

A Postcolonial Indigenous Research Paradigm

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29th March 2011
HSRC
CapeTown



Presentation Layout

- Questions on Current Research Methodologies
- Voices on Current Methodologies
- A postcolonial Indigenous Research Methodology



Questions That are Asked

- Is the knowledge production process espoused by mainstream methodologies respectful and inclusive of all knowledge systems?
- Are the philosophies that underpin the research approach, methods of collecting data, sources of evidence and the analysis, reporting and dissemination process?



Questions That are Asked

- Are, peoples of all worlds, that is, first world, second world, third and fourth world, developed and developing countries, given equal rights through the research process to know, to name, to talk and be heard?
- What are the concerns about current research methodologies?
- What challenges arise in utilising Western-based theory when research is carried among those who suffered European colonial rule, slavery and are continuously being marginalised by the current research tradition?



Questions That are Asked

- What are the challenges that researchers encounter in the literature that inform research on these communities?
- How can we carry out research so that it is respectful and beneficial to the researched communities
- What do the multiple voices of scholars from across the globe say about Euro-Western research methodologies?



Questions That are Asked

How is it possible to decolonize (social) research in/on the non-Western developing countries to ensure that the people's human condition is not constructed through Western hegemony and ideology? Elabor-Idemudia (2002:231).



On Theoretical and Philosophical Foundation of Research Traditions

our current range of research epistemologies-positivism to postmodernisms, poststructuralisms-arise out of the social history and culture of the dominant race,these epistemologies reflect and reinforce that social history and that social group and this has negative results for the people of color in general and scholars of color in particular (Scheurich, 1997:141).



On role of researchers

No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way that it has become mine, my own. Rewriting you, I write myself anew, I am still author, authority, I am the colonizer, the speaking subject, and you are now the centre of my talk (bell hooks, 1990:152).

How do researchers represent the “Other”



On Current Research

- current academic research traditions are founded on the culture, history and philosophies of Euro-Western thought and are therefore indigenous to the Western academy and its institutions.
- current academic research traditions exclude from the knowledge production the knowledge systems of formerly colonized, historically marginalised, and oppressed groups that today are most often represented as “other” and fall under broad categories of non-Western, Third World, developing, underdeveloped, First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, Third World Women, African American Women and so on.



The Captive Mind

- Murkherji (2004) challenges all researchers to debate whether the Social Science methodologies that originated in the West and are indigenous to the West are necessarily universal for the rest of the world. What is your reaction to the challenge?
- The Malaysian sociologist Syed Hussein Alatas (2004) developed the concept “the captive mind” to refer to an uncritical imitation of Western research paradigms within scientific intellectual activity. Others (Fanon, 1967; Ngugi 1986) discuss a process they call colonization of the mind.



For instance, the conceptual framework, framing of the research questions and methods of data collection in most studies emanate from the developed world literature that is predominantly Euro-Western. In addition, the language in the construction of research instruments and the dissemination of research findings is in most cases that of the colonizers.



A postcolonial Indigenous Approach invites
You to problematize research and doing
research 'as a significant site of the
struggle between the interest and knowing
of the West and the interest and knowing
of the "Other" (Smith, 1999:2).



INDIGENOUS RESEARCH PARADIGM

Reason for doing the research

To challenge deficit thinking and pathological descriptions of the former colonized and reconstruct a body of knowledge that carries hope and promotes transformation and social change among the historically oppressed

Philosophical underpinnings

Informed by indigenous knowledge systems, critical theory, post-colonial discourses, feminist theories, critical race-specific theories and neo-Marxist theories,

Ontological assumptions

Socially constructed multiple realities shaped by the set of multiple connections that human beings have with the environment, the cosmos, the living and the non-living

Place of values in the research process

All research must be guided by a relational accountability that promote respectful representation, reciprocity and rights of the researched. The ethics theory is informed by appreciative inquiry, desire-based perspectives and positive psychology

Postcolonial Indigenous Research Methodologies

- Decolonization and Indigenization
- A postcolonial Indigenous Paradigm
- Third Space methodologies



Decolonization and Indigenization

- Critique literature, research approach using postcolonial theory, critical theory, critical race theory
- Invoke indigenous knowledge embodied in languages, proverbs, folktales, stories cultural experiences to bring new topics, themes, methods, processes and categories of analysis not easily obtainable from conventional methods



Measures of Decolonization and indigenization

- Cultural reference: Mention of norms and behaviors not common in the West
- Culture-based justification; rationale and justification arise from the needs and unique relevance of the research to the people
- Conceptual bases: conceptual framework emanates from cultural traditions, norms, language metaphors indigenous knowledge community stories, legends and folktales
- Methodology: Methods and measures are tailored to the culture of the researched.



Examples of Indigenization

- Roos V. (2008). The Mmogo –Method: Discovering Symbolic Community Interactions. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 18(4) 659-668.



Indigenous Research paradigm

- Relational Ontology: Relations with people based on an I/We relationship
- Relational Epistemology: Knowledge that emanates from the experiences and culture of the people
- Relational axiology: Ethics based on the respect, reciprocity, responsibility to the other and rights of the researched



Roles and Responsibility of the Researcher

- Researcher as a colonizer, researched as the colonized.
- Researcher as knower/teacher and researched as an object/subject/known/pupil.
- Researcher as a redeemer, researched as the problem.
- Ethical responsibilities of researchers in the application of theoretical frameworks and literature review to inform the research process.



Researcher as Colonizer/Researched as Colonized

- Whose side am I on?
- Do I challenge and resist dominant discourses that marginalized those who suffer oppression?
- Who am I writing about? Self, or 'Other/s' or both?
- What needs to be rewritten?



Researcher as Knower/ Researched as Ignorant

- Do the researched own a description of themselves?
- Have the voices of the researched been captured in a way that the researched recognize themselves, know themselves, and would like others to know them?



Researcher as redeemer/researched as the problem

- . What psychological harm, humiliation, embarrassment and other losses, if any, have these theories and body of knowledge caused the researched?
- What is the body of indigenous knowledge of the colonized that researchers can utilize to counter theories, and the body of knowledge that may cause humiliation and embarrassment to the researched?



Ethical responsibilities of a transformative healer

A transformative healer needs to reflect and raise the following questions:

- 1. What assumptions, prejudices, stereotypes informed the review of literature?
- 2. How does the literature and theories reviewed portray the researched?
- 3. Is there any deficit thinking or theorising in the literature reviewed?
- 4. What evidence is there to bring to question the literature reviewed?
- 5. What are the gaps in the literature?



Conclusion: Doing Ethical Research

- Every research activity is an exercise in research ethics;, every research question is a moral dilemma, and every research decision is an instantiation of values (Clegg and Slife, 2009:24).



Conclusion: Doing Ethical Research

- Researchers are knowledge brokers, people who have the power to constant legitimating arguments for or against ideas, theories or practices. They are collectors of information and producers of meaning which can be used for, or against indigenous interests (Cram et al., 2004:158).



Conclusion: Doing Ethical Research

I see having some version of self-reflective practice as a necessary core for all inquiry. For example, anyone engaging in collaborative research needs robust self-questioning disciplines as their base” (Marshall, 2001, p 335).

Indigenous research methods are methods built on ethics from the perspective of the formerly colonized and historically marginalized.



- Thank You

