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Reflecting on values: Christian values and ‘institutional body language’ in Indian
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Session 2 – Presentation (14.00 – 14.30) Thursday May 11th
2N24 - Session lead: Sally Elton-Chalcraft
Room: Meeting Room 123

Title: Reflecting on Values and ‘institutional body language’ in Indian schools- implications for the teacher educator

Lead Presenter: Sally Elton-Chalcraft – University of Cumbria

Co-presenter: Paul Cammack – University of Cumbria

Aim: For delegates to consider the impact of values on teacher educators with reference to a case study in Indian Christian foundation schools.

Content: The lead investigator spent two consecutive summers visiting Christian foundation schools in five Indian states and this paper focuses on the impact of Christian values on practice using West-Burnham and Davis (2014) tree metaphor, where education is seen as a moral activity.

The research team reflected on the interconnectedness of values, the Christian religion, the context of the Indian education system and the impact on practice. We explored how espoused values, a teacher’s faith and the ‘institutional body language’ of the school (Dadzie 2000), are enacted in practice.

I did not set out to gauge the extent to which teachers showed a shared belief system rooted or inspired by their faith, rather, I listened to their stories using IPA approach and identified themes which arose - ‘making sense of them making sense of their views’, (Smith and Osborne 2003) and some views were shared while others were in stark contrast.

The findings illustrate how the thirty-four participants narrate firstly the impact of their faith on teaching and learning and secondly the influence of the Christian values in their schools given that the majority of learners are predominantly Hindu, (with some from Muslim, Christian or Sikh backgrounds) all within the context of Indian governmental policy prohibiting proselytising.

Three themes emerged which are mapped on to West-Burnham and Davis tree metaphor (2014):

1. *Christian values provide deep ethical roots.*
2. *Biblical texts and Christian doctrine informs decision making – the tree trunk, and the day to day action – the branches*
3. *Differences and commonalities*

The presentation highlights the tension of conflicting values - Indian Christian teachers sharing God’s love whilst adhering to governmental policy not to coerce non-Christians to convert.

Thinking deeply about teacher education: We are thinking deeply about values in teacher education; reflecting on the impact of espoused personal values, adherence to governmental policy, and implications for practice in an Indian context. This has implications for our role as teacher educators where governmental directives may conflict with a teacher’s values.

The country/ies to which the presentation relates: India and Britain