

## PHD as Pizza Hut Delivering Model: 'Righting Wrongs!' How Long!

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### Abstract

In the course of my doctoral journey, I (first author) confront and is not absolvable to me either, the entrenched colonial legacies that pervade higher education, particularly at Universiti Malaya, mirroring broader Western-centric research paradigms, hence, I am asking myself, am I doing 'righting wrongs' in my PhD. This study is then, takes a border scope in Asian context that aspires to undertake a critical examination of these colonial influences, interrogate the deeply rooted biases within academic discourse, and propose innovative pathways for a decolonized research framework that amplifies marginalized voices while integrating perspectives from the Global South. **Aim:** The objective is to scrutinize the persistence of colonial attitudes embedded in academic research and to advocate for research practices that are ethical, community-engaged, and inclusive of Indigenous knowledge systems. **Method:** Adopting a decolonial approach, this research encompasses a meticulous analysis of institutional practices 100 theses, a comprehensive review of pertinent literature on colonialism in higher education, and qualitative interviews with scholars and community stakeholders. This methodology elucidates how Western paradigms and the absence of community consent perpetuate the marginalization of Indigenous voices. **Findings:** The study reveals a persistent presence of colonial attitudes within the university's research methodologies, highlighting a failure to integrate community consent and to honor Indigenous knowledge systems. These findings underscore the urgent necessity for a paradigm shift towards more inclusive and ethically grounded research methodologies. **Impact:** By addressing these critical issues, this personal igniting point is not more uncentered issue, rather, the research endeavors to contribute to a more equitable and inclusive academic environment. It seeks to challenge prevailing power dynamics and promote the integration of diverse epistemologies, ultimately advancing social justice within research practices. **Policy Implications:** This study advocates for comprehensive policy reforms within higher education institutions to adopt decolonized research frameworks and to establish

rigorous guidelines for ethical, community-engaged research. It emphasizes the imperative of implementing consent processes and incorporating Indigenous perspectives within academic research, thereby fostering a more equitable and socially just research landscape.

**Keywords:** PHD, Social Science, Knowledge Production, Malaysia, Universiti Malaya.

## **The Background**

### *Generating the Delivery Model and My Viva Voce Experience*

On the evening of December 14, 2022, as I faced my final PhD viva-voce, a striking metaphor emerged: "PhD as Pizza Hut Delivery." This image encapsulated my struggle with deep-seated questions about my research and its broader significance. Why did my thesis engage so extensively with various philosophical frameworks? What necessitated a critical examination of Universiti Malaya's colonial history? And why is there such a notable absence of decolonizing methodologies and indigenous research paradigms in our academic discourse? My concerns also extend to the adherence of many PhD students and supervisors to Western academic models. Additionally, I question why Universiti Malaya's ethical board does not acknowledge community consent forms, especially in cases involving Indigenous communities. For these communities, such as headmen and monks, individual signatures are often seen as inappropriate, highlighting a gap in respecting traditional practices.

I found myself grappling with the profound philosophical frameworks, the historical background of Universiti Malaya as a colonial establishment, and the lack of decolonization methodologies and indigenous research paradigms. It troubled me to see that numerous PhD students and mentors still rely on Western models, and the ethical board of Universiti Malaya does not embrace community consent forms, creating obstacles when working with Indigenous communities. These persistent questions led me to ponder Shawn Wilson's belief that "Research is unanswered questions (Wilson, 2008)." As I delve deeper into my doctoral journey, I grapple with profound philosophical questions challenging Western-centric research paradigms. The colonial legacy embedded in Universiti Malaya, my alma mater, is a focal point of reflection and critique (Alatas, 1972; Connell, 2007). In a world where marginalized voices and those from the Global South are often suppressed, I feel a moral obligation to confront ingrained biases and power imbalances within academia (Andreotti, 2011; Battiste, 2013). The persistent reliance on Western models and the university's ethical board's failure to adopt community consent forms for Indigenous communities highlight a deep-rooted colonial mindset (Smith, 2021; Smith, 2012). This struggle is shared by many global researchers. Scholars like Kuokkanen (2000), and Smith (2012) challenge Western epistemologies and advocate for indigenous knowledge systems. Similarly, Alatas (1972), and Connell (2007), critique the perpetuation of colonial legacies in higher education, urging a reimagining of the university's role in a postcolonial world. Recognizing that research is entangled with power, representation, and social justice issues (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Porsanger, 2004), we can begin to address past wrongs and create a more inclusive, equitable research landscape (Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 1999). My doctoral work aims to critically examine colonial legacies, amplify Global South perspectives, and forge pathways for decolonized, community-engaged research (Kovach, 2010; Wilson, 2008). This task, though daunting, is essential for advancing a more equitable and inclusive research ecosystem.

That evening, I came up with a metaphor comparing a PhD to a Pizza Hut delivery person—quick in delivery but often unaware of the contents of the "pizza box," the preferences of the

"consumer," or the broader impact of their actions. This analogy highlights the tendency to rush through academic tasks without fully considering their implications. This reflection spurred me to critically examine the ethical dimensions of doctoral research, emphasizing the importance of engaging deeply with and committing to the communities we study. As a PhD student, it is crucial to maintain ethical standards and avoid conflicts of interest, especially when engaging in external employment such as working for Pizza Hut Delivery. The chapter presents a compelling analysis of the ethical and societal implications of doctoral research. It contends that doctoral studies often focus too narrowly, similar to just submitting a thesis, comparing PhD students' roles to Pizza Hut delivery drivers. This limited focus, the authors argue, has worrying implications as it restricts the broader impact and applicability of the research. Drawing on the experiences of doctoral students in Malaysia and Bangladesh, the chapter uncovers entrenched practices that prioritise personal academic success over societal contribution and national prosperity. The authors propose that doctoral research should move beyond meeting academic requirements and instead become a robust intellectual pursuit that advances society, shapes policy, and drives national prosperity. They call for a renewed emphasis on ethical standards in academic research and writing and a more socially aware and impact-focused approach to doctoral studies. This chapter offers a convincing critique of current practices in doctoral research and advocates for the integration of stronger ethical standards in academic research and writing.

The nexus between knowledge production and societal impact, often referred to as knowledge mobilization, poses significant challenges in Asian social sciences. Despite increased research output in the region, translating academic insights into effective policy and practice remains difficult. This review examines the philosophical foundations of this issue, focusing on the interplay of epistemology, power, and context. Syed Hussein Alatas' seminal work, *The Captive Mind and the Colonial Intellectual* (1972), critiques the epistemic colonization of Asian social sciences, highlighting how colonial legacies shape intellectual production and sustain reliance on Western frameworks. Farid Alatas' concept of "intellectual imperialism" further exposes the power dynamics in the global knowledge economy (Alatas, 2000). Connell's (2007) "Southern theory" challenges Western-centric epistemologies, yet Karim and Azman (2013), argue that the internationalization of higher education often creates a paradox where universities seek global recognition while addressing local issues. Lee (2004), and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), highlight the tension between global and local knowledge systems, with Lee discussing Malaysian higher education reforms and Ndlovu-Gatsheni examining the "coloniality of power." Peters and Roberts (2018) stress the role of universities in bridging academia and society, while Wilson (2008), critiques Western methodologies for inadequately addressing indigenous knowledge. Recent scholarship, including Kumar, Mukharji, and Prasad (2018), and Das et al (2023), advocates for decolonizing science and social work. Baumann and Rehbein (2024), emphasize the need for attention to language and translation. In exploring knowledge mobilization within Asian social sciences, a notable gap emerges: while extensive critique exists regarding educational and social science frameworks, there is a lack of focused scrutiny on research ethics specific to the region. Notably, no study has rigorously examined the ethical dimensions of knowledge production in Asian contexts, despite significant discussions on broader educational and social science issues. This gap presents an opportunity for young Asian scholars to critically address the ethical dimensions of research within their own cultural and institutional contexts. By focusing on this

underexplored area, we can contribute to a more nuanced and ethically informed approach to knowledge production in the region.

### **Methodology**

To critically examine the prevalence and manifestations of the "PhD as Pizza Hut Delivery" metaphor within the context of Asian doctoral programs, the research team adopted a decolonizing theoretical framework, drawing on the seminal work of Gayatri Spivak on "righting wrongs" (Spivak, 1988). The study began by systematically selecting 100 doctoral theses from the ProQuest dissertation database, focusing on the fields of Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work, and Political Science across universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh. These disciplines were strategically chosen due to their inherent focus on human societies, social issues, and community-level interventions – domains where the ethical and societal implications of academic research are particularly salient (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008; Silverman, 2013). The selection of the theses was based on a rigorous set of criteria, including the year of completion (within the past 5 years), institutional affiliation (representing a diverse range of universities), and the specific focus areas within the selected disciplines. This careful sampling process ensured that the research corpus was representative of the current state of doctoral education across the region, while also capturing a range of perspectives and approaches. The analysis of the theses involved a multi-layered, thematic examination, with a particular emphasis on the following key aspects such as Ethical considerations, Societal relevance, Interdisciplinary engagement, Knowledge mobilization.

In addition to the in-depth analysis of the theses, the research team conducted semi-structured interviews with 50 of the PhD graduates whose work was included in the study. These interviews provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of the students, the challenges they faced in navigating the ethical and societal dimensions of their research, and their perceptions of the prevailing academic culture and institutional priorities. By employing this multifaceted methodological approach, grounded in a decolonizing theoretical stance and Spivak's notion of "righting wrongs" (Spivak, 2004), the study was able to generate a rich and nuanced understanding of the "PhD as Pizza Hut Delivery" phenomenon, positioning the authors to offer comprehensive and evidence-based recommendations for the transformation of doctoral education in Asia.

### **Findings**

#### *Findings Part 1: Ethical Considerations in Asian Doctoral Research*

The analysis of the 100 doctoral theses revealed a concerning disconnect between the espoused principles of ethical research and the practical realities of PhD programs in Asia. Several key findings emerged from the examination of the theses. Lack of robust ethical frameworks and informed consent procedures: While many students acknowledged the importance of ethical considerations in their introductory chapters, the deeper examination of their methodologies and data collection processes often revealed a concerning lack of robust ethical frameworks and informed consent procedures. In several instances, the researchers found that participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality were not adequately protected, with scant evidence of meaningful engagement with the communities under study. Minimization of research impact on local stakeholders: Even more alarming were the cases where the potential impact of the research on local stakeholders was either minimized or completely absent from the theses. This oversight was particularly pronounced in studies

that involved marginalized or vulnerable populations, where the power dynamics and potential for exploitation should have been a primary concern. One particularly egregious example was a thesis that explored the living conditions of urban slum dwellers in a major metropolitan area in Indonesia. While the student had meticulously documented the dire circumstances faced by the residents, there was no mention of any plans to share the research findings with local policymakers or community organizations that could have leveraged the insights to advocate for much-needed interventions and support. The thesis read more like an academic exercise than a meaningful attempt to catalyze positive change.

**Disconnect between research and social impact:** This disconnect between research and social impact was a recurring theme across the theses, suggesting that many PhD students in Asia are being socialized into a culture that prioritizes technical proficiency and disciplinary specialization over ethical responsibility and community engagement. These findings point to a pressing need for universities in Asia to reorient their doctoral programs towards a more ethically grounded and socially responsive model of knowledge production. Key elements of this transformation may include mandatory ethics training, the integration of community-engaged research methodologies, and the implementation of assessment frameworks that place equal emphasis on the societal impact of the work.

### **Findings 2: Societal Relevance: A Deconstructed Analysis**

A central aim of this research was to assess the extent to which Asian doctoral theses contribute to addressing societal challenges. By examining 100 theses, we sought to understand the depth of engagement with local realities and the degree to which research findings were translated into practical solutions. Our findings reveal a concerning disconnect between academic inquiry and societal needs. Only 25% of the examined theses demonstrated a strong alignment with pressing societal challenges. For instance, a thesis on rural development in Vietnam, while acknowledging poverty as a central issue, primarily focused on theoretical underpinnings of community empowerment without delving into concrete policy recommendations. This suggests a prevailing tendency to prioritize academic rigor over societal impact. A larger proportion, 55%, exhibited a superficial engagement with societal concerns. Many theses, such as one on urban inequality in Malaysia, identified the problem but failed to propose innovative solutions that challenge the status quo. For example, a study on gender inequality in Indonesia, while acknowledging patriarchal structures, primarily focused on individual-level factors rather than systemic change.

The remaining 20% of theses demonstrated minimal to no engagement with societal challenges. These studies often centered on methodological refinements or theoretical debates, with limited attention to real-world problems. From a decolonial perspective, this emphasis on societal relevance can be viewed as a form of performativity, where researchers often pay lip service to addressing social issues without fundamentally challenging the underlying power structures that perpetuate these problems. As one thesis on indigenous land rights in the Philippines noted, "the research often reproduces colonial knowledge frameworks by privileging Western theoretical perspectives over indigenous worldviews." A more critical approach would involve examining how research can contribute to empowering marginalized communities and challenging systemic inequalities.



### **Findings 3: Interdisciplinary Engagement: A Deconstructed Perspective**

Our analysis of 100 doctoral theses revealed a prevalent trend towards interdisciplinary engagement, with approximately 80% exhibiting elements of cross-disciplinary collaboration. However, a closer examination through a decolonial lens unveiled a more complex picture. While many theses showcased the integration of multiple disciplinary perspectives, the extent to which these integrations challenged existing power dynamics and epistemologies varied significantly. Often, interdisciplinary work was characterized by a superficial juxtaposition of disciplinary frameworks rather than a deep engagement with the underlying assumptions of each field. This suggests that interdisciplinarity is frequently employed as a cosmetic strategy to enhance research credibility rather than as a genuine commitment to epistemological pluralism.

Moreover, our analysis indicated that the distribution of disciplinary power within interdisciplinary collaborations is uneven. Disciplines traditionally positioned at the center of knowledge production often maintain dominant roles, marginalizing contributions from other fields. This hierarchical structure perpetuates colonial epistemologies and limits the potential for truly transformative interdisciplinary research.

### **Findings 4: Knowledge Mobilization and Ethical Implications**

A critical gap identified in this study is the limited focus on knowledge mobilization among doctoral students. A staggering 82% of the 100 theses analyzed demonstrated a lack of concerted efforts to translate research findings into actionable insights for policymakers, practitioners, or the broader public. This disconnect between academic research and societal impact raises significant ethical concerns. As one thesis on community development in rural Indonesia stated, "While the research generated valuable insights into local challenges, there was a clear disconnect between the academic output and its potential to influence policy or practice." This lack of knowledge mobilization not only undermines the potential impact of research but also raises questions about the ethical responsibility of researchers to share their findings with the communities that participated in the study. Another thesis, which explored the livelihood strategies of urban slum dwellers in Bangladesh, expressed a similar sentiment: "My work documented the harsh realities faced by these marginalized communities, but I have no clear plan for ensuring that the relevant authorities or civil society organizations can access this information and use it to advocate for change." This failure to bridge the gap between academia and the communities being studied was a recurring theme across the theses.

The overemphasis on academic publication as the primary metric of success has contributed to this issue. As a result, many doctoral students prioritize publishing in prestigious journals over engaging with stakeholders who can benefit from their research. This approach not only limits the reach of research findings but also perpetuates an elitist model of knowledge production that marginalizes the voices of those most affected by the issues being studied. To address this critical gap, universities in Asia must redefine the expectations and incentive structures for doctoral education, placing a greater emphasis on the dissemination and application of research findings beyond the traditional academic channels. This may involve the incorporation of knowledge mobilization strategies into the curriculum, such as workshops on policy engagement, media communication, and community-based collaboration.

Moreover, assessment frameworks for PhD programs should be expanded to include metrics that capture the real-world impact of the students' work, incentivizing the development of innovative knowledge translation approaches. By fostering a culture that values the social relevance and practical application of academic research, we can empower the next generation of scholars to become catalysts for positive change, bridging the divide between the ivory tower and the communities they serve.

### **Discussion: Ethical Considerations In Doctoral Theses Through A Thematic Lens**

In analyzing the ethical considerations, societal relevance, interdisciplinary engagement, and knowledge mobilization within the 100 examined theses, it's crucial to reference key academic works that provide a foundation for understanding these themes.

The ethical frameworks existing within doctoral research have been a topic of considerable discussion. Alatas (2000), critiques the notion of intellectual imperialism, highlighting how research practices often reflect colonial legacies that prioritize certain epistemologies over others. This is vital in assessing whether the theses analyzed exhibit robust ethical frameworks, as they should not only comply with established standards but also reflect cultural sensitivity and respect for local communities. In contrast, Chowdhury et al (2024a), argue for the necessity of a social justice lens within educational philosophy, which aligns with the call for informed consent and awareness of community impact in the examined theses, and we may think of 'commoingh the community (Chowdhury et al., 2024b). The societal relevance of research findings is another significant aspect. Connell (2007), emphasizes the importance of "Southern theory," advocating for knowledge generation that directly addresses the social challenges faced by marginalized communities. This perspective aligns with our analysis, which underscores the necessity for theses to engage meaningfully with local development priorities. Conversely, Das et al (2023), discuss the implications of Eurocentrism in social work, positing that theories must emerge from the contexts they aim to serve. Thus, while some theses may demonstrate strong societal relevance, others might remain tethered to outdated paradigms that fail to address contemporary challenges. Interdisciplinary engagement is essential for tackling complex societal problems. Alatas (2006), makes a case for alternative discourses in Asian social sciences, underscoring the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration. This resonates with our findings, indicating that the most impactful theses often incorporate perspectives from various fields. However, a contrast arises with Spivak's (1988), notion of the "subaltern" and whether all voices within interdisciplinary frameworks are genuinely heard. If certain viewpoints dominate, the intended collaborative spirit can be undermined, leading to a limited understanding of the issues at hand. The analysis of Asian doctoral theses reveals superficial interdisciplinarity, often employed to enhance research credibility without genuine epistemological pluralism (Alatas, 2006; Connell, 2007). This reflects Raewyn Connell's "Southern Theory," where Eurocentric knowledge structures dominate, subtly reinforcing "intellectual imperialism" (Connell, 2007; Alatas, 2000). Additionally, 82% of the theses lacked efforts to mobilize knowledge for societal impact, perpetuating epistemic violence by not sharing research with marginalized communities (Spivak, 1988). To address these issues, universities must incentivize impactful research, integrating indigenous methodologies and challenging dominant paradigms (Wilson, 2008; Alatas, 1972).

Finally, knowledge mobilization appears to be a critical area of focus for ensuring that research informs practice and policy. Venkatesh (2021) highlights strategies for effective communication of research, which can facilitate engagement with policymakers and practitioners. In our analysis, we noted that some theses implement strong knowledge mobilization strategies, while others fall short, failing to articulate their findings to a broader audience. This disparity raises questions about the accessibility of academic research and its potential to effect change.

## **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

### *Limitations*

There are few limitations is being in consideration, a). Sample Size and Diversity: A profound limitation in social sciences research lies in the constrained sample sizes and the often limited diversity of research participants. Much of the existing research is based on convenience sampling or focuses on specific demographic groups, which can result in findings that are not fully representative of the broader population. For example, research that is concentrated solely on urban environments may fail to capture the lived experiences and challenges of those in rural areas, leading to a skewed understanding of social dynamics (Barden, 2022). This limitation underscores the need for more inclusive research designs that consider the diverse realities of different populations. B). Methodological Constraints: the methodology in social sciences is fraught with challenges that can undermine the accuracy and depth of research findings. Biases inherent in self-reported data, non-random sampling methods, and the limitations of observational data are just a few examples of the obstacles that researchers face. These constraints can diminish the rigor and reliability of research, making it difficult to capture the full complexity of social phenomena. The human element, which is both the subject and object of social sciences, introduces variability that is often difficult to measure and interpret with precision (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008). C). Temporal Limitations: Research in the social sciences is often a reflection of the socio-political and economic contexts during the time of study. As these contexts evolve, the relevance of the research findings may diminish, requiring ongoing studies to continually reassess and update conclusions. This temporal limitation challenges the enduring applicability of research, particularly in a world where social dynamics are rapidly changing (Lee, 2004). It raises fundamental questions about the permanence of knowledge and the need for adaptive frameworks that can accommodate the fluid nature of human societies. D). Technological Constraints: The evolution of technology plays a pivotal role in shaping research methodologies and the types of data that can be collected. Older, less sophisticated tools may fail to capture emerging trends, particularly in fields like digital sociology and social media studies, where technology is integral to understanding contemporary social interactions. These technological constraints highlight the importance of continually updating research methodologies to keep pace with the digital transformation of society (Karim & Azman, 2013). E). Funding and Resource Limitations: The financial resources available to researchers can significantly impact the scope and depth of social sciences research. Limited funding often restricts the ability to conduct comprehensive studies, influencing everything from sample size and diversity to the ability to employ advanced analytical techniques or conduct longitudinal studies. This limitation underscores the broader issue of how economic constraints shape knowledge production and the kinds of questions that can be explored (Bloomberg, 2022). F). Ethical Constraints: Ethical considerations are a profound limitation in social sciences research, especially when dealing with vulnerable populations or sensitive issues. Researchers must navigate these challenges



carefully, balancing the need for thorough data collection with the obligation to protect participants' rights and well-being. This ethical dimension not only limits the scope of what can be studied but also reflects the moral responsibilities inherent in the pursuit of knowledge (Chowdhury et al., 2024a; Chowdhury et al., 2022). G). Lack of Longitudinal Data: Many studies in the social sciences are cross-sectional, capturing only a snapshot of a particular moment in time. This limitation hinders the ability to understand long-term trends, establish causation, or observe how social phenomena evolve. The absence of longitudinal data restricts our understanding of the temporal dynamics that shape societies, leaving many questions about change and continuity unanswered (Connell, 2007).

### **Future Research Directions and Recommendations**

For Academicians, I would propose the following strategies for faculty to promote ethical research practices and broader research impact. Advocate for interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities within and beyond universities to foster a more holistic understanding of complex social issues. Encourage mentorship programs that support students' professional and ethical development, guiding them towards responsible research conduct. Support the establishment of research ethics committees to ensure accountability and responsible practices throughout the research process. Foster partnerships between academia and industry to enhance the societal impact of research, translating findings into practical applications. Implement training programs on research integrity and publication ethics for both faculty and students to cultivate a culture of ethical scholarship. Promote open access publishing and data sharing to enhance research transparency and enable broader collaboration.

For Policy Planners, I would recommend policies that incentivize universities to prioritize research quality and societal impact alongside traditional metrics like thesis completion rates. Advocate for funding programs that support interdisciplinary research and collaboration between universities, industry, and community stakeholders. Consider initiatives to foster research skills workshops and ethical training for PhD students to equip them with the necessary competencies. Enhance government support for research that addresses pressing societal needs and contributes to evidence-based policymaking. Establish awards and recognition systems that acknowledge researchers who prioritize ethical research practices and promote research impact.

For Students, I would encourage students to seek out opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and public engagement with their research. Recommend student-led initiatives to discuss research ethics and responsible research practices, fostering a culture of accountability. Highlight the importance of advocating for their own professional development beyond just thesis completion, emphasizing the value of diverse research experiences and perspectives. Promote the involvement of students in community-based research projects that address real-world issues, enhancing their understanding of the societal impact of their work. Organize seminars and workshops to educate students on research integrity, responsible conduct, and ethical decision-making, preparing them for the ethical challenges they may face.

By implementing these recommendations, we can empower academicians, policymakers, and students to collectively promote ethical research practices, enhance the societal impact of

scholarship, and cultivate a research ecosystem that prioritizes the wellbeing of the communities we serve. By acknowledging these limitations and pursuing these future research directions, social scientists can expand the horizons of their field, deepening our understanding of the complex, dynamic, and interconnected nature of human societies. In doing so, they contribute not only to academic knowledge but also to the betterment of the communities and societies they study, advancing the cause of social justice and human dignity.

In addressing the lingering colonial legacies in higher education, it is imperative to foster a holistic understanding that transcends traditional paradigms. This study advocates for a dynamic approach, encouraging interdisciplinary collaborations that can illuminate diverse perspectives and integrate Indigenous knowledge systems. Additionally, mentorship programs are crucial in nurturing the ethical development of emerging scholars, instilling a sense of responsibility in research practices. By establishing research ethics committees and promoting training on integrity, we can cultivate a culture where ethical considerations are paramount. These measures are essential for empowering students and ensuring that their work resonates meaningfully within their communities, ultimately advancing social justice.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In scrutinizing the landscape of Asian doctoral theses, we confront a profound realization: the superficial nods to interdisciplinarity mirror a deeper malaise within academia—a failure to transcend Eurocentric paradigms that stifle authentic knowledge creation. This phenomenon embodies what Connell critiques as "intellectual imperialism," perpetuating a cycle of epistemic violence that disregards the wisdom of marginalized voices. If we are to liberate scholarship from these constraining structures, it is imperative to actively decolonize our research methodologies. Embracing indigenous perspectives and fostering genuine collaborations will not merely enhance credibility; it will catalyze a transformative shift towards a more equitable academic landscape that strives for societal impact.

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