

# Participant responses – Decolonial Research Methods webinar series

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

research methods, research, methodology, colonial, knowledge, colonialism, practices, exclusion, discipline, zombie, imperative, face, power, studies, question, reproduce, important, sardar, social injustice, decolonize

## SPEAKERS

Dr Randy T. Nobleza, Luqman Muraina, Nirupama Sarathy, Jorge Vega, Musharrat J. Ahmed-Landeryou, Nuruddin Al Akbar, Carl W. Jones

### **Musharrat J. Ahmed-Landeryou** 00:05

Some of the key messages I took away from the Decolonial Research Methods webinar series 2021 organised by Dr Leon Moosavi are, one, it is fundamental to understand history and terminologies around the term decolonial research methods to enable the researcher to move beyond liminality, two, it is not just shifting but disrupting the entrenched narrative that the global south is the data provider, while the global north host the expertise to analyse and theorise about the data, three, decolonial research methods have to be done through the lens of intersectionality to disentangle the power and politics maintaining the colonial hegemonies in research and publications. In essence, determine your research methods is focused as much on the decolonising knowledge as well as the research process.

### **Jorge Vega** 01:21

Now, why is it important to decolonise research methods? Well, because it's the only way to keep research ethical. Colonialism has left a heritage of racist and sexist exclusion as systemic violence. And this has shaped the face of most of contemporary institutions, including academia and its practices, such as research. So, we cannot just simply let ourselves consciously or unconsciously to reproduce those dynamics of exclusion through our own practices. If we seek to achieve ethically sound research, we should be aware of how our own practices reproduce or help to reproduce uneven power relations in order to avoid the reproduction of social injustice within our own work.

### **Luqman Muraina** 02:36

So in answering the question about the importance of decolonising methodology, I am going to call our attention to general conversations on methodologies in the academy and also the importance of methodology in specific research. I believe that if the conversation on decolonisation is able to infiltrate methodology discussion, it is going to foster and assist the decolonisation movement. Also, decolonising methodologies would allow for pluriversality and diversity in the academy. It is going to

allow for popularisation of indigenous methodologies, episteme and pass it across generations and to many parts of the world. Thank you very much.

**Nuruddin Al Akbar 03:27**

For me, the answer is simple. If there is no colonisation of knowledge, then decolonisation of methodology is not necessary. However, because the current dominant knowledge protection has a colonial character, it is only natural for us to undertake decolonisation effort. For example, according to Ziauddin Sardar, we are now faced with zombie discipline. So what is the zombie discipline? We can say that zombie discipline is a form of knowledge production that should have died, along with the fall of physical colonisation. But in fact, this protection of knowledge continues to exist. And I think Sardar was right. We can take, for example, psychology, which places a human as nothing more than a mechanical machine that can be manipulated for political and economic purposes. And just as zombies who make humans as their primary target as their food, this zombie discipline also has dehumanising and ecological and anti-transcendent effects, turning the Earth into a living hell. So it is a natural thing if we try to decolonise, or decolonising the colonial discipline and methodology.

**Nirupama Sarathy 04:45**

Vanakam from Chennai, in Tamil Nadu, South India. Decolonial research methods are especially relevant in a country like India, with its vast colonial history and unparalleled rich diversity, over 1,000 languages and corresponding cultures changing every few hundred metres. So it's not sufficient and actually impossible to just find ways to, you know, be more sensitive and be more inclusive. Rather, it becomes imperative that for research to be truly authentic and honest we will need to, you know, clearly look at a shift in power into the hands of those whose lives are central to the study, and who know their lives the best. So decolonising research is not just an option, but a necessity for research to truly serve its purpose.

**Dr Randy T. Nobleza 05:45**

It is important to decolonize research methods for autonomous knowledge production. I find it next to impossible if not troublesome to go on and continue doing research with colonial methods. We need a decolonial if not anti-colonial stance on doing research to produce relevant knowledge for our community and other islands as well. I mainly use decolonial research methods in the area of language, media and cultural studies. Having obtained training in Philippine studies, I tried to manage area and local studies. Decolonial research methods are imperative to pursue questions and concerns that would benefit the local community and perhaps neighbouring communities too. For the past several episodes in the recent webinar series on decolonial research methods, I have situated myself, tried to reassess and evaluate how to proceed. My main insights about decolonial research methods are quite paradoxical. Initially, I expected to learn something new. I ended up reaffirming the previous tendencies, practices and advocacies worth moving forward.

**Carl W. Jones 07:07**

While I think it's important to decolonise research methods, I think it's even more important to decolonise ourselves before we start our research. You know, we've grown up in societies receiving communications and there are ideologies, there are systems in place that have been influenced by colonialism or come from the colonies and the powers that be and so we have that in our brains, and in

the way we act, the way we think. So it's very important, I think, first before decolonising the research methods is decolonising yourself and questioning everything - the processes that you're thinking about, the tools that you're using, whether they're electronic, or they're pens or papers. We need to question everything in order to decolonise the processes successfully.