

# Values-based Inquiry in Cross-cultural Research: towards Remedy and Repair

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With

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**Abstract:** As part of an international cross-cultural research community, the authors share the important role values hold in education and educational research. Values need to be acknowledged and shared for extending understanding and human flourishing in our world. Using action research cycles in creating living-educational-theories, values are used as explanatory principles and standards of judgment in order to assess the nature of the authors' influence and their contribution to improving themselves, others and the world. They argue that values-based inquiry can contribute to remedy and repair in our educational research and world.

## 1. Purposes

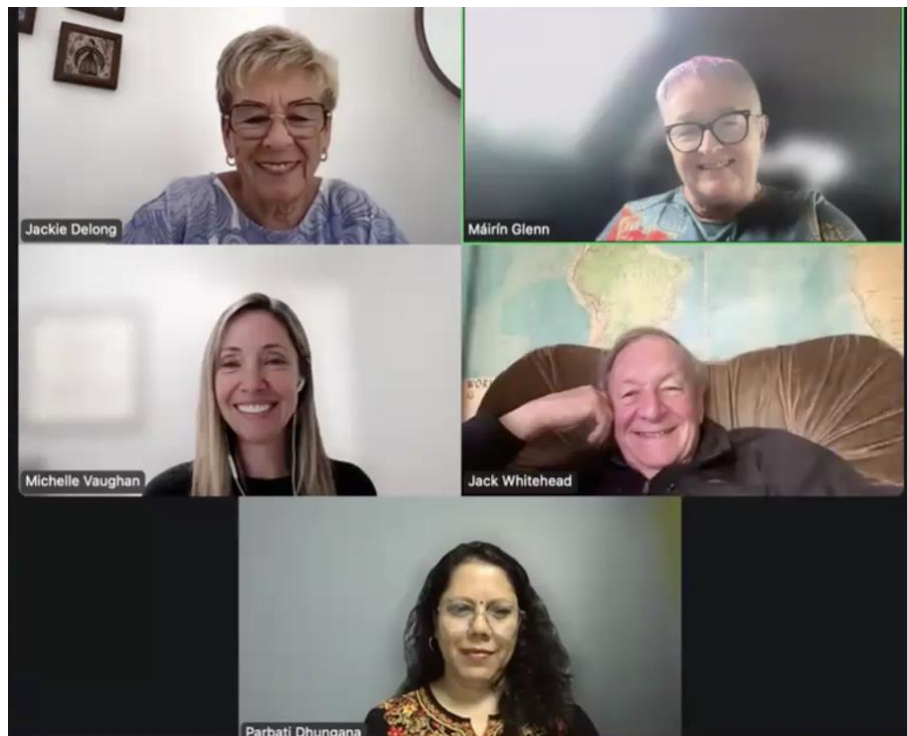
The purpose of this paper is to examine how when action research is undertaken in a practitioner's own context, and is based on their values, it can improve the quality of their own professional work, have a transformational educational influence in the learning of others and contribute to the global knowledgebase of education. It is based on the understanding of the term 'educational' as learning with a life-affirming energy and values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity (DeLong & Whitehead, 2024).

It examines the pivotal role that values hold in the diverse educational contexts of the presenters, Delong- Canada and the Glenn - Republic of Ireland, and their international research community, including Jack Whitehead, UK, Michelle Vaughan-McGovern, USA, and Parbati Dhungana, Nepal, as they reflect on their educational practice in a cross-cultural culture of inquiry.

It also explores how human values can generate powerful research in the service of remedy and repair (AERA 2025 Annual Meeting Theme) as the presenters encourage practitioners from all education settings to collaborate around research in their own practice so as to improve the quality of education in their professional contexts. We argue that repair and remedy in education stem from understanding our values and their impact on learning. We present this argument through the lenses of our responsibilities in generating values-based explanations of our educational influence and our work as a group to embody and clarify the meanings of these relationally-dynamic values together.

To set the context, we share the background of our work and contributions: We are a group of practitioner-researchers from diverse locations around the world who are convinced of the power of action research through the lens of Living Educational Theory to make change. We are Pabati Dhungana - a teacher educator from Nepal; Jack Whitehead - the founder of the Living Educational Theory movement from the UK; Michelle Vaughan-McGovern from the USA – a teacher educator and research facilitator for teacher research; Jackie Delong - international mentor for Living Educational Theory research; Máirín Glenn: author, president of The Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) and co-leader of the Network of Educational Action Research Ireland (NEARI). In the paper, when we speak as individual researchers, the individual is identified and when we speak as a community, a cross-cultural culture of inquiry, we use “we”.

As an international group of presenters (see Fig 1.), we accept our educational responsibilities by generating and sharing valid, evidence-based, and values-based explanations of our educational influences in learning. We support each other through our presentations at the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) conferences (Delong, et al., 2022, 2023, 2024) and AERA (Delong, et al., 2021, 2022, 2023).



**Fig.1 Our Cross-cultural Culture of Inquiry**  
**Clockwise: Máirín, Jack, Parbati, Michelle, Jackie**

## **2. Perspective(s) and Theoretical Frameworks**

We presenters (Glenn and Delong) are two members of an international research group who are involved in action research from the perspective of Living Educational Theory research. This is a form of educational research that considers educational research as a values-based process. The researcher asks questions like ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’ and focuses on the importance of life-affirming energy with values that carry hope for human flourishing (Delong & Whitehead, 2024). Accepting responsibility for becoming aware of one's values and articulating them is a key element of [Living Educational Theory](#) research. We have used our understanding of ‘repair and remedy’ within our work which focuses on values of support, encouragement, caring, empowerment, transformation and improvement. See glossary at <https://ejolts.net/glossary>

Our understanding is that in order to bring hope and purpose (Philpott, 2024; hooks, 2003) to our own lives and the lives of others, we need to adopt an open-minded and open-hearted attitude; share our values openly; hold ourselves accountable for living our values and invite others to join our culture of inquiry (Delong, 2013). When we do not live and act according

to our values, we are “living contradictions” (Whitehead, 1989). Encouraging and supporting educational practitioners to create their own living-educational-theories enables us to know the nature of our educational influences in learning and use our values as explanatory principles. We consider that education is a values-laden process (Delong & Whitehead, 2024); that values constitute the explanatory principles for explanations of educational influences in learning and that values provide the principles for judging improvements in practice (Delong *et al.*, 2023).

This paper is based on the concept that the values people hold inform not only how they live their lives professionally but, also, how they undertake research. Using a Living Educational Theory methodology, the authors overtly look for examples in their research process which can clearly demonstrate that they are working according to the values they hold or are working more closely to them, as they engage in research for human flourishing. These examples become evidence in the research process and contribute to explanatory principles as outlined in Section 3.

### **Our Understanding of the term ‘Remedy and Repair’**

We understand the words ‘remedy’ and ‘repair’ as pertaining to fixing something that has not worked or not worked well and our responsibility to provide ways and means to improve it. In our work we share how we have used our influence for good in helping ourselves and others to improve how and what we're doing and to live more fully according to our/their values. In our current world, we see an increasing emphasis on money, not helping the vulnerable, not providing support for social needs, not on democracy and democratic institutions but overtly on making billionaires more wealthy, valuing people based on their monetary value and devaluing democratic processes. In this we feel that with our focus on values-based inquiry using values from True North principles (Covey, 1991), we might mitigate this negative value with our influence for good in our circles of influence.

We feel a responsibility to speak out against the tragedy being lived out in various jurisdictions globally with the bullying, power-wielding, isolating, cruel and malicious behaviour of their leadership. We are working to speak out against this injustice and in support of values of integrity, justice, democracy, kindness, empathy and love. We live our lives in support of others, particularly our students and other vulnerable peoples.

### 3. **Methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry**

Action research is a values-based inquiry process (Brydon-Miller, 2003; hooks, 2003; McAteer, 2013; McDonagh et al., 2020; Delong & Whitehead, 2024; Whitehead & Huxtable, 2024ab) wherein the researcher examines and discusses their values in the context of the inquiry. The mode of inquiry involves critical reflection and dialogue as a research method (DeLong, 2020). It draws on the premise that the researcher offers an explanation for the educational influence in their own learning and the learning of others as they theorise their practice. In our work, we make extensive use of dialogic and digital visual data in terms of photographs and video clips to support this process.

As we engage in processes of self-examination and critical reflection, our values are articulated, clarified and manifested in our practice and in our research. We demonstrate our values-based explanations of our influence, as individuals and as a group in the following ways:

- **Values in Action:**  
Values are best understood when seen in everyday actions and interactions (Feyerabend, 1975). Digital visual data and dialogue are used as research methods to provide evidence of values as explanatory principles.
- **Series of Writings and Presentations:** We each have provided values-based explanations of our educational influences through various writings and conference presentations. Our influences are also evident in the writings of those we have mentored, showing the evolution of values and the spread of influence within a culture of inquiry.
- **Evidence-Based Sharing:** We consistently share our evidence-based and values-laden explanations of our educational influences in learning through our presentations at CARN and AERA conferences. We take responsibility for inviting others to join our culture of inquiry and supporting new scholars in the field.

In this paper, we interrogate the role of values in education, if they are foundational in educational research and to what extent they can be integrated in diverse contexts (AERA 2025 Annual Meeting Theme).

The research evaluates the effectiveness of our actions and explanations for our educational influences in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations shared in a validation group of 3-8 peers using Habermas' (1976) four criteria of social validity: authenticity, truthfulness, comprehensibility, rightness. We also use Winter's (1989) criteria for enhancing rigour in terms of reflexive critique, dialectical critique, risk, plural structure, multiple resources and theory practice transformation.

#### **4. Data Sources**

The data collated by the group utilises both qualitative as well as quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis. These and all appropriate combinations of these methods are utilised by this research group. Their aim is to improve the state of educational practice in which they work. The values clarified in the research process become the explanatory principles by which the researchers validate their research accounts.

Alternative forms of data as outlined by Eisner (1997) are utilised by this group and include digital and visual data from video recordings of the group's meetings over a three year period. The group have kept personal data including journals and have published widely, see Dhungana, 2020; DeLong and Whitehead, 2024; Glenn et al., 2017; Glenn et al., 2023; Vaughan et al., 2024, for example, and have evidence of their research findings on various websites (see <https://www.actionresearch.net> and [www.ejolt.net](http://www.ejolt.net) for example). This evidence will be presented in Section 5.

#### **5. Results and/or substantiated conclusions or warrants for arguments/point of view**

We claim that by adopting a Living Educational Theory approach to action research we can generate powerful theory in the service of remedy and repair (Annual Meeting Theme, 2025) and for the flourishing of humanity (Whitehead, 1989). In this section, we (i) provide evidence to support our claims and (ii) outline the warrants for discussion arising from our work.

We discuss our claims under the following headings:

1. Educational research helps to improve our work not only so as to improve our practice but also for the greater good of humanity
2. We use values as standards of judgement to ascertain the rigour of the research
3. We make a contribution to knowledge
4. We integrate values in global contexts by encouraging and supporting action researchers to ask, research, and answer, 'How can I improve my practice?'

## 1. Educational Research

First, we make the distinction between education and educational research (DeLong & Whitehead, 2024). **Education Research** refers to research within specific disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and history of education. It often focuses on quantitative data and external outcomes and is typically research on others. On the other hand, **Educational Research** is values-led, seeks to enhance practice, and is undertaken for the flourishing of humanity. It focuses on learning, self-improvement, society-improvement, and contributing to a better world. It is premised on knowing oneself, living according to one's values, and contributing to human flourishing. Educational research builds from a place of action, with a goal of contributing explanations that are actionable in the field of education. This is seen as a greater goal than just understanding in research. Educational research keeps values at the center and supports exploring values, which may be the hidden curriculum. It contributes to enhancing what researchers and participants are doing in their professional spaces.

How does educational research help to improve our work for the greater good of humanity? The AERA 2025 call asks us to take a sense of ownership towards accountability and use our scholarship to repair and remedy the world around us. However, we believe that the first level of scholarly accountability is to go inward to clarify and justify the values that are guiding practice and research every day. Action Research and Living Educational Theory are tools to do this. Living Educational Theory seeks to improve one's practice through a deep understanding of the individual's values and how they influence their work and context. This methodology is used within cross-cultural inquiries to deepen understanding of practices, language, and goals of educational research:

## 2. Standards of Judgement

In Living Educational Theory (LET) research, standards of judgement are drawn from the individual's values. These standards are used to evaluate the quality of the research and to determine if the researcher is enhancing their practice and living more closely to their values. The unit of appraisal in LET research is the individual's own account of their educational influence in learning. This involves creating living-educational-theories with values as explanatory principles to explain their influence as they address the question, 'How do I improve my practice?'

Researchers must engage others to support their claims to know their influence on themselves, on others, and on the social formations where they live and work. For example, a claim about 'loving students into learning' can be supported by visual data or dialogue showing this value in action. [Vaughan & Delong, 2019](#)

### 3. Contributing to Knowledge

We claim that we are contributing to knowledge and influencing our own learning and the learning of others by using our explanation of educational influences as the unit of appraisal. This is similar to using data or evidence in other methodologies. A practical example is providing evidence that the value of care influences doctoral students in their learning through a culture of inquiry. This value is evident in writings and recorded Zoom sessions, which serve as evidence of learning and influence. [Vaughan et al., 2024](#)

### 4. Values in Global Contexts

Sometimes, the mere articulation of a person's values and the role of values in educational research can be a challenging activity. We have had many rich discussions in our international cross-cultural research group on our understandings of values and what is deemed to be educational. Many of the assumptions that we have each held have been interrogated, dislodged and either weakened or strengthened through our values-led and culturally-based interactions. In the preparation of this paper, for example, we came to learn that what some of us understood as 'evidence' (proof of improved practice, for example) as a given element of all forms of research. Parbati explains that in the Eastern Wisdom Traditional knowledge system, they can not get evidence of knowledge and we examine this in more detail below. She explains: 'Only the experiencer can know it, once s/he tries to make sense it fades its originality... I think, we should not seek evidence of each knowledge



claim...Perhaps, trust is vital in a knowledge claim, particularly of cultural, spiritual knowledge'. As this paper reaches completion, we can see that our collective understanding of 'evidence of knowledge' needs much discussion and we still have much to learn from one another.

## Warrants for Discussion

Linking back to our objectives of exploring the role of values in educational action research in global contexts, we discuss the warrants for argument and discussion that have emerged from the authors' research community in terms of (1) values as foundations for research; (2) critical reflection and (3) improving practice.

### **(1) Values as foundations for research**

Values are the foundation upon which the research group builds their lives in education. They (should) give us a firm footing to guide us through our educational lives and provide us with the overarching aims towards which we aspire. In Living Educational Theory research, how people live their values (or not), not only inspires the research but also brings about the standards of judgement by which the quality of research is evaluated as they engage in dialogue with others.

With many global examples of wars and other forms of violence around us that flow from values of hatred, dominance and destruction, making the effort to understand the values of others is essential in order to contribute to the dialogue for human flourishing.

Parbati Dhungana (Parbati) writes: Value as a word means: "what matters to me the most when making a positive change, improvement or contributing to developing something new". I think, in my context, there needs to be an ontological shift of understanding about values. For instance, usually in my context, value as a word is considered as a moral or ethical value which is abstract. However, for me value as a word can have multiple definitions for different people in different contexts and can be converted into an approach (e.g. collaborative approach), or into actions or activities (e.g. pair or group work) which can be measurable or assessed (e.g. indicators of rubrics for assessment).

Values are foundational in educational research because research is a values-laden process: a researcher conducts an investigative study within the bias of their values. Positivists would say that bias must be removed in a scientific project. Instead, as action researchers, we believe that removing subjectivity is unattainable. We aim towards utilising our capacity as critical thinkers and dialogic researchers to unearth any practical, political or hegemonic assumptions that might be made. An awareness of one's values and commitment to adhering to them, while recognizing that full adherence is not possible, is elemental to educational research as it is by its nature geared to learning and improvement.

We inhabit a world where professional learning has been 'colonised by regimes of performative accountability' (Mockler, 2024). Understandings around education have been narrowed by the notion of the 'auditable teacher', 'scripted curricula' and a reverence for standardisation, which has led to an understanding of education as being something that is measurable and quantifiable (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 2021). And yet, there is evidence to show that human and values-based forms of educational research that work towards a collective imaginary of the flourishing of humanity can disrupt the ever-growing emphasis on research that is based solely on statistically-driven results as outlined by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2021).

Parbati writes: I have explicitly integrated values (which used to be implicit or hidden) into my graduate programs, curriculum/courses and training manuals. I, also, encouraged my students and faculties to do the same.

Michelle Vaughan-McGovern (Michelle) and Jackie Delong (Jackie) say: We have acted, researched and revised our practices in action research cycles for the last 6 years as we have lived our value of 'loved into learning' with our students and mentees (Vaughan & Delong, 2019).

## **(2) Critical reflection**

With all of our work we consistently ask the questions, 'How do we know? What is the data that provides evidence for our claims to know, to have influenced ourselves, our community in our culture of inquiry, others outside our community and our local contexts and places of work?'

Parbati: In the Eastern Wisdom Traditional knowledge system, we can not get evidence of knowledge. I can see the practice, in everyday practices as evidence. I think knowledge that I get through experiences is beyond experiential knowledge as they are anubhuti (perhaps it means more than deep experiences). Only the one with the experience can know it, and once s/he tries to make sense, its originality fades. Seeking words or mediums of expression distorts its authentic sense/meaning. For instance, when I sit in our meetings, engage in dialogues, share our stories, experiences, thoughts, I sense a kind of positive vibe or authentic feelings which I rarely can articulate as they are. Perhaps I am unable to express fully here what I meant to say through words. So, if we are engaged in experiential knowledge, I think, we should not seek evidence of each knowledge claim. Perhaps, the actions of the knowledgeable person articulates that. Perhaps, trust is vital in a knowledge claim, particularly of cultural and spiritual knowledge.

Jackie writes: When I watched Rey, Michelle's PhD student, present his session at the CARN Conference in October 2024 in Malmo, Sweden, I saw the evidence of Michelle's influence and, potentially, mine. Rey shared the various strategies he had tried and found effective in engaging his students in math and dealing with math phobia in his classroom. I wish I had a recording of that excellent session, Student-Centred Instruction in a Liberal Math Course: Improving Students' Attitude Towards Math While Promoting Active Learning. He was so kind and loving and, for me, an example of 'loving students into learning' (Vaughan & DeLong, 2019)..



Rey presenting at CARN 2024

Michelle writes: In order to examine how our work contributes to the repair and remedy in education, I believe it is necessary to first examine what needs to be repaired or remedied within our individual contexts. While there are obvious wounds that need attention - discrimination, injustice, inequities of many forms - there are wounds on the individual level that we seek to address through loving connections and care in our work. Working in cultures of inquiry with doctoral students, I am able to be a part of a space that creates a safe environment where students can share the isolation or ostracization they may feel as educational researchers who focus on values of care within their work and practice. In many traditional doctoral programs, a “gold standard” of research or accepted ways of knowing are held up for students to work towards. Where is the opportunity to examine other ways of knowing? When students feel a misalignment between their own core values and those of their program, how do they proceed? These are topics of discussion in our culture of inquiry and the clip below (starting at minute 22) highlights Kimberly wrestling with the ideas about “good research” that have been presented to her and the tension she feels between meeting those expectations and the internal knowledge of what is important to her as a researcher.



(3) Living Theory Chat - 9.1.23 - YouTube

These are repair and remedy conversations that are essential to have with new scholars in the field to bring awareness to the repetition of standardized ways of knowing that are not inclusive of growing a diversity of scholars in the field of educational research.

### **(3) Improving practice**

The authors claim to integrate values in global contexts by encouraging and supporting action researchers to ask, research, and answer, ‘How can I improve my practice?’ They engage in critical dialogue in their own research community frequently and regularly.

Parbati says: For instance, I engage my classes of each course with the questions like-  
Who am I?

How can I improve what I have been doing?

What matters most to you?

The following excerpt from an article abstract is evidence of my living value, collaboration, that resulted into collaborative inquiry which explored multiple strategies of continuous professional transformation of educators.

The findings of our study revealed that collaborative inquiry, self-reflection, and lifelong learning are essential for professional growth, enabling educators to refine their practices in response to evolving educational needs. The study also revealed the chief strategies for continuous professional development as taking responsibility for given tasks, making contributions in collaborative tasks and taking self-initiative. Our study recommends the potential implications of these strategies as significant to the

early career teacher educators who aspire for continuous professional transformation in their university contexts (Dhungana et al, 2024).

Some members of our group mentor individuals in cultures of inquiry to increase their understanding of their values, to live them more fully and to see how values can explain their educational influence on their learning and the learning of others. Others in the community support teachers in their initial and graduate education programmes while others are involved in networks for action research. They argue that if they can improve themselves and live their values more fully, they can influence those in their area of influence to do the same.

Michelle writes- As a living educational theorist, I have seen the transformative potential of researching my practice and its underpinning values, and my role in academia has afforded me opportunities to publish my own work and have a voice within the field of educational research. However, opportunities to disseminate research are not as prevalent for classroom teachers, yet their voice and their data are essential to understanding and addressing the realities and needs of teachers in classrooms today. When scholars, leaders, and stakeholders rely on published research to shape their understanding of classroom experiences, the question arises: How can the outcomes be equitable when the voices of classroom teachers, as authors, are absent? In my work, I focus on creating spaces for classroom teachers to disseminate their work, examples include our teacher researcher [website](https://labschools.fau.edu/teacher-research/)<https://labschools.fau.edu/teacher-research/> and the latest special issue of Voices of Reform.

As an educational researcher, I believe we have a responsibility to understand the values guiding our work and how they contribute to our practice and research. As a doctoral mentor, I also work with doctoral students to develop knowledge of Living Educational Theory Research through the vehicle of a culture of inquiry. Within our culture of inquiry, we provide support in the form of encouragement and critique in two ways – verbally through sharing data analysis from individual projects and in writing through a shared Google Doc. This shared work allows each member additional time to reflect on each other’s work between sessions and challenge their written explanation of their values. Evidence of our work can be seen here in EJOLTS.

Jack Whitehead (Jack) says: The data to support the claim that I have integrated values in global contexts by asking, researching and answering, ‘How can I improve my practice?’ and supporting others to do so do, is offered in my writings between 1967-2025 at

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/writing.shtml>

The most recent evidence that I have engaged in critical dialogue in my own research community has been published and presented in Whitehead & Huxtable, (2024a&b) and Whitehead (2024a,b&c). Evidence that I am mentoring individuals in cultures of inquiry to increase their understandings of their values, to live them more fully and to see how values can explain their educational influence on their learning and the learning of others, can be accessed in the living posters homepage at

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2023.pdf>

with the most recent influences being with an Indonesian research group at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/indonesiangp23.pdf> ,

and the ‘Education, for Development and Sustainability’ group (EDS) with Bangladeshi and Norwegian Researchers at <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/eds24.pdf>

This evidence is related to the focus of the presentation on ‘Values-based Inquiry in Cross-cultural Research: towards Remedy and Repair’. Creating a living-educational-theory can involve overcoming the experience of living contradictions when values of human flourishing are negated. Hence the contribution of the evidence above towards remedy and repair.

Mairin Glenn (Mairin): I am a co-convenor of the Network for Educational Action Research in Ireland (NEARI). NEARI is a voluntary network for everyone interested in practitioner research (Glenn, 2021). We hold meetings ( NEARIMeets) twice a year. They are an opportunity for people interested in practitioner research to convene either face-to-face or online; to explore their practice; to generate theory from it; to engage in critical conversations and share stories of their learning. I see my values around social justice and fairness being enacted in my everyday practice as a network convenor. In particular, the silencing of teachers’ own voices as researchers should be a cause for grave concern for all involved in educational research. Evidence shows that their research accounts are being eroded from mainstream research reviews (Mertler 2024) and that their views appear to be of little worth to the academy (Martell et al. 2021). Yet, the teacher (and their students) in the classroom have a sharper insight into teaching and learning than any external researcher might have,

their voice is generally excluded from the general field of research. This exclusion is a form of epistemicide (de Santos, 2014).

While there are multitudinous reasons for the erosion of teachers' voices in the field of research, it is crucial now to ensure that classroom practitioner's research is not lost. In the NEARI network, we encourage all teachers who engage in research to consider themselves as knowledge generators and to make a conscious decision to disseminate their research accounts as part of their research commitment. We can hear Denise Delaney, a practising teacher, share her insights into her values in her practice as she presents at a NEARIMeet here: <https://tinyurl.com/mad4nnmh> She talks about how important her presentations at NEARIMeets are to help her critical thinking and her investigation around her practice. This video is one snippet of evidence to support our claim to know that we are living and contributing to values-based inquiry and supporting others to do so.

Parbati: In my everyday context, usually people say that we all are inquirers of pure consciousness. I am Self, Pure Consciousness or Brahma. Not being in the state of Brahma is the Egoist self. Perhaps the stage of being an egoist self is a state of living contradiction. Perhaps, it is one of the knowledges- everyday knowledge- like experiential knowledge. I believe in experiential knowledge; however, when I consciously contemplate on everyday practices through shrawana (listen), manana (analyse) and dhyana (meditate) (one of the ways of knowing) I find my everyday knowledge/practices almost true to me.

Jackie: For over 30 years I have been teaching, mentoring, encouraging and supporting practitioner-researchers like Michelle, Parbati, and Joachim in cultures of inquiry to uncover and live according to their values, understand their influence on themselves and others, conduct action research and create their own living-educational-theories. One recent example of my mentoring and influence was with Joachim Arnoy. In his paper, 'Appreciating my core values to more fully appreciate others: My living-educational-theory as a peace education researcher-practitioner', he wrote:

Jackie added jokingly "I think we need to give you some assertiveness training", and followed up with "I think you need to have more faith in your knowledge and your understanding and your capacity to theorise" (in conversation 10.6.2024)...



Jackie acknowledged that I spoke with far more authority in my writing now, which is a necessary trait of such writing. Later in the conversation she expressed “I think I’m hearing the influence on yourself, but we want to talk about the influence on others”. She called on me to look for evidence of my influence on others I have come across in my practice: “Where did you see people working towards the kind of direction that you want them to go in in peace education?” (in conversation 2.9.2024)...In such an introspective article, the influence of the value set I propose is sure to be more visible on myself – not least seeing as that is what I am attempting to show in the article. But in what way do my arrived-at educational values influence others in a constructive fashion? (Arnoy, 2025 in press)

## **6. Scholarly significance**

This paper is indicative of a new collective, educational imaginary (Drewell *et al.*, 2019) for Living Educational Theory Research (Whitehead, 2024a) with human values as explanatory principles for explaining educational influence which has the capacity to contribute to remedy and repair the damages done in our world to date. We authors are convinced that they can begin to build the bridge to just educational renewal (Annual Meeting Theme, 2025) through values-based educational action research.

We promote the worth and relevance of inquiry-based, values-led research and theory generation for decision-making by practitioners in all educational contexts. As the authors, we collaborate in inquiry-oriented activities and we encourage practitioners from global contexts to engage in action research that improves the quality of education in their professional contexts.

As a cross-cultural group, we have acted and reflected on our understanding of values in our own and in each other’s contexts including but not exclusive to Eastern Wisdom and Western Critical Traditions (Dhungana & Delong, in press); also, our hope is that others may see ways to live more fully according to their values, hold themselves accountable and work to ‘dismantle colonial structures’ (Zembylas, 2022). We have acted and researched the following:

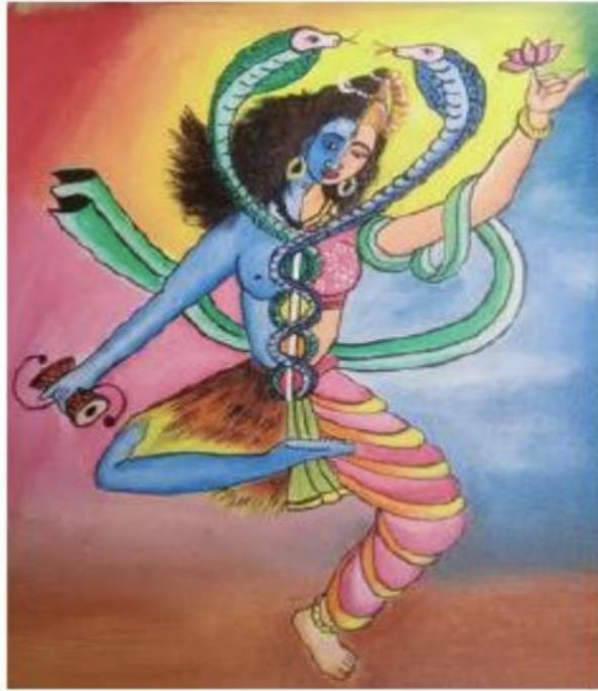
**Cultural Traditions:** While it is important to acknowledge the origins of our values, it is equally crucial to learn from the wisdom and insights of others, regardless of their cultural background. This approach fosters a more inclusive and holistic understanding of values.

Parbati: In my culture, there are many practices of storytelling through which knowledge of Eastern Wisdom Traditions (usually believed ) is transferred and will be transferred from generation to generation. Katha Upanishad, Bhagavad Geeta, Mahabharat are a few of them. I think, lecture-based teachings which are questioned as a teaching process in my context and seem to be against Nepali cultural practice may lead to loss of the cultural ways of knowing.

**Cross-Cultural Support:** Living Educational Theory Research cannot be done in isolation; it requires the support and encouragement of others. A cross-cultural group creates a culture of inquiry where members feel safe and comfortable being vulnerable. This environment allows for the sharing and addressing of challenging and uncomfortable concerns and for deep learning.

**Understanding Different Approaches:** The group has challenged itself to understand different ways of being and knowing, especially regarding Eastern and Western approaches and cultures, as well as colonization. This understanding enriches the research process and promotes harmony.

**Harmony and Ardhanarishwor:** The concept of Ardhanarishwor, a constellation of Purusha (Shiva) and Prakriti (Shakti), represents an inclusive, integrated, and harmonious whole. When logicity and intuitiveness are balanced, harmony is experienced. This balance is an explanatory principle of living values, such as harmony and equity (Dhungana & Delong, in press).



**Fig. 2 Ardhanarishwor: a metaphor of a Harmonious, Equitable Space**

**Cultural Lens:** Viewing oneself and one's values without a cultural lens can be challenging. However, being part of a cross-cultural group provides opportunities to dismantle imposed beliefs, values, and structures, leading to more authentic and fruitful scholarship.

As a cross-cultural group, we have acted and reflected on our understandings of values in our own and in each other's contexts. We locate the inclusion of practitioner-initiated, inquiry-based and values-led research in policy-making directed toward major social issues and for the flourishing of humanity. Our hope is that others may see ways to live more fully according to their values and hold themselves accountable (DeLong et al, 2021, 2022, 2023).

Until Jack Whitehead brought the work of Margaret Midgley (Robson, 2025) to our attention as a group composed primarily of women, we had not reflected on the significance of our feminine ways of knowing and being and its contribution to repair and remedy. When we focused on the subject, it prompted Parbati to share her work in gender inequality and recognize our influence as women: Cultural collaborative ways of knowing, doing, valuing and becoming: A 'Pandheri Guff' inquiry of Nepali women scholars.

Parbati shared: The article shows how we women scholars in universities are recognising our influences as women.

In Nepal, women are facing challenges in academia due to gender biases and limited opportunities. To this end, the authors introduce Pandheri Guff, a traditional Nepali method for discussing and addressing such issues...engaged in a cultural Nepali collaborative inquiry, combining their narratives to create meaning...This article argued that this cultural approach advances understanding of women's knowledge acquisition and enhances higher education learning by providing a collaborative and reflective space to overcome gender biases and improve learning experiences (Dhungana et al, 2025).

Our group is animated by values of social justice and equity and we work towards creating conditions for the flourishing of humanity as we enact our values in practice. As individuals, we are hewn from the crooked timber that is the imperfection of humanity, and we work towards remedying our work practices and enhancing them. We may never fully remedy or repair society as we see research as an ongoing, emergent process – never fully completed and never fully remedied or repaired. End-of-the road thinking and completion are the antithesis of educational thinking.

Embodied ways of knowing lie at the heart of Living Educational Theory research and are often seen as pertaining to women's ways of knowing. We question traditional, fixed, patriarchal assumptions as they undermine democracy, seeing education promote the privileged elites (hooks, 2010). Feminist perspectives in education promote critical thinking and make that all-important link between education and social justice. Feminist theory promotes a pedagogy of 'promise and possibility' while generating new powerful energies to classrooms (hooks, 2010, p.94). An emphasis on connection, dialogue, criticality and the ability to support others in a vision of a better world are interwoven with the practicality of the steps needed to set these processes in motion. These are characteristics of women's ways of knowing and Living Educational Theory research. We aim to transcend race, gender, and unhelpful categorisations as our research opens us up to mystery, creativity, humour and unending possibilities.

The significance of this research is focused on the meaning of practitioner researchers living values of human flourishing in cultures of inquiry with a Living Educational Theory Research approach to professional learning and development in education. The meanings are used in validated, evidence-based explanations of how to conduct values-based educational inquiry for human flourishing. The values-laden explanations show how focusing on values

contributes to the creation of a culture of inquiry improves educational decision-making at all levels in Just Educational Research with remedy and repair.

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