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*Developments in living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty,  
globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory research approach*

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A virtual presentation to the ‘International Conference on Poverty  
Globalisation and Schooling: A holistic approach’ at the University of Central  
Florida on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016.



44 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0b56mUX5dQ>

The powerpoint slides with video-clip to support this virtual presentation can  
be accessed at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jwufc200216.pptx>

## Abstract

In my presentation to the 2015 Conference on *Poverty Globalization and Schooling: A Holistic Approach* I focused on: 'Living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory research approach'. The details of this presentation can be accessed from:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwucfpaper260115.pdf> . I distinguished: a living-educational-theory from Living Theory research; a holistic approach; schooling and educating; globalization; living-global-citizenship; economic and moral poverty. I also showed how to access living-educational-theories and the Educational Journal of Living Theories from <http://www.actionresearch.net> .

In this year's presentation I shall focus on **developments** in this Living Theory research approach with a focus on the importance of creating a profession of **Master Educators** that responds to issues of poverty, globalisation and schooling. I shall explain the importance of creating your own living-educational-theories as knowledge-creators, through Living Theory research with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

## **Introduction**

In this year's presentation I shall present **developments** in living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory research approach. These developments are focused on the importance of participating in a social movement to influence poverty, globalization and schooling. This social movement involves the creation of a profession of master educators as knowledge-creators in realizing the value of living-global-citizenship as fully as possible.

Before I present these development I shall just refresh your memories of, or introduce you to, the central ideas from last year's presentation where I distinguished: a living-educational theory; educational researchers from education researchers; globalization; poverty; a holistic approach with Living Theory research.

I shall then move on to developments in the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers whilst both resisting the pressures of education researchers to suppress these knowledge-creating capacities, and using insights from their theories; creating a profession of master educators; recognising and accrediting master educators; living-global-citizenship; Living Theory research as a holistic social movement with living-posters and multi-screen SKYPE.

## **Refreshing or Introducing**

- i) A holistic approach with Living Theory research:

- A holistic approach is characterized by the belief that the parts of something are intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole.
- A holistic approach to Living Theory research is distinguished by an awareness of a dynamic and inclusive relationship between the individual and collective.

ii) Distinguishing a living-educational-theory:

- A living-educational-theory is an individual's values-based explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located.

iii) Educational researchers and education researchers:

- **Educational researchers** explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence the practice and understandings.
- **Education researcher** produced explanations in terms of the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, economics, leadership and administration and other disciplines and fields of education.

iv) globalization:

- The economic rationality of globalisation can lead to de-valuation and de-moralisation with the removal of values that carry hope for the

flourishing of humanity from a discourse. Economic rationality must not be permitted to hinder the full expression of living-global-citizenship.

v) poverty (economic and moral):

- Different conceptions of poverty – economic and moral.
- Transcending constraints of economic poverty.
- How do I use my living and lived experience to influence the economic independence in others?
- [Bonnie Kaplan - How do I use my living and lived experience to influence creative economic independence in others?](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/kaplan/KaplanMTech032014.pdf)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/kaplan/KaplanMTech032014.pdf>
- [Arianna Briganti - Generating my own living-theory: An interim report.](http://ejolts.net/node/262)
- <http://ejolts.net/node/262>

### **Developments in Living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory research approach**

These developments are focused on: Developing the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers whilst both resisting the pressures of education researchers to suppress the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers, and at the same time using insights from their theories; creating a profession of master educators; recognising and accrediting master educators; living-global-citizenship; Living Theory research as a holistic social movement.

i) Developing the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers whilst both resisting the pressures of education researchers in the American

and British Educational Research Associations, and valuing some of their insights.

- Felice Levine, the Executive Director of AERA and Geoff Whitty, in his Presidential Address to BERA, have both urged their organisations to give prominence to Education Research rather than Educational Research.

The main reason for stressing the importance of the knowledge-creating capacities of practitioner-researchers is because a mistake in the disciplines approach to educational theory. This mistake led to **the replacement** of the practical principles that you and I use to explain our educational influence, by conceptual principles from the disciplines of education, such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. Paul Hirst (1983) described this mistake when he said that in many characterisations of educational theory, his own included, the generalisations from practical experience that have as their justification the results of individual activities and practices were:

.... at best pragmatic maxims having a first crude and superficial justification in practice that in any rationally developed theory would be replaced by principles with more fundamental, theoretical justification. That now seems to me to be a mistake. Rationally defensible practical principles, I suggest, must of their nature stand up to such practical tests and without that are necessarily inadequate." (p. 18)

This replacement of the practical principles that you and I use to explain our educational influences in learning is implicit in the move to give prominence to education research in both the American and British Educational Research Associations. In fulfilling our responsibilities as educators to contribute to the educational knowledge-base we might need to resist the pressure of education

researchers to explain our educational influences within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of education researchers.

In focusing on the knowledge-creating capacities of practitioner-researchers I shall concentrate on the creation of a profession of Master Educators and their responsibilities to contribute to the professional knowledge-base of education. The reason for this focus is because of the potential offered by the embodied knowledge of educators to transform the education knowledge-base, in Universities and Colleges, into an educational knowledge-base. I am claiming that this transformation can be brought about by Universities, Colleges and the professional bodies of teachers and educators, recognising and accrediting the embodied knowledge of educators, in the form of their living-educational-theories. These living-theories go beyond the knowledge generated and accredited in Universities and College by education researchers, in the creation of an educational knowledge-base of education.

## **ii) Creating a Profession of Master Educators**

- The Florida Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC )... supports the academic achievement of our students by assuring that our educators are professionally qualified for highly effective instruction. Florida educators must be certified to teach in our public schools and in many of our private schools. Educators include classroom teachers, school administrators, and other support professionals, such as guidance counsellors and media specialists. The Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC) is committed to providing timely, accurate, and efficient services to all constituents. <http://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/certification>

The Florida Bureau of Educator Certification already recognizes the term ‘educator’ as does the Council of Educators in South Africa. Professional

organisations in such countries as the Republic of Ireland and Scotland have Teaching Councils that do not, as yet, recognize the professionalism of educators. I am suggesting that the Florida Bureau of Educator Certification could lead the world in recognize and accrediting master educators in partnerships with University and College master programmes. The idea of an educator I am working with below goes beyond ideas of training, instruction and efficiency.

### **iii) Recognising and Accrediting Master Educators**

- This recognition and accreditation requires a partnership between organisations such as the Florida Bureau of Educator Certification and Universities and Colleges.  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/educators/floridamastereducators.pdf>
- Evidence on how this can be done can be accessed at:
- Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2016) Creating a profession of Educators with living-theories of master and doctor educators. *Gifted Education International*, 32(1) 6-25.  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/gei2015/geicontents2016.pdf>

If we are to work together in a social movement to develop holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling with Living Theory research I suggest that we hold ourselves accountable for living as fully as possible the value of living-global-citizenship.

### **iv) Living Global Citizenship**

- Living Global Citizenship is focused on living as fully as possible the values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

- See the living-global-citizenship weblinks on pages 2-3 of <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/IofEsem021214.pdf>
- Coombs, S., Potts, M., Whitehead, J. (2014) 'International Educational Development and Learning through Sustainable Partnerships: Living Global Citizenship' London; Palgrave Macmillan

As part of the creation of a social movement with the value of living-global-citizenship I am suggesting that we should create and share our living-educational-theories, with insights from different cultural understandings (Bruce-Ferguson, 2008). I am thinking particularly, but not exclusively of those that draw on the African idea of Ubuntu (Charles, 2007; Phillips, 2011 ), that draw on East Asian Epistemologies (Inoue, 2012; 2015) and those that embrace the idea from indigenous South American cultures of Ñaupaj + mampuni (Galindo, 2011). Ñaupaj means past and when we add mampuni to the other word it means towards the future taking the past with us, or creating the future based in the past. Each of the living-educational-theories at <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> includes a unique constellation of values as explanatory principles and draws insights from different cultural understandings.

#### **v) Creating, sharing and accessing living-educational-theories;**

- **The Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS)**

<http://ejolts.net>

- **Living-theory doctoral theses**

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

- **Living-theory master's units and dissertations**

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/mastermod.shtml>

Within our living-educational-theories we can explain our individual educational influences in the learning of social formations. The world's

problems of poverty, globalization and schooling need a global social movement. Hence the importance of developing Living Theory research as a holistic social movement.

**vi) Living Theory research as a holistic social movement.**

I think that it is worth emphasizing that:

- A holistic approach is characterized by the belief that the parts of something are intimately interconnected and explicable in relationships between the individual and collective.
- A holistic approach to Living Theory research is distinguished by a relationally dynamic and inclusive awareness of the mutual influences of both the individual and the collective.

In addressing issues of poverty I explained in my 2015 presentation that I am developing ideas presented at the 2013 Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association:

The presentation accepts and responds to the purpose of the theme of AERA 2013 to signal that ‘we must engage and examine the complexities of poverty, as well as challenge oversimplifications (eg) in how we study and address poverty and its consequences.’ (Tierney & Renn, 2012, p.2). It also demonstrates how...to advance knowledge about education, to encourage scholarly inquiry related to education, and to promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good.” (Ball and Tyson, 2011). The presentation attempts to address the question, How can living educational theory in a culture of inquiry address the negative effect of impoverished educational environments to improve educational practice, educational research and the social/public good? (DeLong, et.al, 2013)

At the heart of Living Theory research is an understanding of self that includes a relational dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative (Rayner, 2004, 2006). I use the shorthand ‘i~we~i’ to represent this relationally dynamic awareness of self. It is grounded in the creation of unique, living-educational-theories of practitioner-researchers in enquiries of the kind, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’ in which the values that form the standards by which ‘improvement’ is recognised. These values include living-global-citizenship and living-cultures-of- inquiry (DeLong, 2002). I use i~we when there are just two of us in the we; i~we~i shows there are more individuals and points to the developing complexity of relationships when the collective comprises more than two people.

I raised seven questions in last year’s presentation (Whitehead,2015). These including the following two questions, to which I shall now respond with developments over the past year (2015-16).

- i) How can i~we~i contribute to overcoming the poverty of traditional academic texts that omit embodied expressions of energy and values in explanations of educational influence.
- ii) How can i~we~i demonstrate the educational influence of digital multi-screen and multi-media narratives in contributing to a globally influential movement of living-theory practitioners and researchers?

Living-theories draw insight from a wide range of theoretical frameworks from different forms and fields of knowledge and practice. The global significance is that the living-theories are being created and academically legitimated in international contexts including, Europe, North and South America, Australia, India, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, China, Japan, Malaya, Nepal, New Zealand and South Africa.

There is still much to do in generating social movements of Living Theory researchers that are transforming social contexts and organisations. For example, consider the following answer to part of question i) above, How can i~we~i contribute to overcoming the poverty of traditional academic texts that omit embodied expressions of energy and values in explanations of educational influence? In responding to this question I shall see if I can communicate what I am meaning by the embodied expressions of energy-flowing, relationally dynamic, ontological values, by pointing to their expression in the research of Arianna Briganti (2015) a living-theorist, development-economist.

The extract from this research below, is focused on Arianna's (and her husband's) responses to meeting four destitute young girls in Ethiopia. Arianna's living-theory research is a significant development in Living Theory research as she engages with issues of poverty and globalisation in creating her living-theory of being a development-economist:

In 2005 while I was working in Ethiopia, in Addis Ababa, I met four very young destitute girls (age four, six, nine and twelve) who were marginalised by the society, with no access to housing, education or sufficient food. Three of the girls were living with their mother in a slum- like area of the city's outskirts and all of them received support from the missionary nuns living nearby.

These three girls Semira, Salwa and Fozjia became my husband's and my foster- daughters while we have adopted the youngest Marta. More than ten years later in Italy, one of them Salwa (currently 19 years old) had a conversation with me recorded by my husband, about our family, her two sisters and mother, on how to protect vulnerable people and how life can change for the better if disadvantaged individuals are given a chance. The relationship with our four daughters and the values we exposed them to throughout the years such as inclusion, gender-equality, cultural cohesion,

equity, educational development and respect for diversities, have become a crucial part of my living-theory. My living-theory here refers to my way of individually contributing to strengthen the global social movement, which aims at a fairer world.

Our conversation is divided into three short videos (video 5, video 6, video 7) in which we both express our values and how we are influencing each other. At minutes 1:15 of the first clip Salwa recalls when her sisters and herself were living in poverty and isolation. From minutes 3:05 to 6:57 she explains how education has changed her life and talks about her goals in life. Her goals are to complete her education and help poor people. From 7:00 to 9:25 Salwa is showing the impact that the help we provided her with has transformed in her into a desire to help other people in the same condition she used to inhabit. She is already helping underprivileged people living in her neighbourhood together with her classmates and teachers. In the second clip Salwa talks about what is she doing to fight for people's right. From minutes 2:28 to 9:00 the focus is on young girls being victims of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual violence and early marriage. Her words resonate with the sense of togetherness I discussed with my peer researchers in the video above and show that she is being influenced and is influencing the people around her. Salwa claims that knowing that other young women are fighting for their rights give her strength. At minutes 8:47 she adds 'I can do it, even better'.

The experience with our daughters is providing my life with a deep sense of authenticity. In fact their lives represent a testimony to the nature and the quality of our relationship, gives me hope for the future and assure me that what I am doing is not fighting for the past, but for a brighter future, in which my girls will be protagonists. My living-theory starts at the grassroots-level, evolves into something that transcends the academic, and impacts on those I have the privilege to meet along the way.



Video 5. [Salwa Ismail and Arianna Briganti- part 1](#)(Briganti, 2015)

Video 6. [Salwa Ismail and Arianna Briganti-part 2](#) (Briganti, 2015)

Video 7. [Salwa Ismail and Arianna Briganti-part 3](#)(Briganti, 2015)

My conversation with my PhD supervisor Moira Laidlaw offers feedback on the interaction between Salwa and myself and provides a form of triangulation. In the videos (video 8 and video 9) Moira speaks on how she has perceived my discussion with Salwa. She also senses this empathetic resonance between us and the life-affirming energy flowing from and to us (Whitehead, 2015, p. 250). My understanding of empathetic resonance echoes Whitehead's (ibid.) who defines it as 'the feeling of the immediate presence of the other in expressing the living values that the other experiences as giving meaning and purpose to their life'. Salwa's and my relational value emerges clearly in our conversation according to her response at minutes 1:48 to 4:33 and 10:29 to 11:30. When I look at the video again I believe that for both Salwa and myself the quality of our relationship emerges very visibly in the clip, unveils the dialectic peaceful space I am discussing in this narrative. I would argue that this shows a consistency between my espoused values and my lived values. Salwa and I have recreated that peaceful space and we inhabit it together.

Whilst you have my ethical permission to download the clips from YouTube onto your desktop using download helper in the Firefox Browser, this is not permitted by the YouTube rules of use. If you do access the clip by other means you can drag and drop it into quicktime and move the cursor backwards and forward to get a sense of embodied expressions of meanings of ontological values. By ontological values I am meaning the values that are used to give meaning and purpose to an individual's life.

I shall now answer question ii) above, How can i~we~i demonstrate the educational influence of digital multi-screen and multi-media narratives in contributing to a globally influential movement of living-theory practitioners and researchers? The answer is based on evidence from a Town Hall Meeting, convened by Jacqueline Delong (DeLong, Whitehead and Huxtable, 2015) at the Action Research Network of the America's Conference on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and a workshop convened by Sonia Hutchison (2015) at the Action Learning, Action Research Association (ALARA) Conference in Pretoria, South Africa on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

Here is the Abstract for the Town Hall Meeting with access to the living-posters of practitioner-researchers that were presented in the meeting to show the potential of multi-screen SKYPE conversations and multi-media narratives in developing Living Theory research as a social movement. This shows the major development since last year's keynote in Living Theory research as a social movement:

**Come and join our live conversation with an international community of practitioner action researchers.**

**ABSTRACT:**

*The intent of this Town Hall meeting was to engage practitioner-researchers across the globe as attendees and virtually through the internet in a living-culture-of-inquiry through values-based dialogue in creating living-theories*

*(explanations of our educational influence). In preparation for the session, participants created visual representations of their research in the form of e-posters for location on the Educational Journal Of Living Theories (EJOLTs) site - see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arna/arnaposters270415.pdf> .*

*Multi-screen SKYPE conversations are shown to be influencing our perceptions of the idea that 'I am because we are/we are because I am' or i~we for shorthand and enabling us to 'pool' our life-affirming and life-enhancing energies, as well as sharing and evolving our relationally dynamic Culture of Inquiry and Living Theory research.*

*In small groups of 6-7, we share our experience with these sorts of dialogues and invite others to participate in conversations that influence our teaching and research practice and encourage use of this interactive process as a model for joint action, learning with and from each other. (see*

*<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arna/jdjwmhTH2015.pdf> )*

Sonia Hutchison is the Chief Executive Officer the Carers' Centre in Bath and North East Somerset in the UK who is creating a living-theory of care-giving (Hutchison, 2013). Sonia describes her workshop at the ALARA conference with its focus on developing new ways of working that participants could use to improve their research.

I will use multi-modal resources with clips from Skype, pictures and video to introduce the participants to the research group and give practical knowledge on how to use these technologies to set up their own groups. I will expand participants understanding of Living Theory research methodology and how to apply it to their own settings. I will support participants in generating their own ideas and plans to put their learning into action in their own settings.

Sonia included in her workshop a multi-screen SKYPE conversation and the living-poster homepage at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arna/arnaposters270415.pdf> as part of the demonstration of the influence of Research Groups in developing Living Theory research as a global movement.

## **Outcomes**

The outcomes of developments in living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling have focused on the developments in a Living Theory research approach as a social movement. These outcomes have emerged from the 2015 presentation that focused on understanding a Living Theory research paradigm developed from over 40 living-theory doctorates that have been legitimated in different universities around the world. Each of these doctorates has been legitimated by the Academy as having made an original contribution to knowledge. They include a living-theory of undergraduate medical education in South Africa; a life-skills programme in India; a curriculum for the healing nurse in Japan; passion for compassion in the health service in the UK; a new epistemology of educational knowledge; a living culture of inquiry in Canada; the living-theories of practitioner-researchers from around the world published in the Educational Journal of Living Theories (2008-present), accessible from <http://ejolts.net>; a living theory of caring; a living theory of counseling and a reflexive study of the continuous practice improvement of a global professional.

The developments of Living Theory research as a social movement, since February 2015 have focused on ‘living-theory-posters’ and multi-screen SKYPEs as research methods. Being clear about the research question(s) has implications for the methodology and methods to be used in answering the question. The developments in the research questions since February 2015 are focused on the relational dynamic

between the individual and the collection in enhancing the influence of Living Theory research as a social movement:

- iii) How can i~we~i contribute to overcoming the poverty of traditional academic texts that omit embodied expressions of energy and values in explanations of educational influence.
- iv) How can i~we~i demonstrate the educational influence of digital multi-screen and multi-media narratives in contributing to a globally influential movement of living-theory practitioners and researchers?

The developments of Living Theory research as a social movement, since February 2015 have also focused on the creation of a profession of master educators through the creation, recognition and legitimation of the living-theories of master educators.

I am hoping to be able to report on further developments at the 2017 Action Research Network of the Americas and the Global Action Research Assembly to be held in Cartagena, Colombia in June 2017. I am suggesting that all participants in this year's conference at the University of Central Florida could create and share their living-posters in preparation for the 2017 conference in Cartagena and encourage their students and colleagues to do the same. In this way we could extend the community of living-theory practitioner-researchers and focus on enhancing the global educational influences of Living Theory research as a social movement that is enhancing the flow of values and understanding that are carrying hope for the flourishing of humanity. Many thanks for the opportunity to share these ideas with you and I am looking forward to continuing our conversations and to learning more about your own contributions to our educational influences in the creation of a holistic approach to issues of poverty, globalization and schooling.

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