

Enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research.

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Abstract

This paper is focused on academic citizenship, service and community engagement in enhancing the flow of values of human flourishing with Living Educational Theory Research. It is intended as a response to the invitation to pause, engage reflexively and ask deep, critical questions about change and growth, post- pandemic. Our response involves the re-imagining re-envisioning and re-creating new futures for higher education in relation to the questions 'Is it time for universities to grow up? why? how?'.

A Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing professional development in higher education includes the generation of values-laden explanations of educational influence in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. Our evidence and values-laden explanation shows how we are growing through learning from our past and reimagining an horizon of education for the flourishing of humanity. The explanation includes a dialectical rationality, grounded in contradiction, that moves beyond technical rationality in contributing to social and epistemic justice. We address questions about what we needed to unlearn and relearn in contributing to a transformative and democratic higher education in a continuous process of becoming with values of human flourishing.

We clarify the values of an Ubuntu way of living in community-based educational research in enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement. We use a method of empathetic resonance with digital visual data to clarify and communicate the meanings of embodied values in the course of their emergence in our educational practices. Whilst we include our individual explanations of educational influences in learning, these are grounded in community values and practices that focus on the meanings of values of human flourishing. Data is drawn from over 60 Living Educational Theory doctorates that have been accredited by Universities around the world. Readers are encouraged to create their own living-posters and contribute these to the global context of living-posters from Universities around the world at <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2021.pdf> .

Keywords: Living Educational Theory Research; Values-laden explanations of educational influences in learning; Professional Development in Higher Education.

Context

With its focus on academic citizenship, service and community engagement in enhancing the flow of values of human flourishing with Living Educational Theory Research, this paper builds on the 2011 Inaugural Nelson Mandela Lecture at Durban University of Technology (Whitehead 2011) and Charles' (2007) doctoral research into 'How Can I Bring Ubuntu As A Living Standard of Judgement Into The Academy? Moving Beyond Decolonisation Through Societal Reidentification And Guiltless Recognition'. It draws on the arguments in Whitehead and Huxtable (2022) on 'Developing a Living Educational Theory Research Approach to Community-Based Educational Research'.

The paper is intended as a response to the conference organisers' invitation to pause, engage reflexively and ask deep, critical questions about change and growth, post- pandemic. Our response involves the re-imagining re-envisioning and re-creating new futures for higher education in relation to the questions 'Is it time for universities to grow up? why? how?'. This includes applying Huxtable's (2022) arguments for distinguishing between 'educational psychology as a distinct field of knowledge and practice' and 'the practice of psychology in Education', why it is important and possible ways forward, to other disciplines of education in distinguishing them from educational research.

We begin by asking 'Is it time for universities to: Group Up? Why? How? and by distinguishing a Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing professional development in higher education. The approach includes the generation of values-laden explanations of educational influence in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. We clarify what we are meaning by values of human flourishing and explain how the embodied expressions of these values can be clarified and communicated using digital visual data and a process of empathetic resonance. This includes the clarification and communication of the values of an Ubuntu way of living in community-based educational research in enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement.

We accept Donald Schon's (1995) arguments about the need for a new epistemology for the new scholarship. Hence our interest in epistemology. The explanations in living-educational-theories include a dialectical rationality, grounded in contradiction, that moves beyond technical rationality in contributing to social and epistemic justice. Questions are raised about what might be needed to unlearn and relearn by practitioner-researchers in higher education, in contributing to a transformative and democratic higher education in a continuous process of becoming with values of human flourishing.

In justifying our claims to be enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research, we include our individual explanations of educational influences in learning, these are grounded in community values and practices that focus on the meanings of values of human flourishing. Data is drawn from over 60 Living Educational Theory doctorates that have been accredited by Universities around the world, as evidence in justifying our claims.

In conclusion participants and readers are encouraged to create their own living-posters and contribute these to the global context of living-posters from Universities around the world at <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2021.pdf> and to participate in the growth of a social movement that is committed to enhancing our own and each others'

academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research.

Is it Time for Universities to: Grow Up? Why? How?

Grow Up? – What is it to ‘grow up?’

As a person ‘grows up’ their concern moves from a focus on enhancing their own flourishing, to *include* a concern for with the flourishing of others (such as family, ‘local’ community) and eventually expands to *include* a concern for the flourishing of those they don’t directly know or have connection with (such Humanity and our planet) and helping others do so too.

A person does not turn away from their concern for their own flourishing – they have as much right to be recognised as any other human being - rather they hold together their concern for their own flourishing, the flourishing of others and the flourishing of Humanity and the planet together and seek to find ways of working to resolve tensions where the flourishing of one may appear to be at odds with the flourishing of another.

For universities to grow up its concern needs to shift from a concern to enhance its own flourishing to *include* a concern to contribute to the flourishing of its ‘local’ community and to *include* a concern to contribute to the flourishing of Humanity and our planet and helping others (people and social formations large and small) to do so too and create knowledge of humane ways of resolving tensions. Part of this growing up, involves the embrace of processes of knowledge creation that move beyond the boundaries of a disciplines approach to knowledge creation. Huxtable (2022) has explained how academics in higher education can move beyond their disciplinary boundaries in their knowledge creation that includes researching their community engagement with values of human flourishing.

Why?

Because universities have particular responsibilities as places of higher education - seats of advanced academic, intellectual and scholarly learning to create knowledge, not only of local value but also of potentially universal value.

How?

In this paper we offer Living Educational Theory Research as continual professional development (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016) and community-based educational research (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2022) as one approach to how universities might begin to re-imagine, re-envision and re-create new futures as a place of higher education

What has Living Educational Theory Research to offer enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research?

What distinguishes a Living Educational Theory Research approach, which is of relevance here?

A Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing professional development in higher education includes the generation of values-laden explanations of educational influence in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. The research presented here is with a view to attracting the attention of those employed by a university as a professional practitioner for example as a lecturer/tutor/research supervisor/ teacher educator, community-based educational researcher or community engagement practitioner.

A Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing professional development in higher education includes:

- Practitioners researching into their practice to understand and improve their educational influences in learning and mitigate the negative consequences.
- The clarification and communication of embodied meanings of values of human flourishing, which give the practitioner's practice and life meaning and purpose.
- Recognising where the practitioner experiences them self as a living contradiction and/or their values of human flourishing contradicted by others or circumstance and seeks to improve matters.
- Collecting data which enables them to understand the consequences of their efforts and see where/whether they are having any educational influence in the learning people and communities, for example, to enhance their academic citizenship, service and community engagement in the process and how they might improve matters.
- The generation of valid values-laden explanations of educational influence in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located.
- Making public the knowledge they generate and contributing to a global educational knowledgebase and discourse for the benefit of all.

Implications of adopting a Living Educational Theory Research approach to re-imagining re-envisioning and re-creating new futures for higher education

Data is drawn from over 60 Living Educational Theory doctorates that have been accredited by Universities around the world and the body of knowledge generated through Living Educational Theory Research which has been published in peer-reviewed journals in relation to the conference questions:

- How can we grow through learning from our past, our recent past -- and 'reimagine a horizon of education outside the current paradigm' (Nxumalo, Nayak & Tuck, 2022, p. 99) for the flourishing of humanity and our world, including our post-human world?

Over 50 Living Educational Theory doctorates accessible from <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> demonstrate the academic legitimacy of the knowledge created by practitioner-researchers who are asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing with values of human

flourishing?’ These doctorates are contributing to an ecology of knowledges that recognises the interdependence of the human and non-human worlds.

- How can we grow beyond technocratic rationality, utilitarianism, performativity and managerialism to strive toward social and epistemic justice, freedom and transformation of all sectors of education and society?

Each Living Educational Theory doctorate grows beyond technocratic rationality with its grounding in contradictions and dialectical rationalities (Whitehead, 2013; Whitehead & Rayner, 2009) that face the tensions of living in particular contexts with pressures to deny the values of human flourishing.

- What do we need to unlearn and relearn; how do we grow and create – to tap the possibilities and potentialities that exist for a truly transformative and democratic higher education, society and world that remains in-becoming (Waghid, 2017)?

Living Educational Theory Researchers need to unlearn what they have been taught as the dominant epistemologies in contributions to knowledge that are structured through propositional logic, the elimination of the ‘I’ of the researcher and the aim that the knowledge-creation should be values free. They need to relearn and explore the possibilities for knowledge creation of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, ‘How do I improve what I am doing with values of human flourishing?’, in which the ‘I’ is experienced as a living contradiction when values are negated in practice.

Enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research

A Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing professional development in higher education includes the generation of values-laden explanations of educational influence in one’s own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. We clarify what we are meaning by values of human flourishing in relation to an Ubuntu way of living and explain how the embodied expressions of these values can be clarified and communicated using digital visual data and a process of empathetic resonance. This includes the clarification and communication of the values of an Ubuntu way of living in community-based educational research in enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement. We relate the values of an Ubuntu way of living to what we are meaning by ‘values of human flourishing’.

Clarifying the values of an Ubuntu way of living in community-based educational research, in enhancing academic citizenship, service and community is perhaps best illustrated by Eden Charles’ (2007) doctoral inquiry into the question, ‘*How Can I bring Ubuntu As A Living Standard Of Judgment Into The Academy? Moving Beyond Decolonisation Through Societal Reidentification And Guiltless Recognition.*’ Charles presents the clarification of his Ubuntu way of living using digital visual data and his art in a process of empathetic resonance. In drawing insights from Ubuntu in the sense that ‘I am because we are and we are because I am’, we are emphasising that our individual explanations of educational influences in learning, are connected to community values and practices that focus on the meanings of values of human flourishing. In drawing insights from Ubuntu, using Charles’

ideas of moving beyond decolonisation we recognise a potential criticism that in using these insights we should avoid contributing to colonisation in the sense of taking meanings of Ubuntu out of context and applying them without any recognition of their indigenous meanings. Hence our concern to check with indigenous groups that we are drawing insights from Ubuntu in an appropriate way that is contributing to values of human flourishing.

Our explanations of educational influences in learning, drawing insights from Ubuntu, includes a dialectical rationality, grounded in contradiction, that moves beyond technical rationality in contributing to social and epistemic justice (Whitehead, 2013; Whitehead & Rayner, 2009).

In enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research we are emphasising that our academic citizenship is focused on the generation and sharing of the knowledge we are generating with values of human flourishing in our community engagement.

How the research was/is being undertaken - Research methodology and methods

We think it worth repeating that we are using a Living Educational Theory approach to continuing professional development in higher education (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016). The approach includes the generation of values-laden explanations of educational influence in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. We clarify what we are meaning by values of human flourishing and explain how the embodied expressions of these values can be clarified and communicated using digital visual data and a process of empathetic resonance. This includes the clarification and communication of the values of an Ubuntu way of living in community-based educational research in enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement.

Summary of the findings

We accept Donald Schon's (1995) arguments, building on Boyer's (1990) 'Scholarship Reconsidered', about the need for a new epistemology for the new scholarship. Hence our interest in epistemology. The explanations in living-educational-theories include a dialectical rationality, grounded in contradiction, that moves beyond technical rationality in contributing to social and epistemic justice. Questions are raised about what might be needed to unlearn and relearn by practitioner-researchers in higher education, in contributing to a transformative and democratic higher education in a continuous process of becoming with values of human flourishing:

If we intend to pursue the "new forms of scholarship" that Ernest Boyer presents in his *Scholarship Reconsidered*, we cannot avoid questions of epistemology, since the new forms of scholarship he describes challenge the epistemology built into the modern research university.

In addition to basic research--Boyer's scholarship of discovery, which "has come to be viewed as the first and most essential form of scholarship, with other functions flowing from it"--Boyer envisions three new forms of scholarship.

* The scholarship of integration gives meaning to isolated facts, "putting them into perspective ... making connections across disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too"

* In the scholarship of application, "the scholar asks `How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as to institutions?'"

* The scholarship of teaching, which "begins with what the teacher knows," means not only transmitting knowledge but transforming and extending it as well"

If integration, application, and teaching are to be taken as "forms of scholarship" in other than a Pickwickian sense, the new scholars must produce knowledge that is testably valid, according to criteria of appropriate rigor, and their claims to knowledge must lend themselves to intellectual debate within academic (among other) communities of inquiry. But what are these kinds of knowledge, claims to validity, and criteria of appropriate rigor? And how do they stand in relation to the "old" scholarship of discovery?

I argue in this article that if the new scholarship is to mean anything, it must imply a kind of action research with norms of its own, which will conflict with the norms of technical rationality--the prevailing epistemology built into the research universities. (Schon, 1995, p. 27)

Value of the findings and to whom will they be of use

We have explained how Living Educational Theory Research can contribute to enhancing academic citizenship, service and community engagement. This research included our individual explanations of educational influences in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which our practice is located. The explanations are grounded in community values and practices that focus on the meanings of values of human flourishing. A Data Archive was presented of over 60 Living Educational Theory doctorates that have been accredited by Universities around the world, as evidence in justifying our claims. These can be used by others as they create their own living-educational-theories.

Interim conclusion

In conclusion participants and readers are encouraged to create their own living-posters and contribute these to the global context of living-posters from Universities around the world at <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2021.pdf> and to participate in the growth of a social movement that is committed to enhancing our own and each others' academic citizenship, service and community engagement with Living Educational Theory Research.

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