

**How do I contribute to cultivating equitable education systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory, Action Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a UK/global context?**

**A presentation in the 2022 AERA Symposium on 'Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century in global contexts through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry'.**

**Jack Whitehead, University of Cumbria, UK.**

**DRAFT 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 for planning meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 15:00 UK time.**

### **ABSTRACT**

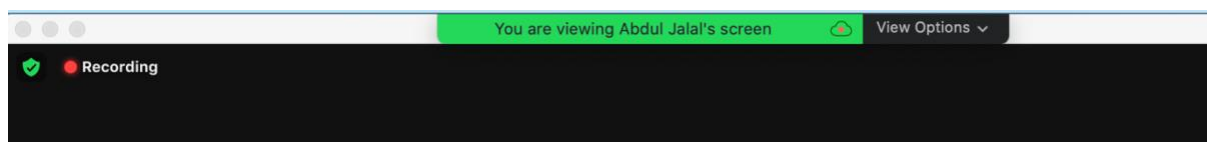
The purpose of this contribution is to explain how Living Educational Theory Research and Action Research can contribute to cultivating equitable education systems for the 21st century in cultures of educational inquiry in a uk/global context. The theoretical perspectives include those of Living Educational Theory Research, Action Research and Cultures of Inquiry. These perspectives include insights from understandings of ecology of knowledges and knowledge democracy in creating alternatives to neoliberalism with co-operative economies. The idea of cultures of educational inquiry (DeLong, 2022), used in this presentation includes: Said's (1993, p. xiv) idea that culture is a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought; Maxwell's (2021) distinction between knowledge-inquiry and wisdom-inquiry in creating a co-operative rational world; deSantos' (2014) analysis of epistemicide in relation to establishing equitable education systems and Bhattacharya's (2021) ideas on de/colonizing educational research.

With their focus on cultivating equitable education systems, the presentations in this 2022 symposium develop the research presented in a symposium at AERA 2021 on 'Accepting Educational Responsibility: Building Living Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in Global Contexts.' (DeLong, et al., 2021). Following the introduction, the organisation of this presentation follows the structure of the successful proposal for presentation at AERA 2022: methods, techniques and modes of inquiry; Data sources, evidence and materials; results; significance. This Symposium also builds on the Symposium on 'Raising Voices Using Dialogue as a Research Method in Living Theory Cultures of Inquiry' (DeLong, 2020; DeLong, et al. 2020) presented at the 2020 conference of the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN).

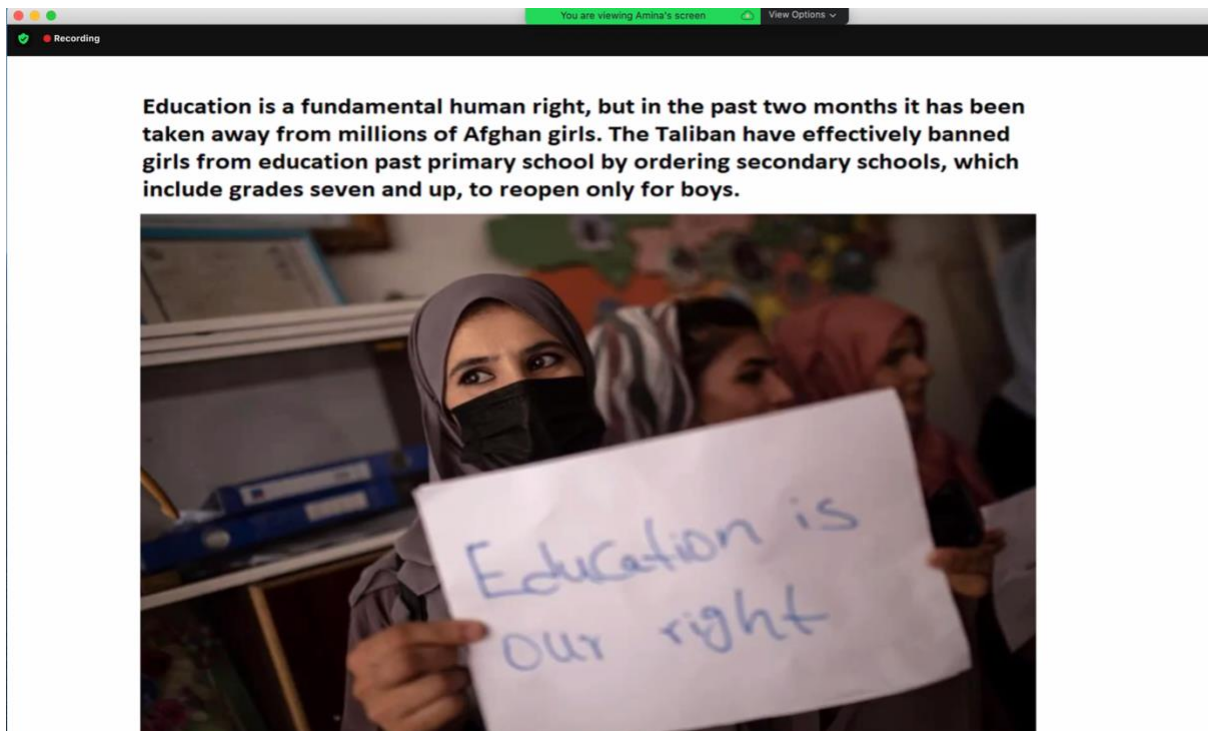
### **1. Introduction**

This presentation is based on two assumptions. The first is that educational research includes the generation of valid, evidence-based explanations of the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the educational practice is located as they ask, research and answer questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my educational practice with values of human flourishing?'. I have called these explanations, living-educational-theories

(Whitehead, 1989). The second is that there is a clear distinction between education research and educational research. Education research is research that is carried out within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the disciplinary forms and fields of education such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, politics and management of education, to contribute to these forms and fields of knowledge. Educational research is research that is carried out to contribute to educational knowledge with explanations of educational influences in learning with values of human flourishing. One of these values is equity with its related value of justice. The latest Living Educational Theory to be awarded, at the University of Lancaster in November 2021, was Arianna Briganti's thesis on 'My living-theory of International Development' ( see- <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/ABrigantiphd.pdf> ). Briganti highlighted the value of gender justice in her work and research in Afghanistan, through her work in the charity, Nove Onlus (see - <https://www.noveonlus.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/organisational-chart-censurato-29-luglio-2021.pdf> ). The University of Edinburgh invited Nove Onlus to take part in a webinar entitled Education in Afghanistan under the Taliban Rule, on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (see <https://www.ukfiet.org/events/education-in-afghanistan-under-taliban-rule-ceid-research-group-webinar/>). The opportunities for the education of girls and women in Afghanistan has changed dramatically since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. Arianna's colleague Amina shared her insights as a teacher committed to women's education before and after the second Taliban regime. Here are two slides from the presentations, to provide some details of the context in Afghanistan which must be taken into account when working out how to contribute to the generation of an equitable education system in Afghanistan:



- Just in the year 2020 through out Afghanistan more than 535 attacks on education facilities were held.
- A 17% increase of attacks over the education facilities compare to 2019.
- In October 2020 a suicide attack on education center in western Kabul killed 24 students.
- In November 2020, in another complex suicide attack on Kabul university 22 university students were Killed.
- On 9th May 2021, 60 people, mostly school girls were killed in a suicide attack close to a primary school in Kabul that took place when students were about to leave the classroom.



**Education is a fundamental human right, but in the past two months it has been taken away from millions of Afghan girls. The Taliban have effectively banned girls from education past primary school by ordering secondary schools, which include grades seven and up, to reopen only for boys.**

In asking, researching and answering such questions as 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I draw on Living Educational Theory Research and use Action-reflection Cycles. I accept Carr and Kemmis definition that:

Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 162).

In an action-reflection cycle an individual expresses a concern when values are not lived as fully as possible, possibilities for improving practice are imagined and an action plan chosen. The plan is acted on and data are gathered to enable the research to make an evidence-based judgement on the effectiveness of their actions in living their values as fully as possible. The research evaluates the effectiveness of their actions and an explanation for their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations is produced and shared in a validation group of some 3-8 peers. The questions asked by a validation group and directed at the validity of the explanations of educational influence are:

- i) How could I enhance the comprehensibility of my explanation?
- ii) How could I strengthen the evidence I use in my explanation of educational influence in learning?

- iii) How could I deepen and extend my understandings of the sociohistorical and sociocultural influences in my practice and understandings?
- iv) How could I enhance the authenticity of my explanation in showing that I am living my values as fully as possible.

I also accept Stringer's idea of community-based action research:

Community-based action research is always enacted through an explicit set of social values. In modern, democratic social contexts, it is seen as a process of inquiry that has the following characteristics:

- It is *democratic*, enabling the participation of all people.
- It is *equitable*, acknowledging people's equality of worth.
- It is *liberating*, providing freedom from oppressive, debilitating conditions.
- It is *life enhancing*, enabling the expression of people's full human potential.

(Stringer 1999: 9-10)

On the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2022 I participated in a 'NEARI Meet'. This is a meeting of the Network, Educational Action Research Ireland ( see <http://www.eari.ie/> )

NEARI is for all educational action researchers, whether beginners or lifelong researchers. It is a platform for sharing research stories and provides opportunities for personal and critical engagement as well as for resource sharing, It links action researchers within Ireland and with the broader global action research communities. Please check the **NEARI Ethics Statement** at <http://eariblog.edublogs.org/neari-network-for-educational-action-research-in-ireland/neari-ethical-statement/>.

The ethical statement sets out the standards for the good conduct of members of NEARI. The values below are those that I associate with the generation of an equitable education system:

Collegiality, support, critical engagement, mutual trust and respect are the cornerstones for the conduct of NEARI.

NEARI is grounded in values such as social justice, fairness, inclusion, democracy and collaboration. These umbrella values incorporate the core educational values of the Irish Teaching Council i.e. care, respect, integrity and trust.

Our standards are embedded in these ethical values, therefore NEARI participants are expected to commit to:

- **engaging in a respectful manner with one another, and in all references to NEARIMeets and discussion,**
- **abiding by all child protection guidelines**
- **protecting the identity of people/institutions, mentioned in dialogue at NEARIMeets or online (if these people and institutions so desire)**

- **ensuring a safe environment where people feel free to express their thoughts and ideas in an open manner**
- **seeking permission and giving due acknowledgment to participants whose comments may be used in both academic and non-academic writing**

My focus on 'Cultures of Educational Inquiry in UK/global contexts' is because of my research interest in the question, 'How do I contribute to enhancing the systemic influence of Living Educational Theory Research in enhancing the flow of values of human flourishing?' To have a systemic influence, that is sustained, I believe that it is important to embody the ideas one wishes to spread within cultures. I was introduced to the idea of a culture of inquiry by DeLong (2002) with her idea that one of the basic tenets of DeLong's philosophy is that the development of a culture for improving learning rests upon supporting the knowledge-creating capacity in each individual in the system. Hence, DeLong started with her own. Her thesis sets out a claim to know her own learning in her educational inquiry, 'How can I improve my practice...?'

I include within my understanding of a culture of educational inquiry, Maxwell's distinction between knowledge-inquiry and wisdom-inquiry in creating a co-operative rational world. (Whitehead, 2021). Maxwell claims that 'knowledge-inquiry' has been successful in enabling humans to learn about the universe, and about ourselves and other forms of life as a part of the universe. However, he argues that knowledge-inquiry has failed in enabling us to learn how to create a genuinely civilized, enlightened, wise world. He offers 'wisdom-inquiry' as a way of solving the second great problem of learning. My own 'wisdom-inquiry' is focused on my question of improving my practice with values of human flourishing. It is this focus on values of human flourishing that distinguishes my educational research as contributing now only to educational knowledge but also to the creation of a civilized, enlightened and wise world.

I have analysed elsewhere (Whitehead, 2015) my contribution to a Living Educational Theory Research approach within a culture of inquiry that takes into account deSantos' (2014) analysis of Epistemicide. I am also including within my understanding of a culture of inquiry Bhattacharya's (2021) ideas on de/colonizing educational research.

I agree with Bhattacharya (p.1) that de/colonizing educational research requires understanding western intellectual canon-building dating back to the European Enlightenment and disrupting such superiority of knowledge construction through knowledge democracy, intellectual diversity, and pluriversity. I also agree that:

De/colonizing educational research must include a global agenda while simultaneously marking specific localized agendas. This is how the violence in settler colonial and once-colonized nations can be disrupted, mitigated, and eradicated in

educational research, education, and nation-states. Calling for liminal and border work and recognizing that colonizing forces of oppression are not static, de/colonizing educational research advocates for an understanding of fluidity in resistance. (Bhattacharya, 2021, p.1)

Hence, my concern with gender justice and the recognition of cultural differences in values of human flourishing in the sections below. In this recognition I include insights from understandings of ecology of knowledges and knowledge democracy in creating alternatives to neoliberalism, with co-operative economies (Whitehead, 2021) such as the one proposed by Brown (2021):

The primary perspective is that a Living Theory research approach, can contribute to the generation of a publicly validated, professional knowledgebase of professional educators in their living-educational-theories, as contributions to the evolution of a global educational knowledge-base. The theoretical tools include insights from understandings of ecology of knowledges and knowledge democracy in creating alternatives to neoliberalism with co- operative economies.

My research into the question, 'How do I contribute to cultivating equitable education systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory, Action Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a UK/global context?', also includes insights from contributions to the 2020 Symposium , at the 2020 Collaborative Action Research Network Conference, on Improving our world by raising the voices of action researchers through living-educational-theories.

The three authors share their recent research on encouraging and supporting practitioner-researchers to create their own living-educational-theories of practitioner-researchers for informal research and for legitimation by universities around the world. Using action-reflection cycles they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I contribute to improving our world as I support others to create their own living-educational-theories? These practitioner-researchers show how their explanations of educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations, have emerged from supporting global practitioner-researchers. Raising the voices of Living Educational Theory researchers in the contexts of the UK, Canada, Nepal, USA, South Africa and the Republic of Ireland is shown to be contributing to the extending global influences of Living Educational Theory research with values of human flourishing in educational conversations. Digital visual data are used to clarify and communicate the meanings of the expression of the ontological values of the researchers in their explanations of educational influences in learning including being loved into learning. The implications are analysed in terms of original contributions to educational knowledge and of their roles as global citizens (Delong, et al. 2020 -

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/carn/jdd2020CARN231020.pdf> )

## **2. Methods, techniques, and modes of inquiry**

The methods used for enhancing the robustness of the validity and rigor of the explanations of educational influences in learning with values of human flourishing, include the use of Habermas' (1976) four criteria of social validity and Winter's (1989) six criteria for enhancing rigor, of dialectical and reflexive critique, risk, plural structure, multiple resource and theory practice transformation. Contributors to this symposium and participants in the presentations are being encouraged to test the validity of claims made in the presentation, with principles of validity and rigour. The principles of validity have been listed above. An example of the application of the six principles for enhancing rigor has been provided by Kok (1991).

The methods include the use of empathetic resonance for analysing digital visual data with visual narratives, to develop a shared understanding of relational values of human flourishing, including equity, in valid explanations of educational influences in learning.

**Using the method of empathetic resonance for clarifying and communicating the meanings of embodied expressions of values of human flourishing.**

I am using the method of empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate the meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy that flows through me as I experience the pleasure of preparing for this 2022 AERA Symposium. This flow of life-affirming energy is accompanied by each individual's unique constellation of values that are expressed as values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. The method involves moving a cursor backwards and forwards along a digital video and pausing at the moment of greatest resonance. The still images below capture these moments in relation to the expression of flows of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry that for me carries hope for the flourishing of humanity. Each individual's presentation to the symposium provides evidence of their value of equity as a value of human flourishing.



Images from left to right of Michelle Vaughan, Swaroop Rawal, Jacqueline Delong, Parbati Dhunana and Jack Whitehead from the planning meeting of 29/11/21

The 24 minute video of the planning conversation on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 can be accessed at <https://youtu.be/-T1UTymYGYE>

The shared expressions around 15:27 minutes clarifies and communicates our meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry.

On checking the validity of this claim with the participants, I received this response from Parbati:

On 23 Jan 2022, at 05:04, Parbati Dhunana <parupdl77@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Jack,



The image that you captured was perfectly fine as my smile is evidence of my value of equity (and harmony) as a value of human flourishing. I think we are conducting a participatory, collaborative, or cooperative inquiry to develop equitable strategies to improve what we have been doing which is enhancing our life-affirming energies. Within our community of "culture of inquiry" we have been getting a loving, caring, and respectful learning environment. According to the Eastern Wisdom Traditions, which includes Yogic knowledge traditions of South East Asia, 'love, care, and respect' (I understand them as my living value, "living love") are connected to the Heart Chakra. As the heart lies at the center of the body, we are activating our Heart Chakra by 'living love' and thereby influencing all the remaining 6 Chakras of our body.

Warmly

**Parbati Dhungana**

PhD Scholar, Kathmandu University, School of Education

Email: [parupdl77@gmail.com](mailto:parupdl77@gmail.com); [parbati@kusoed.edu.np](mailto:parbati@kusoed.edu.np)

Cell no. 977-9849148259

Web Page: <http://www.spanglefish.com/parbati-livingvalues/index.asp>

Michelle responded:

On 23 Jan 2022, at 15:16, Michelle Vaughan <mvaugha3@fau.edu> wrote:

Thank you for sending Jack, I agree with Parbati that the moments you capture truly embody the feelings of the "loving, caring, and respectful learning environment" that has been organically (perhaps purposefully?) created through this work. While we are each working on our own lines of inquiry within this culture of inquiry, I believe our intentional love and support for one another shine through in these images. Thank you for sharing, it brought a smile to my face!

**Michelle Vaughan, Ed.D.**

Associate Professor

M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction Program Coordinator

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Florida Atlantic University

777 Glades Road

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Jackie responded

On 23 Jan 2022, at 15:27, Jackie Delong <jddelong@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi, Jack. I agree with Parbati and Michelle. I experience that flow of life-affirming energy in our culture of inquiry every time we meet.

I see in my visual expression and in the expressions of each of us the pleasure of being together and our purposeful work together to do our part to improve our lives and positively influence the world around us in our contexts, our social formations.



I have included empathetic resonance in my paper now.

Love, Jackie

In this planning meeting we shared our brief responses to the question: “In my context, what kinds of teaching and learning processes foster equity, disrupt systemic inequality, and deepen learning?”

On the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 we continued to plan and to share our responses to this question:



30:21 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cM7WEP3ON-E>

The shared expressions around 1:55 minutes clarifies and communicates our meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry. Parbati missed this meeting because of a prior engagement.

In the planning meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022, I checked that everyone was OK with me locating our relationships as cooperative and strategic relationships as we contribute to 'Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century in global contexts through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry'?



29:53 minute video at <https://youtu.be/uIBXAKHiazM>

The shared expressions around 0.11 minutes clarifies and communicates our meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry.

Following the discussion, I decided not to characterise my relationships as 'strategic' because of the danger of objectifying the other as being used by me, rather than co-operating within a sustaining commitment to work together in achieving shared values over time.

In the planning meeting of Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the dialogue included information from Swaroop Rawal about her activities in influencing school curricula within an Indian context with her understandings of life-skills education and value of equity. Parbati Dhungana made explicit, in the dialogue, some intentions for her research, and mentioned the Eastern idea of Chakras in relation to my focus on a flow of life-affirming energy in the relationships between us. I am also aware of the Chinese notion of Chi to express a life-affirming energy.



24:42 minute video at <https://youtu.be/MbR2s6nWLZU>

The shared expressions around this focus of 21:01 minutes clarifies and communicates our meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry.

**The modes of inquiry** draw insights from the methodologies of: auto-ethnography in stressing the importance of cultural influences in explanations of educational influences in learning; critical social constructivism in recognising the destructive influences of capitalism in realising the values of human flourishing within a co-operative rational world; action research with action-reflection cycles; narrative in constructing a valid, evidence-based story with an explanation of educational influences in learning; self-study in including 'I' within the research question.

All the participants in the symposium are exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering their questions, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' within their particular cultural contexts, whilst also relating to the values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity as global citizens. They are using dialogue as a research method in their contributions to developing cultures of inquiry. These contributions include their living-educational-theories with values of human flourishing.

All the participants recognise the importance of researching within and contributing to a culture of inquiry with the qualities defined by Delong (2022). We have provided digital visual data, from our planning conversations for this symposium at AERA 2022, to clarify and communicate what we are meaning by the shared expression of a life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry. Each participant has also shared their evidence-based explanation of how they are contributing to 'Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century in global contexts through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry' (see <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/aera2022sessionprop.pdf> )

### **3. Data sources, evidence and materials**

The data sources I use include over 50 Living Educational Theory Research doctoral and masters theses and dissertations that examine the educational influences in learning of practitioner-researchers who have accepted an educational responsibility for building Living Theory cultures of educational inquiry in global contexts with values of human flourishing, including equity.

You can access these theses and dissertations at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

You will see that the title of this collection is 'Creating and Contributing to an Ecology of Knowledges'. I have explained elsewhere (Whitehead, 2020) how Living Educational Theory Research is contributing to 'knowledge mobilization' an 'ecology of knowledges' and 'knowledge democracy'. I agree with Rowell's point about knowledge democracy:

Knowledge democracy is a concept that has grown out of transformations in the politics of knowledge production. The concept is rooted in resistance to the monopolisation of expert knowledge producers in relation to global north-south splits in the politics of development from

the mid-20th century up to our time. The democratisation of knowledge production and the expansion of challenges to all forms of elitist domination have been joined at the hip for at least the last 50 years, fueled by a recognition of the transformative power of knowledge democratisation. (Rowell, 2018)

Each thesis in the collection has been accredited as making an original contribution to knowledge. The archive of living-educational-theories, provides the materials that I am using in researching my question, 'How do I contribute to cultivating equitable education systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory, Action Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a UK/global context?.'

One of my contributions has been, and is continuing, to support doctoral researchers in exploring the implications of questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' with values of human flourishing, in making original contributions to knowledge. Each of the theses includes an acknowledgement of the use that has been made of ideas from my own research in the creation of a living-educational-theory.

#### **4. Results**

The results have been documented and presented in this symposium in:

1. Jacqueline Delong (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a Canadian/global context.
2. Jack Whitehead (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory, Action Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a UK/global context.
3. Parbati Dhungana (2022). Living educational values for enhancing self-educating strategies for equitable education.
4. Michelle Vaughan (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a USA/global context.
5. Swaroop Rawal (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in an Indian /global context.

The results include the generation of a new epistemology for educational knowledge (Schon, 1995) that is grounded in the values of accepting educational responsibility, active citizenship and living cultures of inquiry (Whitehead, 2013). The epistemology includes the values-laden, relationally dynamic, explanatory principles that are used in explaining the educational influences in contributing to cultivating equitable education systems. The explanation includes the explication of a Living Educational Theory approach to continuing professional development (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016). In this approach the embodied knowledges of professional practitioners are made explicit in a way that is consistent with

Snow's (2001) call to make public the practical knowledge of educators. The results include the use of empathetic resonance with digital visual data from the symposium planning conversations, to clarify and communicate the meanings of embodied expressions of a flow of life-affirming energy within our culture of inquiry. This flow of energy, together with our values carries hope for the flourishing of humanity as we generate and share our living-educational theories from within our own contexts. Whilst we are acting locally we are communicating as global citizens.

## 5. Significance

In our successful submission we stated that:

The scholarly significance is focused on a distinction between education research and educational research. Using de Santos' (2014) idea of 'epistemicide', the influence of education researchers on educational researchers is analysed in terms of the replacement by education researchers of the practical principles used by educational researchers to explain their educational influences in learning. Evidence of this replacement is provided from social pressures in the American and British Educational Research Associations where much evidence resides of inequalities in opportunities, research and participation. The scientific significance is focused on "utilizing new forms of data and data analytics" in the use of dialogue as research method, digital visual data and the method of empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate the meanings of the embodied expressions of the values that constitute human flourishing and that are used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning.

Since submitting our proposal in June 2021 my thoughts, about the significance of my own contribution to the symposium, have evolved. In a planning conversation of the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022, Michelle Vaughan explained that her latest draft had left blank and open the significance section. This opened up for me the following response about the significance of my own contribution and the symposium as a whole on 'Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century in global contexts through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry'.

I shall focus my new understandings of the significance on the qualities of 'recognition' and 'participation' that I am experienced with my co-presenters in the Symposium, in contributing to the cultivation of equitable education systems through Living Educational Theory Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry.

Fukuyama (1992) has focused on the importance of 'thymos' that stands for the recognition by one person of the worth of another:

Human beings seek recognition of their own worth, or of the people, things, or principles that they invest with worth. The desire for recognition, and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame and pride, are parts of the human

personality critical to political life. According to Hegel, they are what drives the whole historical process. (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xvii)

I am grounding my value of equity within this expression of value by one person with another. I shall explain below the importance of understanding the importance of both lexical definitions of value and ostensive expressions of meanings of value through digital visual data on the relationships in our planning meetings for this symposium.

The second quality is that of 'participation' I am suggesting that contributing to the cultivation of equitable education systems requires a quality of participation that expresses as fully as possible values of humanity in contributing to the generation and sustaining of Living Educational Theory Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry.

Skolimowski (1994) has two forms of expression for communication meanings of the participatory mind. The first is a lexical definition of some of the main characteristics.

The participatory research is the art of:

*-empathy – communion with the object of enquiry – learning to use its language –using its language – talking to the object of our enquiry (although this may at first sound strange, let us remember that stranger things are now happening in this life) – penetrating from within – in-dwelling in the other – imaginative hypothesis which leads to the art of identification – transformation of one's consciousness so that it becomes part of the consciousness of the other.*

Skolimowski claims, and I agree, that we know most of these attributes of participatory from our own personal experience. (pp. 160-161).

Skolimowski also uses the following poetic form of expression to complement his lexical understanding of participation when he says:

Let us summarize our discourse so far in a Hymn to Participation.

### ***Hymn To Participation***

*Participation is the song of creation.*

*Participation is the whispering of life unfolding.*

*Participation is the common thread of all evolution.*

*Participation is the common prayer of amoebas and angels.*

*Participation is the oxygen fuelling the process of transcendence.*

*Participation is the song of our individual experiences.*

*Whenever life emerges participation blossoms,*

*As the joy of life,*

*As the bond of solidarity,*

*As the pool from which all living beings drink,*

*As the yeast promoting growth and maturity.*

*When life discovered the meaning of participation  
It had discovered its most important modus for growth.  
Utterly simple and utterly profound is the meaning of participation.  
Nothing happens in evolution without participation.  
The language of solidarity is the language of participation.*

*To be aware is to participate.  
To be asleep is to be estranged from participation.  
To be alive is to sail on the wings of participation.  
To be morose is have one's wings of participation clipped.*

*Love is the deepest form of participation.  
Where there is love there is participation.  
Loveless participation is an anaemic involvement.  
To participate is the first step to loving.*

*How deeply can you enter into the immensity of the universe?  
As deeply as you can embrace it in the arms of your participation.  
Everything else is a mere shadow. The real thing  
Is our immense journey of becoming through participation. (p.158-9)*

In the section above, on using digital visual data with empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate the meanings of embodied values, Parbati responded to my claims about the values express on the video with:

On 23 Jan 2022, at 05:04, Parbati Dhungana <parupdl77@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Jack,  
The image that you captured was perfectly fine as my smile is evidence of my value of equity (and harmony) as a value of human flourishing. I think we are conducting a participatory, collaborative, or cooperative inquiry to develop equitable strategies to improve what we have been doing which is enhancing our life-affirming energies. Within our community of "culture of inquiry" we have been getting a loving, caring, and respectful learning environment. According to the Eastern Wisdom Traditions, which includes Yogic knowledge traditions of South East Asia, 'love, care, and respect' (I understand them as my living value, "living love") are connected to the Heart Chakra. As the heart lies at the center of the body, we are activating our Heart Chakra by 'living love' and thereby influencing all the remaining 6 Chakras of our body.

All five of us have acknowledge that we have experienced ourselves and each other being recognised in the fundamental way described by Fukuyama but given ostensive expressions of embodied meaning through the digital visual data.

In term of our expressions of our values of participation we have all contributed an evidence-based explanation of how we are cultivating equitable education systems through



contributing to Living Educational Theory Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry. In the results section I listed our following contributions to the Symposium. I think our contributions are worth repeating as they provide the evidence of the educational influences of our present contributions to the generation of equitable educational systems:

1. Jacqueline Delong (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a Canadian/global context.
2. Jack Whitehead (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory, Action Research, Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a UK/global context.
3. Parbati Dhungana (2022). Living educational values for enhancing self-educating strategies for equitable education.
4. Michelle Vaughan (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in a USA/global context.
5. Swaroop Rawal (2022). Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century through Living Educational Theory Cultures of Educational Inquiry in an Indian /global context.

The significance of the symposium is also closely related to Maxwell's point about our primary task to be about 'intelligently conducted public education about what our problems are, and what we need to do to solve them.'

On 10 Jan 2022, at 18:32, Maxwell, Nicholas <nicholas.maxwell@UCL.AC.UK> wrote in The Guardian – a British Newspaper:

Dear Friend of Wisdom,

Today, *The Guardian* published a letter of mine on the urgent need to transform universities. The letter is a response to an article by George Monbiot in which he expressed dismay at the way the media put trivial gossip above reporting about the impending disasters of the climate crisis. Here is my letter:

The problem is not so much the media, as George Monbiot suggests (For us climate campaigners, Don't Look Up is painfully real, 5th January), as academia. Judged from the standpoint of helping us solve the climate crisis, academia is an intellectual and practical disaster. If academia was rationally and effectively devoted to helping us solve the climate crisis, and other global problems, it would give absolute intellectual priority to the tasks of articulating the problems, proposing, and critically assessing possible solutions – possible actions, policies, political programmes, ways of living. The pursuit of knowledge would be important but secondary. A central task would be to engage actively with the public to promote *action designed to solve the climate crisis* – above all, put pressure on the government to act. But universities do not remotely proceed in such a way. They are devoted to the pursuit and application of knowledge; they do not take their primary task to be intelligently conducted public education about what our

problems are, and what we need to do to solve them. As I have argued in book after book, article after article, for nearly 50 years, we face climate catastrophe because of the gross and profoundly damaging structural irrationality of academia, which prohibits giving priority to our all-important problems of living.

All good wishes,

Nick

Website: [www.ucl.ac.uk/from-knowledge-to-wisdom](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/from-knowledge-to-wisdom)

Publications online: <http://philpapers.org/profile/17092>

<http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/view/people/ANMAX22.date.html>

At the heart of this symposium, at the 2022 Conference of the American Educational Research Association, is the importance of recognising the educational responsibility of educational researchers for holding themselves to account for living the values of human flourishing as fully as possible. I have claimed that the values include 'recognition' and 'participation'. The responsibility for living these values as fully as possible includes asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice with values of human flourishing?'. It includes using educational research methods of cooperative dialogue and empathetic resonance, with digital visual data from practice, to clarify the meanings of the embodied values that are expressed in practice and used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. It includes using the methods, described above, for enhancing the validity and rigour of explanations of educational influences in learning in contributions to educational knowledge.

The scientific significance of the symposium is in the dialogical form of the evidence-based explanation of our co-operative contributions to a global, living culture of educational inquiry with values of human flourishing, including equity.

The scholarly significance is in the contribution, not only to a new epistemology of educational practice (Whitehead, 2013). It also demonstrates how individuals can exercise their educational responsibilities in exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I, individually and/or in cooperation with others, enhance the difference Living Educational Theory research can make to a culture of inquiry concerned with extending equity in human flourishing?' (DeLong, et al 2021).

At the heart of generating and sustaining equitable educational systems, we have placed the centrality of acknowledging each researchers' educational responsibility to ask, research and answer questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice with values of human flourishing?' This responsibility includes each individual's engagement in co-operative dialogues in contributing their living-educational-theories to Cultures of Educational Inquiry. These living-educational-theories have included the use of digital visual data to clarify the meanings of embodied expression of the values of human flourishing that each individual uses as explanatory principles in their explanations of educational influences in learning within their own context and culture of inquiry. We have stressed the importance of co-operative dialogues with values of human flourishing in

overcoming colonizing tendencies in generating our own educational community of educational researchers.

On writing a previous draft of this paper I agree with Rawal (2022, p. 7) that:

The pandemic has changed the way we teach. I believe it will be a long time before we can use the term post-pandemic. With the shift from the familiar face-to-face teaching to the strange screen-to-screen format, all aspects of teaching and learning are being tested. Online learning will continue to be the major method of learning even after schools and colleges reopen. This blended pedagogy mechanism, called the phygital, is going to be the way of the future. Thus, if we are committed to strengthening education, then it is critical to empower teachers. We will have to invest in the necessary capacity building to take advantage of the potential of remote and blended learning.

Additionally, the pandemic has exposed many inequities that already existed in the education landscape. If we desire to take education forward into the 21st century, the learner must be central to the process. However, there are no ready-made solutions, technological or otherwise. We will have to take collective actions to strengthen public education and expand global solidarity.

The challenge now is to come out of crisis mode and to think beyond the 'new normal'. If educators re-invent, then students will benefit from educational experiences that not only educate holistically but also prepare them as citizens to engage with a swiftly changing, diverse world.

The effects of the Pandemic in the UK have been highlighted in a recent report Clough (2022)

There is no doubt that the pandemic has both exposed and compounded inequalities in education, according to whether pupils attend state or independent schools. Independent schools educate more children from higher socio-economic backgrounds. Generally, their students have benefited from more consistent access to tablets and computers to complete their online schoolwork during lockdown. Moreover, independent schools have been able to offer more comprehensive online teaching. This is largely due to their having greater resources, a smaller number of children to teach, and higher expectations from parents due to fees.

In contrast, state school pupils' backgrounds are more varied, with a lot of students being from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This impacts upon access to online teaching, with more pupils not having access to a computer or tablet to complete their online work. Statistically, pupils from state schools have been shown to be less likely to receive satisfactory online teaching, which is concerning as the state sector looks after many disadvantaged pupils. The government's definition of 'disadvantaged' pupils includes all those eligible for the pupil premium and those who 'vulnerable', such as those with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, a social worker, or those assessed by local authorities as being otherwise vulnerable. A proportionately higher number of children in these groups have more disrupted

access to school even in normal times and have struggled to access appropriate online resources and teaching during lockdown. (p. 2)

On the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 the United Nations reported that some 2,000, 000 refugees have fled from Ukraine into neighbouring countries.

Until the 24<sup>th</sup> February I focused on the significance of the co-vid 19 Pandemic for the development of equitable education systems. After the 24<sup>th</sup> February, whilst the implications of the pandemic, are still very significant, I must now take into account the significance for the symposium of invasion of Ukraine for the development of equitable education systems.

Pulizer-winning photojournalist Lynsey Addario defended as a “war crime” a shocking image she took of a Ukrainian family killed by Russian troops which was printed by *The New York Times* on its front page on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022. The photograph below shows four family members, including two children, lying dead as they just reached capital Kyiv from the neighbouring Irpin



Writing and researching as a global citizen I recognise that global significance of this invasion on the development of equitable education systems. Because of this recognition I wrote the following letter to the Ambassador to the UK of the Russian Federation calling for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine.

**70 Bloomfield Avenue**

**Bath BA2 3AA**

26<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**Ambassador of the Russian Federation**

**6/7 Kensington Palace Gardens,**

**London, W8, 4QS.**

**Re: Russian invasion of. Ukraine**

Members of the Bath & West Co-operative Party, at their members' meeting this morning have asked me to write to you to express our horror and concern at the invasion of Ukraine by Russian armed forces, causing death to innocent civilians, a threat to world peace, and the total undermining of democratic norms and international co-operation.

**We are calling for the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces**, with due reparations to the Ukrainian people, and isolation of the Russian regime until this achieved.

We are expressing to you, the Russian ambassador to the UK, our incomprehension and total condemnation of Russia's actions, and we writing to the Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK to express our total solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

Your sincerely,



Jack Whitehead

(Secretary, Bath and West Cooperative Party)

Copy to: Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK; David Lammy, Shadow Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs.

Being able to enhance educational influences in our own contexts with Living Educational Theory research whilst in other contexts, such as Ukraine and Afghanistan, inequities between education systems are being increased, is our global reality. Whilst we are continuing, within our own social contexts, to contribute to the generation of equitable education systems, this very contribution is increasing inequities between education systems in the global contexts we have described.

I was born on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1944. Paris had been liberated some 4 days earlier whilst the concentration camps such as Auschwitz were murdering millions of Jews, Russians, Romanies and others. Whilst knowing the inhumanity that human beings are capable of, I feel the hope expressed by survivors of the camps, such as Edith Eger (2017) and Victor Frankl (1959)

which involved identifying a purpose in life to feel positive about, and then immersively imagining that outcome.

I agree with Eger:

What happened can never be forgotten and can never be changed. But over time I learned that I can choose how to respond to the past. I can be miserable, or I can be hopeful – I can be depressed, or I can be happy. We always have that choice, that opportunity for control. *I'm here, this is now*, I have learned to tell myself, over and over until the panicky feeling begins to ease. (p. 7).

The hope at the heart of *The Choice* is accompanied by a flow of life-affirming energy connected to Edith's love of dance. *The Choice* describes experiences in which resilience, hope and courage are held together with appalling experiences that negate the values that carry hope for humanity. *The Choice* also explains, in a self-reflexive process, the learning of how to respond to the past in a way that clarifies and communicates the values that carry hope.

And here you are. Here you are! In the sacred present. I can't heal you – or anyone – but I can celebrate your choice to dismantle the prison in your mind, brick by brick. You can't change what happened, you can't change what you did or what was done to you. But you can choose how you live *now*.  
My precious, you can choose to be free. (p. 360).

Frankl stressed the importance of identifying a purpose in life to feel positive about, and then immersively imagining that outcome. My own choice of education continues to provide a purpose in life, I continue to feel positive about the contribution of education to worthwhile forms of life. As this symposium shows, this purpose enables me to form and sustain loving and co-operative relationships. Within these relationships I continue to work and research to enhance the flow of values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity through Living Educational Theory Research. I hope this contribution serves to encourage you to accept the invitation to extend this co-operative research project.

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