Introduction

Research is at its core concerned with knowledge production and dissemination. This chapter engages with the politics of research and knowledge production by outlining the ways that research is practised and ‘made’ in South Africa specifically and in the global South more broadly. In addition, this chapter presents the implications of South African research politics for participation in global knowledge economies. Further, the chapter interrogates issues of open access and argues for the necessity of open access research resources to capacitate research in the global South. These arguments provide the frame for the relevance of the chapters in this book. Hence, this book is a response to two fundamental issues facing the social sciences in South Africa, namely the active production of knowledge relevant to the South African context and access to this knowledge beyond the spheres of university scholars with subsidised access to scholarly publications. As such, this book is both intentionally open access and context specific.

Throughout this chapter, and book, there are references to South Africa, developing contexts, and low- and high-income contexts, and we embed these references in broader discussions concerning global South and global North differences in terms of politics, economics, resources and cultures. However, this is not meant to imply that global North and South contexts always operate in opposition to each other. In fact, this book specifically aims to disrupt binary theorising and so would argue that elements of the global South are of course present in the global North and vice versa. Hence this book applies to global issues. Additionally, whilst comparison between the global North and South might imply that these are homogeneous contexts, we have tried to demonstrate as far as possible that both occupy constantly changing research landscapes with diverse political, economic and cultural issues and tensions that inform these landscapes. As such, discussions concerning global North and South contexts in this book should not be understood monolithically. Rather, both global North and South contexts should be treated as complex, dynamic and multifarious, and thus as both having quite complicated implications for research as practice.
Knowledge production and the political nature of research

The examination of research politics and who has access to the knowledge economy must be prefaced by a discussion of the context and modes of knowledge production. Here we refer to the mechanisms by which knowledge is selected, made and disseminated as well as the sociocultural norms that dictate what may or may not be considered as worthy and valuable knowledge.

Traditionally, knowledge has been produced by and disseminated within university and other higher education structures. Gibbons and colleagues (1994) use the term ‘Mode 1’ to describe research practices whereby universities hold ‘the monopoly in providing training, credentialing, and knowledge production’ (Jansen, 2002, p. 509). Contemporary modes of knowledge production have taken a more interactive and dynamic approach such that research is distributed more widely and is far more heterogeneous, reflexive, application-based and transdisciplinary in nature (Hessels & Van Lente, 2008). This ‘new’ mode of knowledge production was coined by Gibbons et al. (1994) as ‘Mode 2’. In their book The New Production of Knowledge, Gibbons and colleagues (1994) distinguish between Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge-making mechanisms and argue that the transformation of research such that it is based on practice, overlaps disciplines and is produced by and within a variety of organisations is core to a number of modern research practices, including the globalisation and commodification of knowledge and the massification of higher education systems.

More recent postmodern attempts to establish the nature of Mode 2 knowledge production have focused on research quality, especially with regards to its ability to present itself as ‘contextualised science’. Specifically, these postmodern depictions of Mode 2 are focused on how science must be socially aware, socially responsible and constantly engaged in conversation and an exchange of ideas with society. This results in a socially robust set of knowledge productions that includes non-academic and non-scientific participants in the research process, thus boosting research credibility and reliability (Nowotny, Scott, Gibbons & Scott, 2001). While Mode 2 knowledge production seems to certainly dominate the form and nature of contemporary science, criticism has been lodged against this nomenclature of knowledge. These critiques claim that while contemporary research may be increasingly applied, there are still scientific projects that are structured as pure basic research. In addition, the claim that research is transdisciplinary, that it is evolving to attain a universal framework, may be premature given that most journals and scientific projects are still discipline specific (Hessels & Van Lente, 2008). Notwithstanding these and other criticisms, the massification of higher education systems and increasing international competition for the production and dissemination of knowledge have certainly contributed to the demand for a shift in the nature, form and politics of research such that it more closely aligns to a Mode 2 model.

The shift to knowledge-producing systems that are widely socially disseminated has a number of international and local implications. For universities, these challenges relate to sharing resources with other kinds of institutions, learning to collaborate with partners that are not necessarily academic or scientific, and
working with funding and policy requirements that traverse disciplines and are diffused across applied contexts (Godin & Gingras, 2000; Jansen, 2002). This of course has repercussions for the way knowledge evolves, especially for postcolonial contexts such as South Africa.

**The postcolonial politics of ‘making’ knowledge**

The demand for accountable, socially relevant and contextually sound research has resulted in the global shift towards applied, transdisciplinary knowledge-making practices. In turn, traditional knowledge ‘producers’ such as universities and other higher education structures are collaborating with partners in the health, government, education and community sectors as a means to produce research that targets ‘real world’ social, economic and political issues (Waghid, 2002). Gibbons and colleagues’ (1994) Mode 2 proposal for knowledge production makes for an appealing model for South African and other global South contexts as it offers the opportunity for developing contexts to become globally competitive whilst pooling resources through its transdisciplinary (and thus heterogeneous) structure. The outcome is a socially accountable and reflexive model of knowledge production that is localised to ensure that research is focused on social issues rather than on the traditional Mode 1 focus on individual academic interests (Winberg, 2006). This is significant because it allows South African research to remain locally focused whilst engaging in internationally endorsed modes of knowledge-making such that traditional, and often oppressive, global North research practices become undone.

Some of these practices, such as the exclusion of global South scholars from international journals, the privileging of English and other Eurocentric languages in journals and academic texts (Canagarajah, 1996) and the unequal distribution of scientific resources to the global South, are thus overcome through South African scientists’ participation in Mode 2 models of knowledge production. This said, knowledge has become a commodity and its production is also attached to professional privileges (such as promotion) (Jazeel & McFarlane, 2010). Accordingly, research practice, at least in the global South, exists at the intersection of various tensions. These tensions play out in the struggle between various, and sometimes opposing, research objectives including the need to be socially accountable, the call for context relevance, funders’ requirements, professional demands and expectations, global visibility and the moral appeal for research to contribute to social change and policy. Knowledge production, and specifically Mode 2 models of it, thus must take cognisance of particular issues in developing contexts so that these struggles and tensions are reduced. For Winberg (2006), the key to this balancing act is to focus on the transdisciplinary aspect of Mode 2 research practice.

Nowotny and colleagues (2001) call for socially robust knowledge-making practices. Winberg (2006, p. 161) argues that transdisciplinarity can achieve this through the use of ‘appropriate technologies, environmentally sensitive production methods, [and] ethical exploitation of indigenous knowledge’. In addition, knowledge production in developing contexts should be achieved
through reflexive practices that endorse novel approaches to problem solving, deconstruct traditional research approaches and reconstruct transformative and localised frameworks for making knowledge. This reflexive method of knowledge production should be advocated in developing contexts such that students and young scholars are empowered with critical and reflexive research skills that ensure a transformative, thoughtful and context-driven yet internationally valuable research base. This, of course, has major implications in South Africa, where knowledge and those that make and use it are often a function of apartheid legacies such as uneven access to higher education facilities, unequal employment opportunities in research-based institutions and underrepresentation of previously disadvantaged groups in knowledge-making contexts (Waghid, 2002).

This book endorses research methodologies that subscribe to Mode 2 approaches. Rather than focusing on traditional research methods that are often rigid, applied to single disciplines, Eurocentric and based on individuals’ academic interests, this book pays special attention to research methods that are ethical, reflexive, socially accountable, transdisciplinary, context specific and based on social needs, especially those in the developing world. In so doing, this book calls for a transformative approach to using research methods in making knowledge. This transformative approach, coupled with the open access nature of the book and the diverse nature of its authors, is key to the dismantling of oppressive practices in knowledge production, made possible by the global North foothold in the knowledge-making market and the inheritance of oppressive practices of systems such as apartheid.

**Global inequalities in research practice and knowledge production**

Research practice is, at least in global North models, mostly taught as if there is a neat linear movement from data collection to analysis and interpretation. However, South Africa is characterised by a range of culturally diverse communities that are in constant flux and are dynamic in nature. They are also usually typified by racialised tensions, gender inequalities, socioeconomic disparities and high levels of violence (Kramer, Seedat, Lazarus & Suffla, 2011). As a consequence, any research conducted in South African contexts is likely to be challenging with regards to access to resources for data collection purposes and issues related to power differentials between researchers and participants. In turn, research in the global South is often met with a variety of challenges and obstacles in early phases of the research process which makes the ‘neat’ linear movement to data analysis and interpretation both messy and unlikely. It is thus important to surface these issues at the outset of this book so that these South African-specific tensions are more easily understood in the context of later chapters.

Data collection begins with the practice of ethical procedures such as obtaining informed consent. Given that South Africa is characterised by linguistic diversity, there may be linguistic barriers between researchers and participants, whereby participants may not fully understand what they are consenting to. In
addition, there is a high percentage of uneducated people in South Africa and the African region, which implies that some participants may be illiterate and thus unable to read an information sheet or give written consent. This has obvious implications for the objective of ethical imperatives in research – the integrity, safety and protection of participants (Benatar, 2002). As such, the researchers in this book have explicitly shared the ethical considerations that they made in using their research methods, and the ways that they may have overcome particular ethical dilemmas related to working in the South African context.

Data collection in the context of the global South also presents a variety of challenges to researchers. Firstly, the use of both quantitative and qualitative instruments that are developed and interpreted by a professional group of researchers may be inappropriate or irrelevant in particular contexts (see Laher & Cockcroft, 2017). Even when Eurocentric or Americanised instruments are adapted and translated so that they are context appropriate, these adaptations are still conducted by researchers that are likely to be external to the community in which the participants are immersed (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2005). In addition, the way the researchers use the instruments and treat the participants may inadvertently locate this group as ‘experts by virtue of their access to theory, resources and knowledge legitimating mechanisms’ (Kramer et al., 2011, p. 513). This power dynamic is further exacerbated by the fact that very often researchers are external agents entering communities of interest and they very rarely are sufficiently immersed in the context (Homan, 2004; Potter & Kruger, 2001). The views of the researchers are thus often prioritised and the voices of interest to the research regularly remain silenced. It is therefore essential for researchers to sufficiently engage with their own ideological biases and assumptions (Benatar, 2002) and to simultaneously attempt to identify and mobilise the participants’ voices, especially those that are disadvantaged and marginalised. In this way, South African research will refrain from replicating the oppressive practices of the past that so often filter into research practice in the country as a consequence of engrained apartheid legacies. Many of the chapters in this book use the call for context-based understandings of research methods as a means to interrogate these issues. This is especially achieved in the chapters on feminist approaches (Chapter 14), Photovoice methodologies (Chapter 22), ethnography (Chapter 16) and appreciative inquiry (Chapter 21), amongst others.

The aforementioned issues continue to be problematic once data are translated into findings and produced as knowledge for dissemination. Knowledge production in the global South often takes the form of what Grosfoguel (2011) refers to as ‘imperial epistemology’ – theory is produced by and positioned from a global North perspective, even when the subjects of the research are located in the global South. This has the tendency to reduce, minimise, misinterpret or misread the perspectives of those subjects being studied, thus further working to marginalise subjects in developing contexts whilst simultaneously reinforcing and privileging already dominant global North perspectives. This book hopes to challenge this narrative as it is written by and for South African and global South researchers with the objective of platforming both South
African-based perspectives on research and adaptations and innovations of research methodologies that are particular to developing contexts – in both theory and practice.

Of further concern is the issue of the role of the state and/or other funders in knowledge production. The relationship between the state and the scientific community is often contentious and centred on the debate on scientific autonomy in relation to the relevance of the scientific project to state goals or the greater social good. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to fully elaborate on the nature and scope of the autonomy debate, the point made here is that the relationship between the state, as one of the primary funders of scientific research, and the scientific communities in South Africa must be unpacked in any consideration of knowledge production. The role of funders (state or otherwise) in the agenda setting and implementation of systematic scientific research has been widely discussed and debated (see Chu, Jayaraman, Kyamanywa & Ntakiyiruta, 2014; Mouton et al., 2008). Mouton et al. (2008) show that 42% of South African Development Community scientists surveyed ($n = 600$) sourced between 70% and 90% of their funding from overseas; however, only 6% of South African scientists reported similar funding proportions. South Africa has a number of central funding agencies, including the National Research Foundation, the South African Medical Research Council and the Department of Science and Technology, among others. The majority of research expenditure for the period 2004 to 2006 was in the natural and engineering sciences (48%), with social sciences and humanities drawing 31% of these funds (Mouton et al., 2008).

While there appears to be substantial local funder support for knowledge production in South Africa, scientific knowledge in Africa tends to be less visible on the international landscape (Mouton et al., 2008). There are a number of reasons contributing to the relatively low visibility of African research. A major contributing factor to the low visibility of research in the global South is that the majority of local journals, especially in the social sciences and humanities, in developing nations are not indexed in the large bibliographic indexes (Mouton, 2011; Mouton et al., 2008). This is largely due to an entrenched hegemonic definition of research methodologies that delegitimises indigenous research methods. Additionally, as a result of the power imbalance between global South and North accessibility to research funding and dissemination opportunities, global South research is once again marginalised, despite African-based research being able to offer novel, emancipatory and culturally sound research. Furthermore, the nature of academic publishing, with the associated paywalls and privileged access to knowledge housed behind costly journal subscriptions and highly technical language, remains largely inaccessible to the broader (non-academic) society.

Finally, the knowledge economy is typically premised on capitalist assumptions, with knowledge treated as a commodity. Knowledge is regularly disseminated, most often in English, through journal publications, books and book chapters that use a peer-review system most often based on Americanised standards and practices (Altbach, 2004). Most of these resources are now available...
online. Whilst this ensures easy accessibility for those with internet use and those in higher education settings, the ownership of databases, journals and other academic resources by multinational knowledge corporations means that those without internet access, as well as those institutions, groups and individuals unable to pay for access, are unable to participate in the global knowledge economy (Altbach, 2004; Correa, 2000). By publishing this book as an open access resource, we hope to overcome some of the barriers and challenges that global North knowledge dissemination practices impose on global South contexts.

Open educational resources and removing the barriers to research
Suber (2003) takes the position that there are two primary crises that create barriers to research: the pricing limitation and the permission limitation. The serials’ pricing crisis refers to the rising subscription costs of serials such as academic journals, where the cost of subscriptions posted by publishers poses severe limitations to access for institutions (Suber, 2003). Central to the pricing crisis is the argument that the cost of producing and distributing the texts that result from research is expensive and requires large infrastructure (Metz & Gherman, 1991; Vaughn, 2013). As far back as 1991, researchers argued that the objective cost increases did not account for the concomitant increases for serial subscriptions (Metz & Gherman, 1991). However, recent advances in digital technology domains have allowed for the large-scale reproduction and distribution of perfect copies of research outputs at virtually no cost. In response, traditional publishers have created what Suber (2003, 2012) terms the ‘permission crisis’. The permission crisis is the result of publishers raising legal and technological barriers to limit how libraries, scholars, students and the public may access peer-reviewed, credible research outputs (Metz & Gherman, 1991). The legal barriers are ensconced within copyright law, licensing agreements and digital rights management, which limit access by unauthorised (non-subscribed) users (Downes, 2013). The open access movement is presented as the alternative to the paywall publication model currently dominating the academic sector. One of the criticisms of the current model of publication is the view that publishers undeservedly benefit from the donated resources of authors and editors who contribute their time and expertise to producing academically sound texts, while the publisher is seen to acquire the final work without contributing to the production costs (Fuchs & Sandoval, 2013; Suber, 2012).

Within the open access model of publication, authors retain the copyright to their work and are free to distribute, donate, archive as well as lend and copy digital articles on any terms to any user (Antelman, 2004; Metz & Gherman, 1991). Open access literature is defined by two essential properties: there are no costs associated with accessing the material; and the copyright holder has consented in advance to unrestricted reading, downloading, copying, sharing, storing, printing, linking and web crawling (Suber, 2003, 2012). The attribution of the original copyright remains with the authors, ensuring that they are recognised for the production of the work. However, the distribution of the work
may take place without the financial and legal restrictions typically associated with academic research outputs. The assumption here is that authors forego the royalties in return for greater impact through the widest possible dissemination of their work (Albert, 2006). A distinction is drawn between those texts and outputs produced by authors with the intention of monetising the knowledge produced and those texts which are published with the intention of reaching a wider audience free of restriction. Suber (2003) is at pains to point out that the aim of the open access movement is not to enforce strictly open access publication but to place the authority in the hands of the authors to decide whether a piece of work should be monetised or not.

We drew heavily on the sentiments expressed by Downes (2013) and Suber (2003, 2012) and the principles of the open access movement when deciding the final form of this text. The idea behind this book was to place control of the flow of knowledge back into the hands of the scholars and researchers who produced it. We also wanted to ensure that students, researchers and scholars would have full access to the knowledge produced by removing the paywalls typically used to restrict access to information to those who can afford it. Another motivation was to push back against the established trends in knowledge dissemination whereby authors who present significant results and who describe perfectly implemented methods are given preference. The research process is dynamic and complex, often marked by dead ends and false starts. Information on how and why the research process is challenged by various obstacles is also crucial to building the collective knowledge base, and we therefore strove to include book chapters that guard against this type of publication bias (see Chapter 2).

**Publication bias**

We have a habit in writing articles published in scientific journals to make the work as finished as possible, to cover all the tracks, to not worry about the blind alleys or to describe how you had the wrong idea first, and so on. So there isn’t any place to publish, in a dignified manner, what you actually did in order to do the work . . . (Feynmen, 1965, n.p.)

The quote by Feynmen was made during his 1965 Nobel lecture and illustrates one of the persistent issues facing researchers in the sciences – publication bias. There is a resurgence in the appreciation of the advantages of experimentation in the social sciences (Miguel et al., 2014). Governments and advocacy groups in particular are driving a shift toward more evidence-driven policy-making (Miguel et al., 2014). The increased support and funding towards these disciplines is accompanied by a heightened examination of the incentives, norms and institutions which govern and shape the practices in the social sciences (Ferguson & Heene, 2012). Publication bias, in particular, is highlighted as undermining the gains made by improved research design and is described as a dysfunctional reward system in which statistically significant and theoretically tidy results are more readily accepted (Miguel et al., 2014).
Ferguson and Heene (2012) point out that when scholars are under pressure to publish, they may decline to submit results that conflict with popular theories. Furthermore, a study conducted by Fanelli (2010) demonstrated that the more competitive and productive an academic environment is, the higher the likelihood that positive results will be reported. From our perspective, one of the negative implications of this is that the bias towards positive results not only makes replication unfeasible but also increases the difficulty for emerging researchers to enter the field successfully. As such, this book intentionally focuses on research methodologies as they are used, adapted and challenged in the context of South Africa and the global South. This is achieved by the various chapter authors drawing on original research as a means to transparently demonstrate both the successes and challenges of using particular methodologies in a contextually sound, albeit often dynamic and shifting, approach.

Research methods in this book

Social science scholars in South Africa utilise research methods in innovative ways in order to respond to the diversity present in the country’s population as well as to the unique contextual circumstances in which we find ourselves. These methods often remain undocumented but, if exposed to a broader audience, they have the potential to contribute to the quality of research scholarship locally and abroad. The chapters in this book combine research method theory and its applications as a means to disseminate knowledge on best research practices for researchers, practitioners and students in South Africa specifically and in the global South more broadly. The chapters are compiled by experts in various research methods who have synthesised conceptual and application issues by using actual examples from their original research. Chapters also contain discussions on ethical considerations that would be relevant to people who might want to use the method in a similar global South context. The chapters encompass the more theoretical explications of research methods that are provided in existing books (see Babbie & Mouton, 2011; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006; Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012) but add further depth with the applied foci of each chapter. Hence the chapters move beyond an abstract description of research theory and methods to provide critical reflection and discussion on the application of methods in the South African and/or developing world context. The book is divided into three sections: quantitative methods, qualitative methods and transparadigmatic methods. We acknowledge that such a structure may reproduce the very politics of knowledge production which we interrogate. However, the sheer volume of contributions necessitated an arrangement that would be familiar to all and ultimately convenient.

Section One: Quantitative methods

This section includes eight chapters utilising methodologies that would typically be classified as quantitative. The first four chapters encompass the variety of contexts within which non-experimental methods are commonly employed. Hence,
Swart, Kramer, Ratele and Seedat (Chapter 2) provide a discussion of a large-scale study employing data from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System and Statistics South Africa’s most recent national Census (2011) to illustrate the use of correlational designs. This chapter is therefore also useful in explicating the use of secondary data for research. The authors do this by using an example of research on male homicide in South Africa. Cockcroft, Goldschagg and Seabi (Chapter 3) discuss the utility of longitudinal designs using research they conducted on noise exposure amongst primary school children. Makhubela and Mashegoane (Chapter 4) as well as Shuttleworth-Edwards (Chapter 5) present non-experimental designs within the context of psychometrics research in South Africa. Barnes’s Chapter 6, on quasi-experimental research, locates the design within an applied behavioural health research context by focusing on an intervention for binge drinking amongst university students. Two chapters consider experimental designs but from very different perspectives: Sibeko and Stein (Chapter 7) discuss the utility of randomised controlled trials using a task-shifting intervention conducted at Valkenberg Hospital in the Western Cape, whilst Geffen and Pitman (Chapter 8) consider the use of a repeated-measures factorial design in exploring working memory interactions in earworms. This section concludes with the chapter by Finchilescu and Muthal on Q methodology (Chapter 9). This method is often described as qualiquantological and the authors demonstrate the utility of this method in exploring perceptions of academic misconduct amongst university students.

Section One could be described as characteristic of traditional research as practised in the global North. Reviewers of the book have questioned the transformative nature of these methods and whether quantitative, experimental methods have relevance in our contexts. As the editors, we stand firm that all methods have value. We also cannot support a narrow view of what exactly constitutes transformative methods in contexts like ours. Even traditional experimental methods, if used for societal change and development, are transformative. Furthermore, the quantitative studies illustrated in Section One demonstrate how the global North construction of quantitative methodology as rigid and standardised is disrupted in a global South context that, by virtue of the already mentioned diversities and complexities, demands a more flexible, adaptable and contextual quantitative approach to knowledge-making. The case studies presented in this section are illustrative of novel research in South Africa that has social relevance.

Section Two: Qualitative methods

Section Two includes nine chapters and begins with a systematic case study by Edwards (Chapter 10). Typically, single case study designs are located within the quantitative tradition. However, Edwards provides an interesting discussion on the way in which cases can transcend the typical qualitative–quantitative schism and become increasingly characterised by a mixed methods approach. Despite this, Edwards focuses his chapter more on the qualitative and narrative approach to case study research situated within the clinical context. Van Niekerk, Prenter
and Fouché (Chapter 11) take a different approach to case study research by presenting psychobiographical research as a method. They illustrate this using the life story of Christiaan Barnard. Maree (Chapter 12) discusses narrative research using the life design approach to career counselling as an illustration of the method. In Chapter 13, Howard-Payne interrogates the use of grounded theory as a method with her research on voluntary medical adult male circumcision for HIV prevention in South Africa. Kiguwa (Chapter 14) uses research on circumcision to discuss feminist approaches to research. Kramer presents the critical discourse analytic method using South African female-perpetrated sex abuse victim discourses in Chapter 15. Ethnographic approaches to research are presented in the chapters by Whitehead (Chapter 16) and Schmid (Chapter 17). Schmid uses her own experiences to provide insight into autoethnography as a method. Whitehead describes the relevance of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis using research that examines the use of racial categories in everyday interactions in South Africa. Bowman, Siemers and Whitehead (Chapter 18) adopt the genealogy method specifically as espoused by Michel Foucault to explore the history of industrial psychology in South Africa. More particularly, constructions of the South African mineworker are explored to illustrate the use of this technique.

As with Section One, these chapters illustrate case studies from diverse fields within the social sciences. The research is socially relevant, contemporary and has much to offer in terms of understanding the issues prevalent in global South contexts. The chapters by Maree and Edwards are interesting also in their diverse applications of narrative research that do not necessarily conform to the method as explicated in methods textbooks. Further, the researcher–practitioner boundaries are blurred in these chapters. They provide excellent examples of socially relevant research in contexts of practice. Likewise, the chapters by Howard-Payne, Kramer, and Bowman and colleagues demonstrate the value of qualitative research methods as they are able to be reimagined in the South African context. The application of a variety of methods (grounded theory, discourse analysis and genealogy, respectively) originally developed in global North contexts to very specific African issues of male circumcision, violence and migrant labour is testament to the flexibility and adaptability of these methods. Further, the sheer vastness of qualitative methods presented in this section is indicative of the diversity and range of approaches contemporary qualitative work has to offer in the social sciences.

**Section Three: Transparadigmatic methods**

Section Three consists of six chapters espousing methods that we describe as transparadigmatic and transformative. The methods in this section illustrate more so than the other sections how transformative methods are being used in the global South to disrupt traditional knowledge production methods to some extent. We argue that these methods borrow from traditional research methods but are more contextual and are often adapted to suit the assumptions and frames of the research studies that use them. Barnes’s Chapter 19, on transformative
mixed methods, sets the scene for this section. Barnes argues that mixed methods research, when framed by a transformative paradigm, has the potential to contribute to a social justice agenda. In so doing, he highlights the critiques levelled at transformative methods as well as aspects to be considered by researchers wishing to employ this technique. Archer (Chapter 20) discusses an equally flexible method in Design Research using an evaluation of a feedback system for Foundation Phase teachers to demonstrate the utility of Design Research. Nel and Govender (Chapter 21) discuss the evaluation of a wellness programme as well as a case study from a therapeutic context through the lens of appreciative inquiry (AI). Kessi, Kaminer, Boonzaier and Learmonth (Chapter 22) demonstrate the transformative capacities of research methodologies by portraying Photovoice as a means to empower socially and economically oppressed groups living in marginalised communities. Nel and Govender’s AI and Kessi et al.’s participatory methods demonstrate how the divide between social scientist and society can be bridged to widen access to the knowledge production process and, possibly, produce more authentic reflections and interpretations of societal processes and issues. Participatory research and action-based research as transformative methods are presented in Chapter 23 by Sanchez-Betancourt and Vivier. They describe the use of the community scorecard method, which focuses on local service provision and community participation. These chapters lead well into the final chapter by Laher, Fynn and Kramer (Chapter 24), which argues for the relevance of community-based approaches amongst the future trends in social science research.

Laher et al. interrogate issues of social relevance in relation to rigour and ethics in research. In so doing, they allude to the tension between traditional, accepted ways of knowledge production and newer, more contextual methods of research and knowledge production. The chapter argues for rigorous research across both positions but also interrogates the notion of rigour as defined in mainstream understandings. The chapter also argues that the indigenisation of knowledge production can coexist with mainstream understandings but researchers have the responsibility to undertake ethical and socially relevant research. In presenting these arguments, the chapter discusses future trends in social science research, particularly as they pertain to transformation in the field and indigenisation of methods for global South contexts. The role of technology in the future of social science research is also addressed. Hence, the chapter presents a montage of transformative methods beyond those described in the other book chapters.

Conclusion

In his 1987 text, Richard Miller argues that the social sciences have no overarching framework of empirical principles that encompasses all explanations in the field. Rather, he argues that there are particular frameworks for particular fields (Miller, 1987). This methodological pluralism is simultaneously viewed as a sign of the maturity of the social sciences and as a crippling fragmentation hindering
an integrated understanding of the human and social world. Divisions within
contemporary social sciences are deep and complex and involve:
• divisions among the disciplines of anthropology, economics, history, politi-
cal science, psychology and sociology;
• divisions among subdisciplinary fields where each discipline has grown into
an increasing number of pigeonholed sub-frameworks that define courses,
jobs and areas of inquiry; and
• methodological divisions where the argument between the proponents of
the mathematical approaches to social sciences contends with those who
operate within the analytic frameworks of natural languages (Gerring, 2001).

The fragmented nature of the social sciences and the associated ideological, dis-
ciplinary and subdisciplinary cleavages make any effort to provide a cohesive
and coherent synthesis of the discipline exceedingly complex. This book is not
an effort to provide a coherent framework for all social scientific approaches, but
rather celebrates the diversity of approaches and acknowledges each methodo-
logical application as relevant and functional for the specific area of inquiry in
which it is applied. Furthermore, the methods presented here provide an indi-
cation of how different areas of inquiry could be approached, but are not con-
sidered as the sole means of study for the question asked. Each author in the
book brings a unique perspective to the application of social science methods
within the South African context and, given the diversity of issues facing the
South African researcher, they are viewed as part of the broader array through
which we may better understand the difficulties and challenges of conducting
research in this context. In this book, we highlight various approaches through
which fresh knowledge and new perspectives may be generated to better serve
broader society.

Note
1 The global South refers to countries that are treated as ‘developing’ contexts or ‘less
developed’ contexts as per measures indicated by the Human Development Index and

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