

Researching participants with power and privilege: the triumphs and tribulations of 'studying up'

Make today matter

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Indigenous peoples of the past, present and future whose land we are gathered on
- Faculty of Health Sciences
- Organisers

NORMAL GAZE

- **Scholars** are **concerned** with ethical issues related to implications of participants' participation.
- **Anthropologists** and **ethnographers** are **concerned** with eliciting stories from the marginalized groups.
- **Feminists** are **concerned** with giving voice to silenced groups of women and other vulnerable populations.
- **Action researchers** are **concerned** with making sure research considers the needs and wants of the researched.
- In Afrika, Afrikans, women, elderly populations and children are in most cases the **subjects of research** (Mkhabela,2005).



Reversing the Gaze

- An Afrikan
- A woman
- A nurse from rural province trying to make sense of **Eurocentric and indigenous entities**



‘Studying Up’

- Researching the social institutions with power (Mogale & Richter 2019)
- Researching cultures of the elites, powerful and sometimes the literates (Gusterson 1997).
- Power which might be socially, legally and culturally (Ntarangwi 2010).

Ethnographic studies

Title of the Project	Type of Ethnography	Participants
An exploration of the culture of prosecuting violence against women in South African courts	Sensory Ethnography	Prosecutors, magistrates, President of the Courts and intermediary officers
Establishment of a transdisciplinary knowledge Platform on Afrikan-based human rights issues	Netnography	Human rights activist, Sociologist, women advocate nursing scholars and indigenous leaders

Ethnographic studies...

Title of the Project	Type of Ethnography	Participants
An integrated framework for the prosecution of cases of violence against women (VAW) in SA courts	Critical Ethnography	Officials from criminal and justice system and traditional leaders as well as forensic nurses and medical doctors
A transdisciplinary scholarship to inform capacity development of expert witnesses in Sexual Offences cases	Focused Ethnography	Officials from criminal and justice system and traditional leaders as well as forensic nurses and medical doctors.

Aims

Primary study: To explore the culture of prosecution of the cases of violence against women in South African courts.

Project # 2: Establishment of a Virtual Discussion Forum on transdisciplinary knowledge, innovation and learning in addressing violence against women.

Project # 3: To develop an integrated framework for evidence-based prosecution in cases of violence against women.

Project # 4: To develop practical knowledge across various disciplines with a view of holistic and seamless service delivery in the management of sexual offences cases.

Overarching Aim(s)

- To explore the cultural practices and processes employed in addressing reported cases of violence against women by state institutions and parastatals in South Africa.
- To develop transdisciplinary scholarship on the management of violence against women in South Africa.

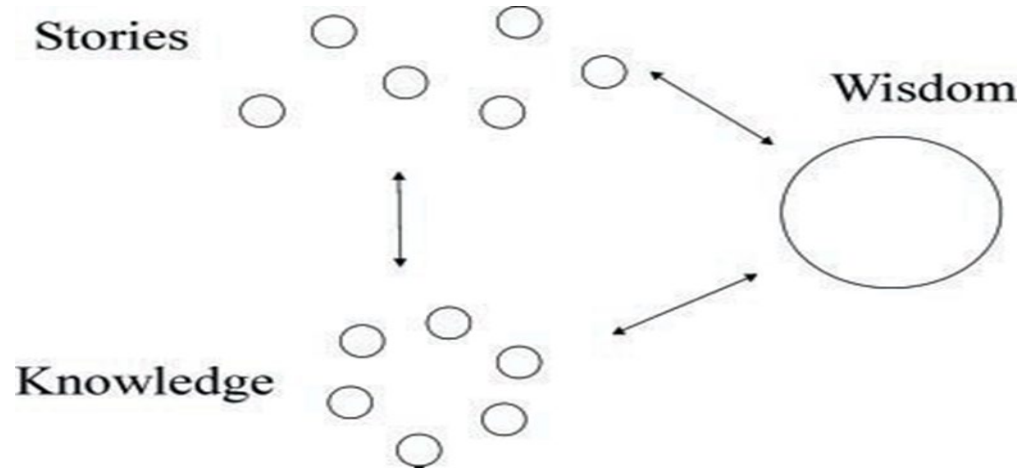


Ethnographic Moments

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- Ethnographic Observations
- Conversations and dialogues
- Talking heads
- Philosophical debates
- Virtual-based tools

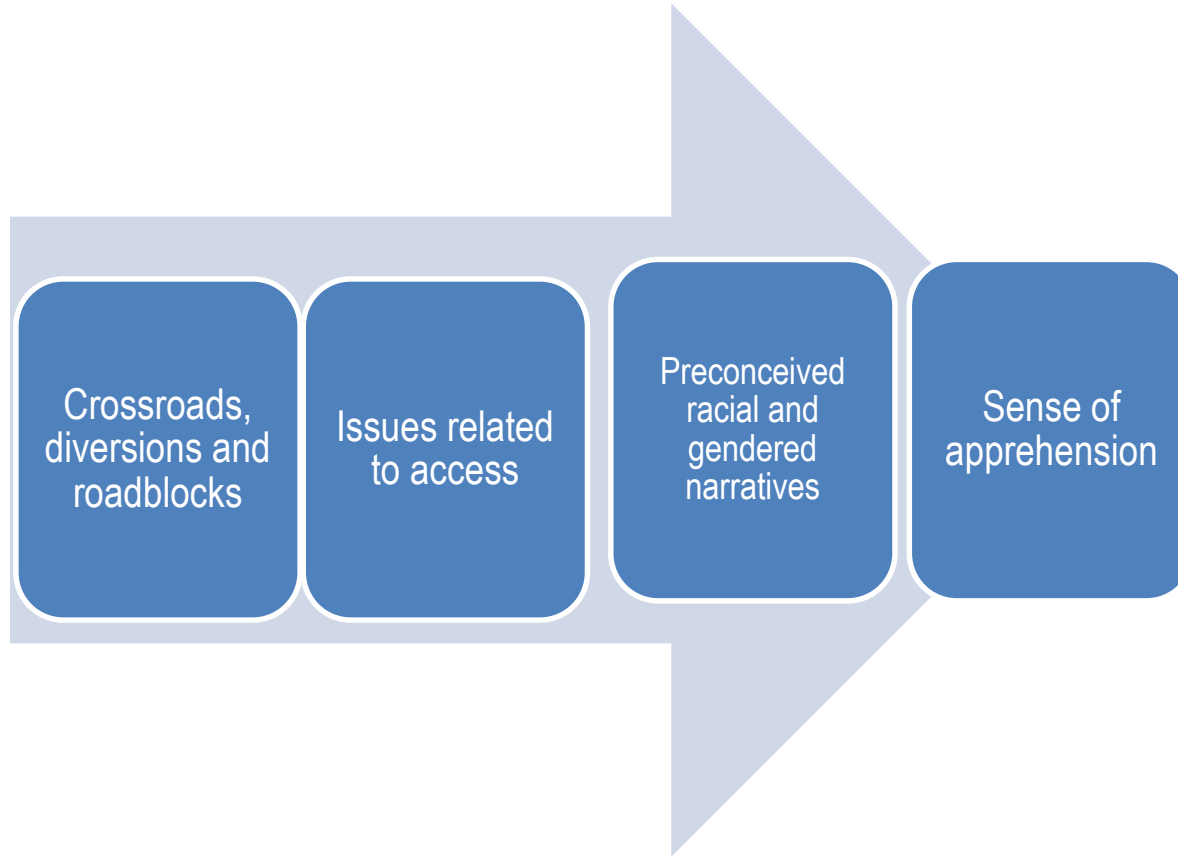
Collaborative Data Analysis

When stories are placed against each other they build a litany of evidence which ultimately cascade to wisdom (Jones-Royster 1996)



Smylie, Martin, Kaplan-Myrth, Steele, Tait & Hogg 2003

Epiphanies



Increasing Ethnographic Authority

- Virtual engagements
- (Re)-thinking field work and writing
- Collaborative research
- Maintaining microphone

Concluding Remarks

- The use of innovation to collaborate with participants.
- Clear understandings of the research relationship.
- In-depth reflexivity processes in research

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Thank You