

# CGHE Annual Conference 2025

## Rethinking knowledge(s): Epistemic diversity in higher education and research

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**Panellists:** Lingxuan Chen (University of Oxford), Zak Devey (University of Oxford), Vedika Kedia (University of Oxford)

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**When you hear 'epistemic diversity', what keywords come to your mind?**

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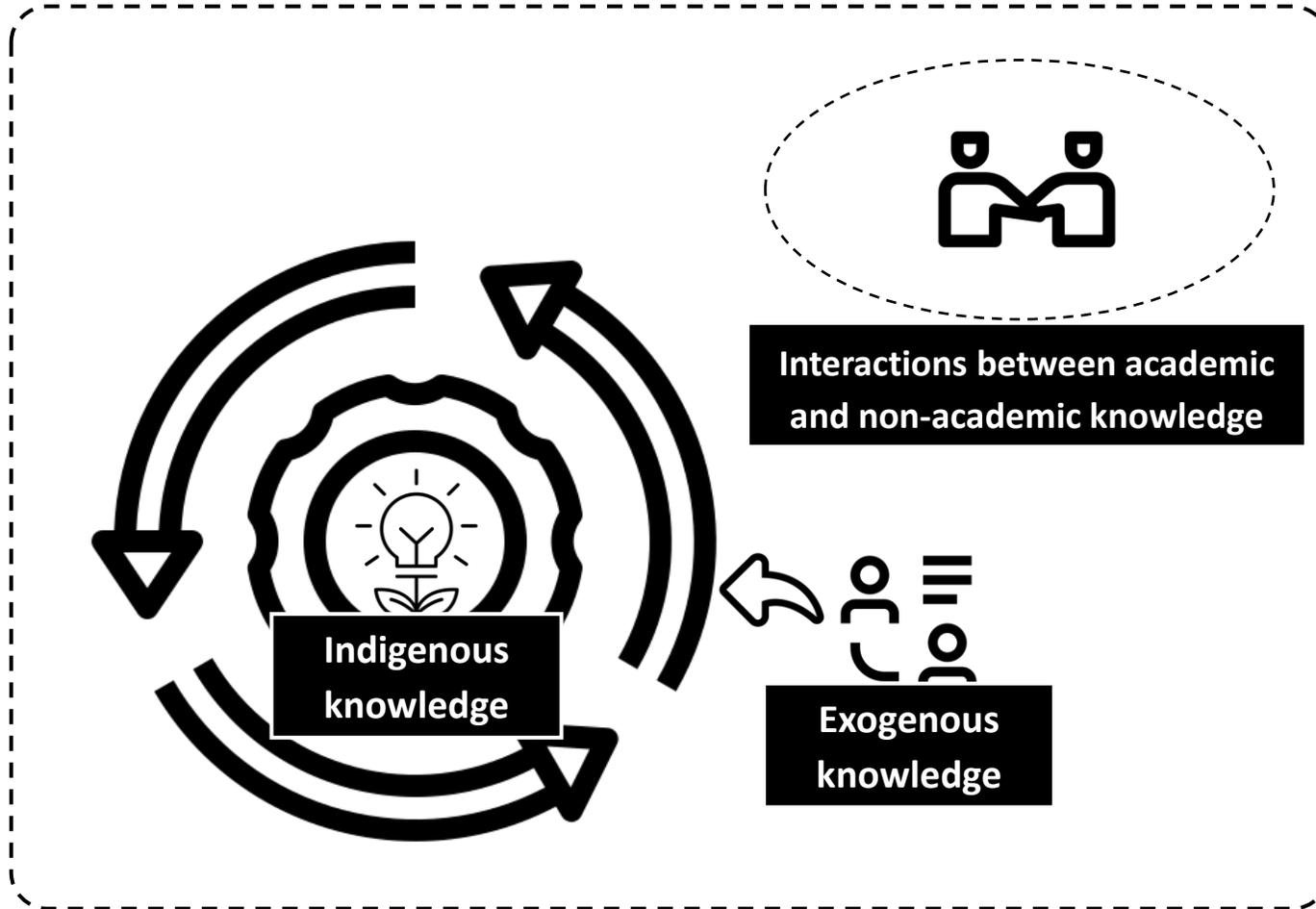


## When you hear 'epistemic diversity', what keywords come to your mind?



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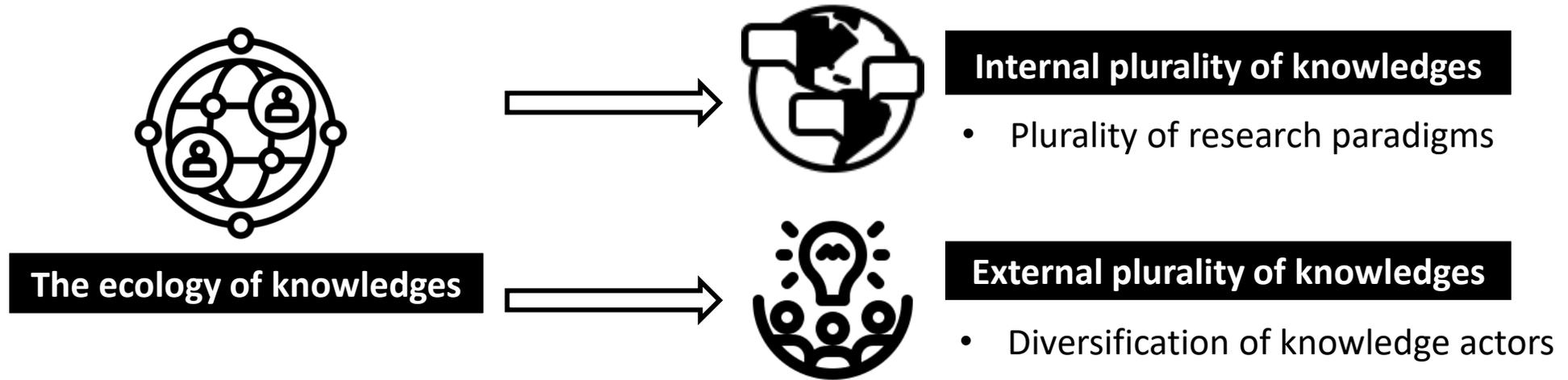
# Endogenous development of educational leadership research in China



Endogenous knowledge system

embeddedness  
social  
cultural  
relevance  
authenticity  
rootedness

## Theoretical perspective



### Policy discourses



- “Philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics”
- The “two integrations” slogan  
*“integrating the fundamental principles of Marxism with China's specific realities and with the fine traditional Chinese culture.”*

### References

Santos, B. S. (2014). *Epistemologies of the south: Justice against epistemicide*. Boulder: Paradigm.

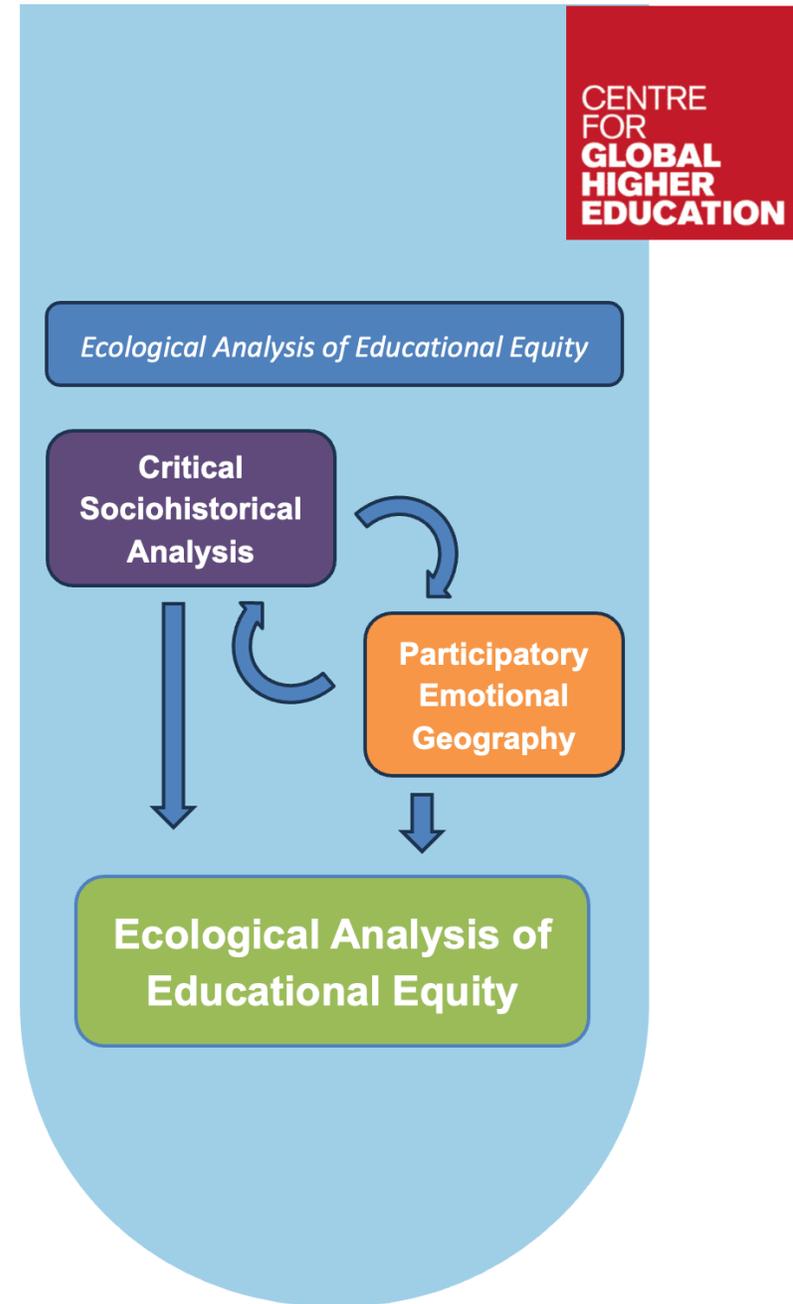
# Epistemic Pluralities in Educational Equity - Aotearoa New Zealand

## Overarching Research Question:

*How do present and historical conceptions of equity shape what it means to be a rangatahi (young person) in Aotearoa New Zealand's educational ecology?*

## Methods:

- **Critical Sociohistorical Analysis** – Pluralities of knowledge as nested in materials
- **Participatory Emotional Geography** – Pluralities of knowledge as embodied by educational communities
- **24 unstructured interviews** and **semi-structured focus groups** with youth and youth community stakeholders across Aotearoa New Zealand.



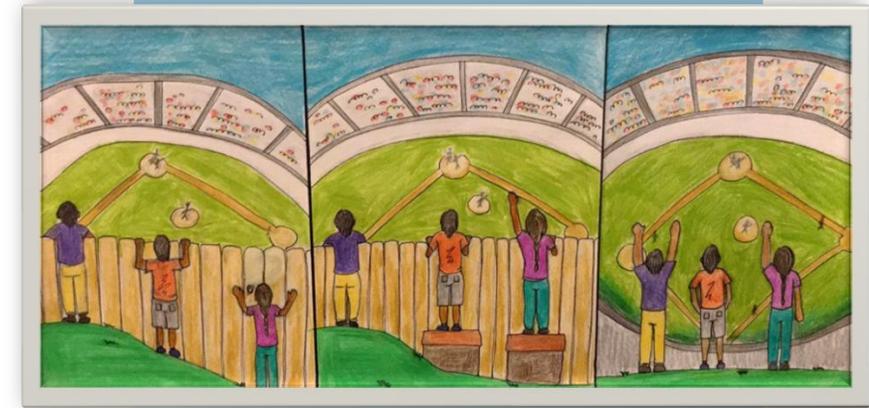
# Reflecting on Educational Equity in Aotearoa New Zealand

**Globalised** definitions of equity, fortifying **neoliberal** and **colonial** conceptualisations of equity.

“... It doesn’t matter how you try to ‘pretty up’ that picture, the ground is always uneven ... Who decides what equity looks like and whether or not that’s our goal?” (Milne, 2025).

Contesting **historicity** and **scientificity** for their role in rendering invisible Te Ao Māori conceptions of equity in education.

“My past is not a lifeless entity to be scrutinized on the postmortem bench of science without my permission and without a genuine acknowledgment that I and my whakapapa are vibrant and thriving” (Mahuika, 2019, p.24).



*Maioha & Tupe (2025)*

# Epistemic Diversity in Global And Local Research

## - Perspectives from India

- MSc Dissertation on *Social Science Research in India: Traversing the 'Global' and 'Local' Terrain* and ongoing work on related publication
- Sixteen in-depth interviews of about 60- 90 minutes each with International Relations (IR) researchers based in universities and think tank in India
- Findings analysed their engagements with the global research system

# Epistemic Diversity in Global And Local Research

## – Perspectives from India

- Global research system and reification of existing patterns of knowledge production

*All the theories that we had (in IR) were inspired by western historical, political, sociological realities. Those were explained using western theoretical frameworks and philosophical resources.*

- Delinking from modern imaginaries – discrepancy "of having to live in colonial power matrix but not belonging to its memories, feelings and way of sensing" (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p. 217)

*The IR that we know today is "foreign", right?". In that, the discipline is distanced from the experiences of people in India.*



Any questions?

# Panel Discussions



**In your view, why is epistemic diversity important for knowledge production?**

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2: Poll ▾



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## In your view, why is epistemic diversity important for knowledge production?

- Anonymous  
Adding perspectives
- Anonymous  
Respect for human agency and conscience is key to the quest to discover truth and for human development
- Anonymous  
Each of us have blind spots and need each other to see clearly
- Anonymous  
We learn and synergise better together
- Anonymous  
Without engaging with local knowledge then we end up talking to ourselves. We lose an understanding of reality.
- Anonymous  
Equity requires putting the last first
- Anonymous  
Whose reality counts?
- Anonymous  
Better world
- Anonymous  
Justice, fairness and truth
- Anonymous  
Every voice must be heard

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How can research practices reflect epistemic diversity both critically and inclusively?



How is (or isn't) epistemic diversity recognised and supported by the current research assessment frameworks?



What opportunities are there to foster epistemic diversity across different research contexts internationally?



Any questions?



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**What do you think are the main challenges to embracing epistemic diversity?**



Thank you!

