, no. 1: 54–63. DOI: 10.1177/160940690900800105.
- Ekine, Adefunke O. 2018. "Women in Academic Arena: Struggles, Strategies and Personal Choices." *Gender Issues* 35, no. 4: 318–29. DOI: 10.1007/s12147-018-9212-6.
- Ellis, Carolyn, and Arthur B. Bochner. 2000. "Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity." In *Handbook of qualitative research*, Second Edition, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 733–768. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Etherington Kim. 2004. *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research*. London: Jessica Kingsley. http://www.123library.org/book_details/?id=2049.
- Evans, Stephen. 2002. "Macaulay's Minute Revisited: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-Century India." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 23: 260–81. DOI: 10.1080/01434630208666469.

- Fakhr, Zainab. 2018. "Exploration of female academic staff experiences in a conservative and gendered society: A case study of selected universities in Pakistan." Unpub. PhD diss., Metropolitan University, London.
- Fakhr, Zainab, and Hazel Messenger. 2020. "Gender inequality and academic freedom in Pakistani higher education." In *Faculty and Student Research in Practising Academic Freedom*, eds. Sengupta Enakshi and Patrick Blessinger, 67–84. Bingley UK: Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Finlay, Linda. 2002. "Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice." *Qualitative research* 2, no. 2: 209–30. DOI: 10.1177/146879410200200205.
- Fleschenberg, Andrea, and Benjamin Baumann. 2021. "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia – Mapping Ideas, Agendas, Debates and Critique." *International Quarterly for South Asian Studies* 21, no. 3–4: 5–16. DOI: 10.11588/iqas.2020.3-4.13846.
- Fleschenberg, Andrea, and Sarah Holz. 2021. "Mapping Academic Debates on Methods, Ethics and Theorising during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Knowledge Productions in Uncertain Times." In "Print Journalism in India: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Developments." Special Issue, *South Asia Chronicle* 11.
- Fleschenberg, Andrea and Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo. 2022. "Negotiating Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg, 495–503.
- Fleschenberg, Andrea and Ahsan Kamal. 2023. "Of Word Limits and World Limits – in Conversation with Ahsan Kamal." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg, 5–19.
- Fleschenberg, Andrea. 2023. "Conclusion. Reflecting Critical Knowledge Production and Social Sciences within an (Inter-) National, Decentred Research Cooperation on Ideas, Issues and Questions of Nation-building in Pakistan." In *Pakistan at Seventy-Five: Identity, Governance and Conflict-Resolution in a Post-Colonial Nation-State*, eds. Andrea Fleschenberg, Sarah Holz, and Arslan Waheed. Liverpool University Press.
- Foucault, Michel, and Colin Gordon. 2008. *Power*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Foucault, Michel. 2020. "Power/knowledge." In *The new social theory reader*, eds. Steven Seidman and Jeffrey C. Alexander, 73–79. London: Routledge.
- Furman, Rich. 2004. "Using poetry and narrative as qualitative data: Exploring a father's cancer through poetry." *Families, Systems, & Health* 22, no. 2: 162–70.
- Gebrial, Dalia. 2018. "Rhodes Must Fall: Oxford and movements for change." In Bhambra, Gebrial, and Nişancioğlu, 19–36.
- Giddens, Anthony. 2013. *New Rules of Sociological Method: A Positive Critique of Interpretative Sociologies*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Gopal, Piryamvada. 2021. "On Decolonisation and the University." *Textual Practice* 35, no. 6: 873–99. DOI: 10.1080/0950236x.2021.1929561.
- Gordon, David F. 2020. *Decolonization and the State in Kenya*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Gouldner, Alvin Ward. 1971. *The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology*. London: Heinemann.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2007. "The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economy Paradigms." *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2–3: 211–23.
- Halai, Anjum. 2012. *Research Methodologies in the 'South'*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.
- Heleta, Savo. 2018. "Decolonising Knowledge in South Africa: Dismantling the pedagogy of big lies." *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 40, no. 2: 47–60. DOI: 10.5070/F7402040942.

- Holz, Sarah, and Abida Bano. 2022. "Navigating Respectability in Patriarchal Contexts: Ethical Dilemmas of Women Researchers in Pakistan." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg, 553–85.
- Houben, Vincent, Ramon Guillermo and Elísio Macamo 2020. "New Area Studies as an Emerging Discipline. The Way Ahead for Southeast Asian Studies." In "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia," eds. Andrea Fleschenberg and Benjamin Baumann. Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 51, no. 4–3: 51–64.
- Horsburgh, Dorothy. 2003. "Evaluation of qualitative research." *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 12, no. 2: 307–12.
- Huang, Ping. 2022. "Ecological Civilisation: A Historical Perspective on Environmental Policy Narratives in China." In "China beyond China, Part I." Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 53, no. 2: 181–206.
- Jacobs, Jerry A., and Scott Frickle. 2009. "Interdisciplinarity: A critical assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35, no. 1: 43–65. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-115954.
- Jackson, Peter A., and Andrea Fleschenberg. 2020. "Reflections on Critical New Area Studies – in Conversation with Prof. Dr. Peter Jackson." In "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia," eds. Andrea Fleschenberg and Benjamin Baumann. Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 51, no. 4–3: 17–34.
- Johansson, Leanne. 2015. "Dangerous liaisons: Risk, positionality and power in women's anthropological fieldwork." *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford* 7, no. 1: 55–63. URL: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=6df19d4b547f7f9cc888f5d228909d472365f99b>.
- Kalia, Sumrin. 2021. "Magnifying Dissent: Researching Religious Outrage amidst the Pandemic." *South Asia Chronicle* 11: 469–92.
- Keet, A. 2014. "Epistemic 'Othering' and the Decolonisation of Knowledge." *Africa Insight* 44, no. 1: 23–37.
- Kessel, Frank, and Patricia L. Rosenfield. 2008. "Toward Transdisciplinary Research." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 35, no. 2: 116–23. DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2008.05.005.
- Khan, Muhammad Salman. 2021. "Covid-19 and Interview Mode Debates: Reflections on Using WhatsApp for Voice-only Interviewing." *South Asia Chronicle* 11: 493–519.
- Khan, Mubarak Ali, and Syed Jaffar Ahmed. 2013. *Challenges of History Writing in South Asia: Special Volume in Honour of Dr Mubarak Ali*. First Edition. Karachi: Pakistan Study Centre, University of Karachi.
- Khan, Usman, Yu Cheng, Zahid Ali Shah, Shakir Ullah, and Ma Jianfu. 2020. "Reclaiming Pashtun Identity." *Interventions* 23, no. 8: 1166–86. DOI: 10.1080/1369801x.2020.1845769.
- King, Kathryn E. 1994. "Method and methodology in feminist research: what is the difference?" *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 20, no. 1: 19–22.
- King, Christopher Rolland. 1999. *One Language Two Scripts: The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth Century North India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Klein, Julie Thompson. 1990. *Interdisciplinarity: History Theory and Practice*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Kloß, Sinah Theres. 2017. "Sexual(ized) harassment and ethnographic fieldwork: A silenced aspect of social research." *Ethnography* 18, no. 3: 396–414. DOI: 10.1177/1466138116641958.
- Koch, Tina, and Ann Harrington. 1998. "Reconceptualising Rigour: The Case for Reflexivity." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 28, no. 4: 882–90. DOI: 10.1046/j.1365-2648.1998.00725.x.

- Knorr, Lina, Andrea Fleschenberg, Sumrin Kalia, and Claudia Derichs. 2023. *Local responses to global challenges in Southeast Asia: A transregional studies reader*. Hackensack, NJ, Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pt. Ltd.
- Leake, Elisabeth. 2016. "At the Nation-State's Edge: Centre-Periphery Relations in Post-1947 South Asia." *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 2: 509–39. DOI: 10.1017/S0018246X15000394.
- Lee, Crystal Chen. 2020. "'I Have a Voice': Re-examining Researcher Positionality and Humanising Research With African Immigrant Girls." *Multicultural Perspectives* 22, no. 1: 46–54. DOI: 10.1080/15210960.2020.1728272.
- Lélé, Sharachachandra, and Richard B. Norgaard. 2005. "Practising interdisciplinarity." *Bioscience* 55, no. 11: 967–75. DOI: 10.1641/0006-3568(2005)055[0967:PI]2.0.CO;2.
- Lisiak, Agata. 2015. "Fieldwork and Fashion: Gendered and Classed Performances in Research Sites." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 16, no. 2. DOI: 10.17169/fqs-16.2.2334.
- Macaulay, Thomas Bibington. 2015. "Minutes dated 2 February 1835." *Islamic Studies* 54, no. 3/4: 237–48.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2006. "Cesaire's gift and the decolonial turn." *Radical Philosophy Review* 9, no. 2: 111–38.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2011. „Thinking through the decolonial turn: Post-continental interventions in theory, philosophy, and critique—An introduction.“ *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of peripheral cultural production of the Luso-Hispanic world* 1, no. 2: 1–15.
- Marginson, Simon. 2014. "Academic Freedom: A Global Comparative Approach." *Frontiers of Education in China* 9, no. 1: 24–41, DOI: 10.3868/s110-003-014-0003-x.
- Maphalala, Mncedisi C., and Nhlanhla Mpofu. 2017. "Are we there yet? A literature study of the challenges of women academics in institutions of higher education." *Gender & Behaviour* 15, no. 2: 9245–53. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2108818499/fulltext>.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2015. "Decolonising knowledge and the question of the archive." <http://wiser.wits.ac.za/system/files/Achille.pdf>, accessed August 28, 2022.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2016. "Decolonising the university: New directions." *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15, no. 1: 29–45. DOI: 10.1177/1474022215618513.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2005. "Prophets facing sideways: The geopolitics of knowledge and the colonial difference." *Social Epistemology* 19, no. 1: 111–27.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2007. "Introduction." *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2–3: 155–67. DOI: 10.1080/09502380601162498.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2009. "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom." *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, no. 7–8: 159–81. DOI: 10.1177/0263276409349275.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2011. "The Global South and World Dis/Order." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 67, no. 2: 165–88. DOI: 10.3998/jar.0521004.0067.202.
- Mitova, Veli. 2020. "Decolonising Knowledge Here and Now." *Philosophical Papers* 49, no. 2: 191–212. DOI: 10.1080/05568641.2020.1779606.
- Moosavi, Leon. 2020. "The decolonial bandwagon and the dangers of intellectual decolonisation." *International Review of Sociology* 30, no. 2: 332–54. DOI: 10.1080/03906701.2020.1776919.
- Muborakshoevaa, Marodsilton. 2015. "Impediments to Enhancing Research within Universities in Developing Context: The Case of Pakistani Universities." *Journal of International and Comparative Education (JICE)* 4, no. 1: 1–13. DOI: 10.14425/00.76.05.

- Nelson, Cary. 2010. *No University Is an Island: Saving Academic Freedom*. New York: New York University Press. DOI: 10.18574/nyu/9780814758595.001.0001.
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. 1986. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- Oland, Maxine, Siobhan M. Hart, and Liam Frink. 2020. *Decolonizing indigenous histories: Exploring prehistoric/colonial transitions in archaeology*. Tucson (Ariz.), United States: University of Arizona press.
- Patton, Paul, and Meaghan Morris, eds. 1979. *Michel Foucault: power, truth, strategy*. Sydney: Feral Publications.
- Pratiwi, Sari, and Nana Supriatna. 2019. "Proceedings of the 4th Asian Education Symposium (AES 2019)." *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*. May 15, 2020. Atlantis Press. <https://www.atlantispress.com/proceedings/aes-19>.
- Punch, Samantha, and Ashley Rogers. 2022. "Building, not burning bridges in research: Insider/outsider dilemmas and engaging with the bridge community." *Journal of Leisure Research* 53, no. 2: 272–89. DOI: 10.1080/00222216.2021.1887782.
- Qin, Dongxiao. 2016. "Positionality." In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, ed. Nancy A. Naples, 1–2. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.
- Rehbein, Boike, Ahsan Kamal, Manan Ahmed Asif. 2020. "New Area Studies, Scientific Communities and Knowledge Production." In "New Area Studies and Southeast Asia," eds. Andrea Fleschenberg and Benjamin Baumann. Special Issue, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 51, no. 4–3: 65–78.
- Rehman, Tariq. 2010. "Language Problems and Politics in Pakistan." In *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics*, ed. Paul Brass, 232–46. London: Routledge.
- Rhee, Jeong-eun. 2020. *Decolonial feminist research: Haunting, rememory and mothers*. London: Routledge.
- Robertson, Jan. 2000. "The three Rs of action research methodology: reciprocity, reflexivity and reflection-on-reality." *Educational action research* 8, no. 2: 307–26.
- Russel-Mundine, Gabrielle. 2012. Reflexivity in Indigenous research: Reframing and decolonising research? *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 19, no. 1: 1–6. DOI: 10.1017/jht.2012.8.
- Sakti, Victoria Kumala, and Deastry Yulita Taek. 2023. "Reflections on Ethics in Research with Older Displaced Persons in West Timor: Considering the 'Time Effect'." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg, 39–85.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2008. *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond northern epistemologies*. London, UK: Verso.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2014. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. London: Routledge.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2016. "Epistemologies of the South and the Future." *From the European South: a transdisciplinary journal of post-colonial humanities*, no. 1: 17–29.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2018. *The end of the cognitive empire: The coming of age of epistemologies of the South*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Scheurich, James Joseph, and Michelle D. Young. 1997. "Colouring epistemologies: Are our research epistemologies racially biased?" *Educational Researcher* 26, no. 4: 4–16.
- Schulz, Philipp, Anne-Kathrin Kreft, Heleen Touquet, and Sarah Martin. 2022. "Self-care for gender-based violence researchers—Beyond bubble baths and chocolate pralines." *Qualitative Research* 0, no. 0: 1–20. DOI: 14687941221087868.

- Shaukat, Sadia, and Anthony William Pell. 2016. "Gender Inequality at Workplace in Pakistani Higher Education Institutions." *Bahria Journal of Professional Psychology* 15, no. 1: 29–45.
- Sherif, Bahira. 2001. "The Ambiguity of Boundaries in the Fieldwork Experience: Establishing Rapport and Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status." *Qualitative Inquiry* 7, no. 4: 436–47. DOI: 10.1177/107780040100700403.
- Shizha, Edward. 2006. "Legitimising Indigenous Knowledge in Zimbabwe: A theoretical analysis of post-colonial School Knowledge and its colonial legacy." *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education* 1, no. 1.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonising Methodologies*. London: Zed Books.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 2021. *Decolonising methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Third edition. London: Zed.
- Sökefeld, Martin. 2005. "From Colonialism to Post-colonial Colonialism: Changing Modes of Domination in the Northern Areas of Pakistan." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 4: 939–73. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25075905>.
- Sökefeld, Martin, Tabassum Fahim Ruby, and Chien-Juh Gu. 2022. "Keep Research Ethics Dirty!" In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg: 519–32.
- Talbot, Ian. 2013. "India and Pakistan." In *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics*, ed. Paul Brass, 27–40. London: Routledge.
- Thajib, Ferdiansyah. 2022. "Following the Heart: Ethics of Doing Affective Ethnography in Vulnerable Research Settings." In Bano, Castillo, Holz and Fleschenberg, 533–51.
- Visvanathan, Shiv. 2020. "Official hegemony and contesting pluralism." In *World Anthropologies: Disciplinary Transformations within Systems of Power*, eds. Gustavo Lins Ribeiro and Arturo Escobar, 239–58. Abingdon, New York: Routledge.
- Vorster, Jo-Anne, and Lynn Quinn. 2017. "The 'Decolonial Turn': What Does It Mean for Academic Staff Development?." *Education as Change*. UNISA Press. DOI: 10.17159/1947-9417/2017/853.
- Wessels, Michael. 2015. "Reflections on Ethical and Practical Challenges of Conducting Research with Children in War Zones: Toward a Grounded Approach." In *Research Methods in Conflict Settings a View from Below*, eds. Gale, Lacey Andrews, Karen Jacobsen, Dyan E. Mazurana, and Michael Wessells, 81–105. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, Dan. 2017. "Decolonising Knowledge: An Epistemographical Mise en Place." *Tabula Rasa: Revista de Humanidades* 27, 301–37. DOI: 10.25058/20112742.453.
- Yousaf, Farooq. 2021. "The 'savage' Pathan (Pashtun) and the postcolonial burden." *Critical Studies on Security* 9, no. 1: 36–39. DOI: 10.1080/21624887.2021.1904194.
- Zuberi, Mehwish. 2021. "Between Disconnects and Flows: Reflections on Doing Fieldwork in Rural South Punjab during the Covid-19 Pandemic." *South Asia Chronicle* 11: p. 521–40.
- Zwi, A. B., N. J. Grove, C. MacKenzie, E. Pittaway, D. Zion, D. Silove, and D. Tarantola. 2006. "Placing Ethics in the Centre: Negotiating New Spaces for Ethical Research in Conflict Situations". *Global Public Health* 1, no. 3: 264–77. DOI: 10.1080/17441690600673866.