Decolonising humanities and social sciences

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Reflections...

"Decolonization is not a metaphor"

Tuck & Yang (2012)

"…If it was recognised that … I have a claim on Britishness, not because of anything other than the history that produced me as British then this would enable people of the majority population to reconsider how they reconstructed their Britishness in opposition to me as opposed to inclusive of me"
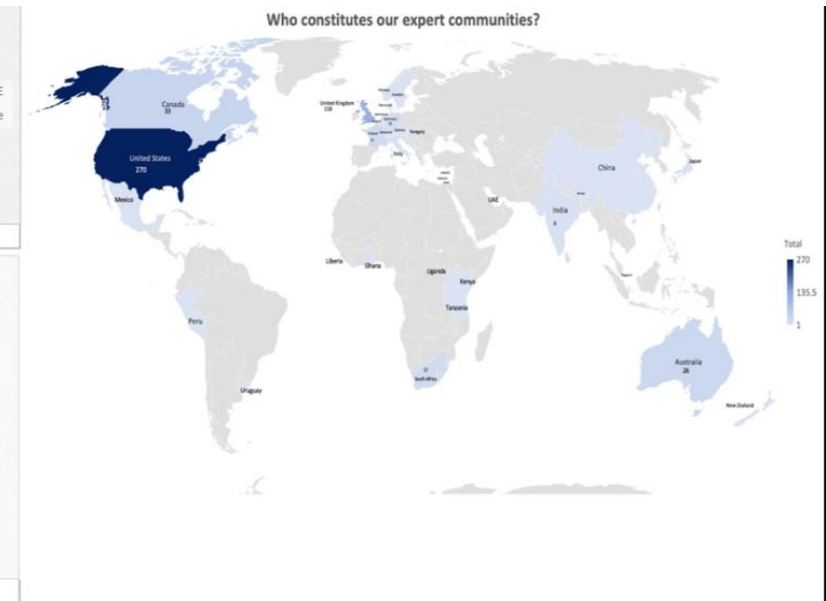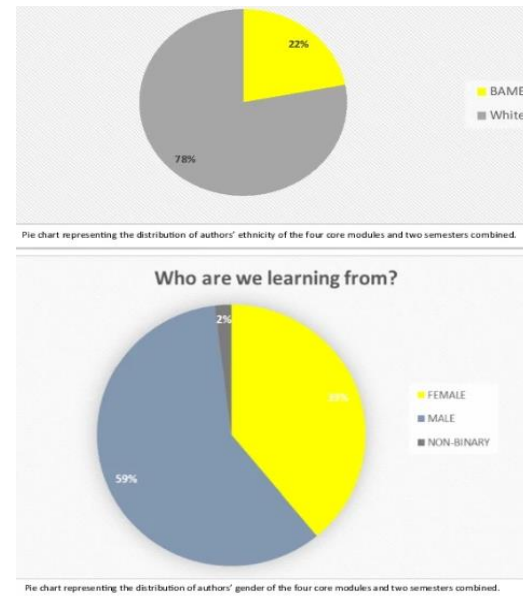
(Bhambra, 2020)

Decolonisation challenges

- Limited progress of curriculum decolonisation (Guardian, 2020)

- Tokenism and knowledge hierarchy (Tamimi et al., 2023)

- Dominant ethics and methodologies (ibid)

- Material implications of colonialism – the neoliberal influence (Enslin & Hedge, 2023; Garrett, 2024; Mohamed et al., 2020)

Only 24 of the 128 universities who responded said they committed to decolonising their curriculums

	0	20	40	60	80
Yes 24					
No 104					

Guardian graphic | Source: Guardian FOIs. Four universities said they were decolonising a initiatives

Pie chart representing the distribution of authors' ethnicity of the four core modules and two semesters combined.

Who are we learning from?

Pie chart representing the distribution of authors' gender of the four core modules and two semesters combined.

Who constitutes our expert communities?

Decolonisation – a case study

- International doctoral students' experiences in British universities

- Depicting and analysing narratives of and about doctoral supervision of international students

- In-depth qualitative study

- Data analysed thematically

- Impact of colonial narratives on internalising and normalising epistemic limitations

Decolonisation by discipline

Sociology of education

Decolonisation and power – whose power?

Decolonisation as "delinking" (Mignolo, 2007)

Pool of modalities of thinking, doing and being (Connell, 2007)

Provide analytical tools and methods (Ardiles et al., 2023)

Expanding epistemic imagination (Collet-Sabe, 2023)

Hopeful narratives of social change and epistemic justice

- Knowledge of ancestral matriarchal societies (Collet-Sabe, 2023)

- Building on community experiences and education as a liberating tool (Walton, 2018; Gonzales, 2023)

- Questioning universality and embracing globality and plurality (Matthew et al., 2023; Levinson et al., 2022)

Reflections

- How can you decolonise the curriculum/academy in your area of work?

- Who would be your allies?

- What can you commit to doing to further your decolonising journey