Living Educational Theory Research in the Real World: Results of reaching out to people and communities

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Abstract

The results of reaching out to people and communities are analysed in terms of the living-educational-theories created, shared and legitimated by action-researchers around the world. The analysis is focused on the creation of a 'collective imaginary' and the explication of an extended epistemology in the explanations of educational influences in learning. These valid, evidence and values-based explanations have been produced by practitioner-researchers as they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my professional practice with values of human flourishing?".

The 'collective imaginary' is focused on the flows of life-affirming energy with values of human flourishing as living-educational-theories are created and shared. It includes the idea of 'best-loved self' from the work of Schwab (1954/1978) and Craig (2013, 2020) and the idea of ~i~we~I~us~ relationships from the work of Mounter (2023).

The extended epistemologies are focused on the units of appraisal, standards of judgement and living logics of these explanations of educational influences in learning. The units of appraisal include community and individually generated explanations of educational influences in learning. The living-standards of judgement are influenced by cultural influences where the standards of judgement are influenced by the context of their use. The living-logics distinguish forms of rationality that include insights from propositional and dialectical theories. The rationalities of living-logics transcend the rejections of both traditions of propositional and dialectical inquiry that have been made by both traditions of inquiry.

The embodied expressions of the meanings of values of human flourishing that are used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning are clarified and communicated using digital visual data from educational practice with a process of empathetic resonance.

Introduction

We start this paper with setting Living Educational Theory Research in real world local and global contexts. This includes the introduction of the idea of 'best loved-self' (Craig, 2013, 2020) and ~i~we~I~us~ relationships (Mounter, 2023) into Living Educational Theory Research. We then go on to give a brief description of what constitutes Living Educational Theory Research as a process and as an extending epistemology for practice. Various forms of data are presented and analysed to help clarify the meaning and implications of Living Educational Theory Research for professional practitioners realising their values-laden responsibilities as a member of a social formation and as a global citizen.

We then move on to illustrate how it empowers professional practitioners to improve what they are doing in the social formation (their 'local real world'), which forms the context of their professional practice, while keeping in focus the far ranging consequences of what they are doing for bringing into being, with values of human flourishing, a better 'global real world', comprising people and communities, each with their unique agendas and worldviews. In the next section we draw on the Living Educational Research of professional practitioners working in diverse context and cultures to illustrate the results of their reaching out to people and communities as contributors to, and/or co-creators of, valid accounts of educational influences in learning.

We conclude with a discussion of some of the pleasures and challenges experienced by professional practitioners engaging in Living Educational Theory Research and imagine possible next practical steps to progress our Living Educational Theory Research and help others do so too.

The paper is organised as follows:
1. Setting Living Educational Theory Research in real world local and global contexts with a 'Collective Imaginary' that includes the ideas of best-loved self and ~i~we~I~us~ relationships.
2. A brief description of what constitutes Living Educational Theory Research as a process
3. Living Educational Theory Research as an extending epistemology for practice
4. Implications of spreading knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory Research in local and global real worlds and results of reaching out to people and communities
5. Pleasures and challenges and imagining steps to progress our Living Educational Theory Research for the benefit of all in local and global real worlds.
6. Some implications of the practical principles and relationally dynamic epistemology related to the 'values-laden missions' of professional practitioners as global citizens contributing to a Collective Imaginary with values of human flourishing

1. Setting Living Educational Theory Research in real world local and global contexts with a 'Collective Imaginary' that includes the ideas of best-loved self and ~i~we~I~us~ relationships.

We are assuming that a responsibility of professional educators is to be living values of human flourishing as fully as possible, in their educational practices.

It is our intention to contribute to the global spread of values of human flourishing by supporting people and communities to create their living-educational-theories in their local 'real world' and contribute valid accounts of their Living Educational Theory Research to a global knowledgebase all can draw on, whatever the 'real world' that is the context of their practice. In recognising the importance of collective influences in this global context, we are proposing, drawing on the ideas of Dewell and Larsson (2019), to contribute to the development, in the real worlds that are the context of the practice researched, of a 'Collective Imaginary' with values of human flourishing. Dewell and Larsson believe that the way we see and interpret the world through our Collective Imaginary, influences our meaning-making and what we find important and valuable in living values of human flourishing:

> These "values" shape the decisions we make both individually and collectively and, in turn, the way history evolves. They also believe that we create our Collective Imaginary (consciously or unconsciously) and at the same time our Collective Imaginary determines the way our world evolves… What is required is for us to deliberately and consciously support the emergence of a new and more complex Collective Imaginary. (Dewell & Larsson pp. 66-67)

In this paper we are beginning to clarify a meaning of a Collective Imaginary with values of human flourishing with Mounter,'s (2023) idea of '~i~we~I~us~' relationships and Craig's (2013) idea of 'best-loved self' and how supporting the spread of knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory contributes to its development. The main reason for developing this Collective Imaginary arises from the need for a response to a limitation, identified by Mounter (2023) in existing explanations for the learning of social formations in accounts of Living Educational Theory Research and living-educational-theories. We agree that more attention needs to be given to clarifying the explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence in the learning of social formations to realise their values-laden responsibilities in their local real world, and what constitutes a 'social formation'. We agree with Mounter that '~i~we~I~us~' relationships offers a clarification that can overcome the present lack of clarity about the nature of the explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence in the learning of social formations:

> ~i~we~I~us~ is a linear representation of a non-linear, dynamic, relational value and explanation of relationships developed by educational practitioners, that accept educational responsibility for their Living Professionalism. Within my thesis ~i~we~I~us~ is a key and

original contribution to knowledge and one of the blocks within my Keystone Diagram and the focus of my second research question. This relationally, dynamic ontological value is also an epistemological standard of judgement of my practice. When speaking aloud of iweIus relationships I usually abbreviate it, missing out saying the tildes~, although they are the most important aspect, of energy flowing, values-laden, invitational, part of this relational value. We will always say iweIus because including the tilde is not easily or quickly said, but we must be mindful of the significance of the silent tilde~, as reflected in the erosion of meaning I have noticed when Living Educational Theory Research is truncated to Living Theory.

~i~we~I~us~ relationships address the limitation I have identified within the educational influences in social formations of Living Educational Theory Research, represented as ~us~ in ~i~we~I~us~ relationships. Many living-educational-theories have been written as part of Master's degrees, Doctorates or papers for conferences and for publication. Across many of these research projects you can find addressed the educational influences in learning of the practitioner researchers in ~I~. You can also see the focus on the educational influences in the learning of 'others' in ~i~we~, but missing is the third aspect identified by Whitehead (2015), explanations of the educational influences in learning in social formations, captured within ~us~.

We are also drawing on the idea of 'best-loved self'. Schwab (1954/1978) created the concept and Craig (2013, 2020) developed it as a concept in teacher-research. We also recognise the uniqueness of each individual's express of their 'best-loved self'. We believe that expressions of a 'best-loved self' includes an experience of being twice affirmed (Bernstein, 1971, p. 48). We use the response that Bernstein (1971, p. 48) gave to the question, 'What is it to produce something as a human being?' from the early writings of Marx. In producing something as a human being we twice affirm ourselves and the other. In our production of our living-educational-theory we objectify our individuality and uniqueness and in the course of the activity we enjoy an individual life. As use is made by another of insights from our living-educational-theories, our product, we have the direct and conscious satisfaction that our work satisfies a human need and that it objectifies human nature with our values of human flourishing.

We experience such affirmation in the generation and sharing of our living-educational-theories and in another's use of what we have produced in the generation of their own living-educational-theory with values of human flourishing. An example is provided by what we experience supporting the planning committee of the 4th International Conference for Transformative Education Research and Sustainable Development to prepare presentations for the conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 2024. (See their living-posters, which can be accessed from https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/indonesiangp23.pdf). Another example of being twice affirmed in what we experience supporting the creation and sharing of the living-educational-theories of the individuals and groups/collectives which can be seen by accessing their living-posters from the living-posters homepage, https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2023.pdf

Our values of human flourishing include a flow of life-affirming and life-enhancing energy and a productive orientation to life and work. We use Fromm's (1960) distinction between a productive and a marketing orientation and what he indicates is a necessary condition for a professional practitioner to realise their responsibility for the consequences of what they do:

> ...if a person can face the truth without panic they will realise that there is no purpose to life other than that which they create for themselves through their loving relationships and productive work (p.18).

Whitehead (1989) coined the phrase, living-educational-theories as valid, values-laden explanations created by professional practitioners for their educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formation which forms the context of their practice. Living-educational-theories are produced by professional, practitioner to realise their responsibility to research their practice to understand and improve it and to generate valid explanations for their educational influences in learning. They do this as they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my professional practice with values of human flourishing?".

A distinction is made between being a member of a profession and being a professional. We believe that being a professional explicitly includes a responsibility of a practitioner to not only develop their expertise as experts in their field but to also live, in their practice, values of human flourishing as fully as possible, and help others do so too, for benefit of the social formations, which form the context of their practice and the benefit of those who comprise them. We also believe that a professional practitioner has a responsibility to contribute to the growth of global knowledge of living in practice, values of human flourishing for the benefit of individual people, communities and Humanity.

A distinction is also made between educational research and education research. We understand *education* research to be research carried out within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of disciplines of education such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. The purpose of education researchers is to generate knowledge of philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education, in the form of, for example, conceptual theories. We understand *educational* research to be research carried out within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the Discipline of Education. The purpose of educational researchers is to generate educational knowledge, in the form of, for example, their valid explanations, with values of human flourishing, for their educational influences in learning.

We draw on an academic monograph (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2024) 'Living Educational Theory Research as an Epistemology for Practice: The Role of Values in Practitioners' Professional Development'. It includes the results of our reaching out to people and communities living and working in various cultures and contexts worldwide in this next section, to explain how a relationally dynamic, educational epistemology has emerged from practitioner's multi-media narratives of their Living Educational Theory Research.

2. A brief description of what constitutes Living Educational Theory Research as a process

We distinguish Living Educational Theory Research from a living-educational-theory. Living Educational Theory Research refers to the conceptual principles that distinguish the research approach. A living-educational-theory is a values-based explanation offered by an individual of their educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Whitehead, 1989).

In a previous publication (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2013) we presented arguments for teachers to engage in Living Educational Theory Research as professional development. As we have said, Living Educational Theory Research requires the generation, validation and sharing of a living-educational-theory as a values-based explanation offered by an individual of their educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Whitehead, 1989). This argument was extended in an evidence-based analysis of the living-educational-theories of professional educators (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016) to show how this can empower educators to improve their practice and, by offering as a gift the knowledge they generate in the process, contribute to the creation of a profession of educators. The argument was further extended (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2023, 2024) in the explication of an educational epistemology based on the nature of the knowledge generated by professional practitioners as Master and Doctor Educators, in their living-educational-theories.

We have argued that for this educational knowledge to be legitimated by universities, in the form of accredited awards, an extension and transformation will be required in the dominating forms of knowledge. It is also argued that educators, teaching in professional development programmes, need to develop their talents, knowledge and expertise by researching their own practice in the same way as the teachers they are supporting. In doing so they will contribute to an educational pedagogy for the creation, validating and sharing of living-educational-theories.

We focus our efforts to reach out to people and communities with support for them to research what they are doing in the real local world they live and work in, in terms of the generating and sharing their living-educational-theories with values of human flourishing. We are offering the homepage of living-posters (Living-posters, 2023) as evidence of our influence in reaching out to people and communities living and working in a real global. In the creation and sharing of living-posters we are encouraging professional practitioners to make globally accessible, the knowledge they create in their local real

world and cultural context, of their values, what they want to improve and what they are doing to have a life-enhancing educational influence in the learning of people and communities to flourish and helping others to do so too.

Further, and more substantial evidence of our educational influence in learning of people and communities researching their practice with Living Educational Theory Research in the real local worlds they live and work in, can be accessed from the Masters (2023) and Doctoral (2023) writings of practitioner-researchers, who are seeking to live their values of human flourishing as fully as possible in a wide range of different cultural and professional contexts. Each doctorate has been judged by university appointed examiners, as making an original contribution to knowledge. Great care has gone into the Abstract of each doctorate to be clear about the knowledge-claims. These doctorates constitute the data archive that provides the evidence in the next section for the explication of an educational epistemology for professional educational practice.

3. Living Educational Theory Research as an extending epistemology for practice[1]

The units of appraisal, standards of judgement and logic distinguish an epistemology. An educational, values-laden epistemology is distinguished by the units of appraisal, which include community and individually generated explanations for their educational influences in learning. The standards of judgement evolve as they are influenced by the cultural context of their use. The living-logics are relational and dynamic and distinguish forms of rationality that include insights from propositional and dialectical theories as individual researchers respond to experiencing themselves as living contradictions in the course of their Living Educational Theory Research. By a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead, 2019) we mean holding together values of human flourishing together with their negation. We argue that the rationalities of living-logics (Whitehead, 2013) transcend the rejections by both traditions of propositional and dialectical inquiry that have been made by both traditions of inquiry. The embodied expressions of the meanings of values of human flourishing, that are used as explanatory principles in explanations for educational influences in learning, are clarified and communicated, using digital visual data from educational practice, with a process of empathetic resonance.

In the monograph we also clarify a distinction between the practical knowledge of improving practice and the epistemological contributions of these knowledge-claims. In his 2011 paper, '*Developing a relationally dynamic epistemology for educational knowledge'*, (Whitehead, 2011) Whitehead explicated this epistemology, framed within an understanding of philosophy as loving wisdom. It includes a stipulative definition of living-educational-theories and the distinction, between educational research and education research, used in this monograph. The focus is on sharing the meanings of the practical principles used by a professional practitioner in their explanations for their educational influences in learning. These explanations form the units of appraisal in an epistemology for practice that is grounded in these individually generated knowledge-claims. The meanings of the practical principles in a community generated explanation for educational influences in learning form the units of appraisal in an epistemology of practice that is grounded in these community generated knowledge-claims.

The explication of this epistemology was further developed in the chapter 'The Legitimation of Post-Formalism with Living Educational Theories', Whitehead (2017), in Letiche at al. (2018). In this chapter Whitehead made a connection with Kincheloe's research into the tension between Kincheloe's universal values of authenticity, relatedness, emancipation, respect for the other and the translation of those values into specific, concrete actions. Whitehead agreed with Kincheloe's assertion that the values are just so many 'grand narratives' if they are not actualized in specific, lived actions and circumstances. He also agreed with Kincheloe's proposal that pedagogical researchers focus on transformations that can overcome the limitations of the formal logic in the theories that explain educational influences in learning. Hence the connection to a relationally dynamic epistemology in explanations for educational influences in learning created through Living Educational

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[1] This section is based on Chapter 7 of Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2024) Living Educational Theory Research as an Epistemology for Practice: The Role of Values in Practitioners' Professional Development. London; Routledge (In press).

Theory Research.

Attention is also drawn in the Whitehead (2017) paper to the importance of using digital technology to gather visual data that can be integrated into contributions of values-laden knowledge to a global educational knowledgebase. The use of this data enables the communication of meanings of values to go beyond the meanings that can be communicated through printed text alone. This has Implications for changes in university regulations, which govern the submission of original contributions to knowledge, particularly that created during Masters and Doctoral research and presented for legitimation and the award of a degree.

We make a distinction between the standards of judgement used in a living-educational-theory to make judgements about changes in practice and the standards of judgement used to evaluate the validity of a contribution to educational knowledge. Limitations, of using solely printed text-based media for representing explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning, are identified. The use of multi-media narratives for the explication and communication of the meanings of practical principles with their flows of energy and values are considered in terms of the creation of a relationally dynamic epistemology for educational knowledge. Implications are explored, of the practical principles and epistemology of Living Educational Theory Research, for the realisation of the values-laden missions of professional practitioners and international bodies such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

4. Implications of spreading knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory Research in local and global real worlds and results of reaching out to people and communities

We are all influenced by the social formations, within which we live and work that form both local and global real worlds. These influences often include powerful cultural influences that can remain hidden. We have found the insights of critical theorists (Habermas,2002) very helpful in revealing the political and economic influences that can affect practice and understanding, especially in revealing the influences of global capitalism. In accepting responsibility as a global citizen, we include the importance of developing our cultural understandings of different social contexts and in the development of our cultural responsive pedagogy with values of human flourishing. In developing these cultural understandings we recognise that conflicts can exist between different understandings of values of human flourishing.

As we write there are ongoing wars between the Ukraine and Russia following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and between Israel and Hamas, following Hamas' massacre of Israeli's on the 12th October 2023. These wars can be understood in terms of different Collective Imaginaries created in local real worlds, with competing views about values of human flourishing. These have implications for us all who want to bring into being a global real world where we can resolve differences humanely in a way that helps to bring into being a safe and peaceful. Similarly, the denial of access by girls to education and access by women to economic possibilities in a local real world, created by the Taliban since taking control of Afghanistan in August 2021, has implications for professional practitioners realising their responsibilities as global citizens in local and global real worlds.

We believe the responsibilities of a global citizen, include a commitment to the United Nations statements on human rights. We also believe the ability of professional practitioners as global citizens to realise these responsibilities can be enhanced by engaging in Living Educational Theory Research to include the creation and sharing of living-educational-theories that embody these commitments and the political implications of learning to create humane ways of engaging to find mutually productive ways forward with people and communities with competing understandings of the values of human flourishing.

5. Results of reaching out to people and communities as contributors to, and/or co-creators of, valid accounts of educational influences in learning

There are cultural influences in many social formations serve to disempower members of the local real worlds they form, and also global real worlds we are all members of. For example, some universities and academic associations promote quantitative research to the detriment of qualitative

research. These cultural influences suppress self-study research, with the inclusion of 'I' in legitimate academic research and as a consequence impede the development of professional practitioner educational research and the generation of educational, values-laden knowledge. When professional practitioners encounter such constraints they can call for support on an international community of scholars that have already had their living-educational-theories legitimated in a wide range of Universities throughout the world. We are identifying living-educational-theories with explorations in the local real world of the kind, "How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice, with values of human flourishing?', which contribute to bringing into being a better, more humane, safe and peaceful global real world.

The account by Spiro (2008)) offers an example of how Living Educational Theory Research has empowered a professional practitioner to improve what they are doing in a university, which constituted their 'local real world' within which they sought to create educational knowledge as a contribution to a better 'global real world'

Some of the results of reaching out to people and communities to extend knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory Research can be accessed from the homepage of living-posters (2023). Chitanand's (2023) work in the Durban University of Technology, South Africa, illustrates the consequence of a person and community creating and co-creating knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory Research as professional development and helping others do so too. Chitanand is a professional, educational practitioner realising and researching her values-laden responsibilities.

More results in terms of the creation and sharing of valid accounts of educational influences in learning can be accessed from the archive of the Educational Journal of Living Theories from 2008-2023 (EJOLTs 2008-2023).

7. Pleasures and challenges and imagining steps to progress our Living Educational Theory Research for the benefit of all in local and global real worlds.

Pleasures

One of the great pleasures of Living Educational Theory Research is in experiencing a flow of life-affirming and life-enhancing energy with values of human flourishing. Producing one's living-educational-theory with values of human flourishing, is accompanied by a flow of energy that comes from feeling that something has been produced that is worthwhile in terms of its contribution to other people and communities learning to flourish and helping others learn to do so too.. Another pleasure is offering accounts of our Living Educational Theory Research and in seeing others using one's living-educational-theory in the creation of their own.

Challenges of communicating a relationally dynamic epistemology

There are many different challenges in such communications that are influenced by different cultural pressures in different global contexts and access to technology. Working and researching in Afghanistan for example, involves encountering the cultural pressures of state policy on denying girls access to education and women to equality with men in economic opportunities. Working and researching in Indonesia, the UK, and other cultural contexts can involve pressure to engage in quantitative rather than qualitative research and not to value practitioner self-study research that includes the personal pronoun 'I'. In the UK in October 2023 a doctoral researcher received a reviewers report on their draft thesis and told that they should remove the personal pronoun 'I' from the title of their research. This was for a practitioner self-study doctorate in which 'I' was central to the study. In recognising such cultural pressures, we advocate bearing in mind Foucault's notion of 'regimes of truth' communicated by Rabinow (1991, pp. 73-74):

> The intellectual can operate and struggle at the general level of that regime of truth which is so essential to the structure and functioning of our society. There is a battle "for truth," or at least "around truth"- it being understood once again that by truth I do not mean "the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted," but rather "the ensemble of rules

according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true," it being understood also that it's a matter not of a battle "on behalf" of the truth, but of a battle about the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays. It is necessary to think of the political problems of intellectuals not in terms of "science" and "ideology," but in terms of "truth" and "power." And thus the question of the professionalization of intellectuals and the division between intellectual and manual labour can envisaged in a new way.

Another challenge can be in the development of multi-media narratives for the explication and communication of the meanings of practical principles, with their flows of energy and values. These are fundamental to the creation of a relationally dynamic epistemology comprising educational knowledge. It was only in the early 2000s that the University of Bath changed its regulations governing the submission of research degrees to allow the submission of digital visual data in addition to printed text.

Printed texts can present clear meanings of value-words that are clarified lexically in terms of other words. For example, in *Ethics and Education*, Peters (1966) clarified the meanings of freedom, justice, consideration of interests, respect for persons and worthwhile activities. This clarification of meaning was done through a solely printed text-based media. Peters asked, "What is implied if a person is seriously asking the question, 'What ought I to do?'". He used a Kantian form of transcendental deduction to justify his claims that these ethical principles were a necessary condition of ethics and education. The transcendental deduction was based on the argument that if a proposition y was given as true and proposition x could be demonstrated as existing within proposition y, then it followed the there were good grounds for accepting proposition x. However, the meanings of embodied expressions of values cannot be solely communicated by lexical definitions and conceptual analyses. This is because embodied expressions of values are expressed in actions and flow with energy in an individual's unique constellation of values within which they interact.

The answer Peters communicated to his question, "What is implied if a person is seriously asking the question, 'What ought I to do?" in his 1966 text is somewhat different to that communicated by Whitehead, in his 1993 text (pp.5-6).

> One of my most memorable experiences was being pinned against the wall of the School by a gang leader called Big Kamara who informed me not too gently that he would slit my 'fuckin' throat' with his sharpened dog comb if I 'grassed' on his gang to the police. I have always blamed my predicament in this case on my Professor of Philosophy, Richard Peters. I had returned to the School after an early evening seminar with Peters on questions of the kind, 'What ought I to do?'. Peters would always answer that rationality and reason were the ways to overcome practical problems. I returned to the School to supervise a dance when I heard a dreadful racket coming from the front of the school. I asked myself Peters' question, and answered that I must go and reason with whoever was creating the disturbance. Hence I found myself against the wall with the possibility of a rather limited life-span.
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> My response at the time went beyond my previous understanding of rationality. In response to the threat to slit my fuckin' throat, I answered with a kind of demonic energy that, I've trained for five fuckin' years to teach you fuckin' bastards how to improve and make something of your fuckin' lives and I haven't come here to be fucked up by you fuckin' lot. So get out of my fuckin' way and I'll go to my fuckin'' dance. I still look back with some relieved amazement that the group parted, Big Karmara stepped back and I drove off, throat, life and limbs intact. As I drove away I remember thinking that perhaps my philosophy professor had got it wrong. Perhaps there was a different form of rationality in real life which I needed to understand!

In our writings together (e.g. Whitehead & Huxtable 2006 a & b), we have not only revealed limitations in the sole use of printed text-based media for representing these ethical principles and embodied expressions of values in explanations of educational influences in learning. We have also demonstrated how multi-media narratives can communicate the meanings of these ethical principles and expressions of embodied values.

In our multi-media narrative (Whitehead and Huxtable, 2006b) we clarify and communicate how we co-created living standards of judgement in our living-educational-theories. We describe the perspectives developed professional educators and educational researchers by adopting a Living Educational Theory Research approach to improving their practice. The values, clarified and communicated in the course of the research, include a love for their profession and a passion for the educational processes of learning and joy and fulfilment in supporting others in their learning journeys while continuously improving their own. The importance and meaning of values of respect for individual identity and integrity while engaging in collaborative research and knowledge creation is also communicated. We first use the term 'i~we' (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2006, a & b) to convey the coexistence of individual identity and social relationships. We creatively engaged with the concept of Ubuntum in the sense of 'I am because we are' from African cosmology and it helped us to enhance our understanding of who we are, what we know, and what we do. We see our values being expressed within flows of life-affirming energy that gives purpose and meaning to our professional practice. Through enquiry, inquiry and research, we clarify the meanings of these values and develop living standards of judgment to evaluate the educational influences in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. These meanings form the basis of our epistemological knowledge claims.

Our use of multi-media representations enables us to communicate our understandings of educational influences in learning. These involve a dynamic awareness of space, boundaries, and interconnectedness (Rayner, 2011). We highlight the need for 'living' standards of judgment, which are clarified and evolve in the course of the research, to evaluate explanations for educational influences in learning that go beyond formal and dialectical logics as we generate our own living-educational-theories. These are based on our own learning experiences within our particular contexts. We also communicate the epistemological meanings of co-created living evaluative standards of judgement related to: equality in power relations, life-affirming and life-enhancing energy, a passion for life-long and life-wide education, inquiry learning, and systemic influence in the education of social formations.

One of the main reasons for a professional practitioner making their research public is to their epistemological knowledge-claims to public criticism. This criticism in important in testing the validity of the knowledge-claim and is consistent with Popper's (1975) point about enhancing the objectivity of knowledge-claims through intersubjective criticism, or the mutual rational controls of critical discussion. The public process of enhancing the validity of knowledge-claims helps to overcome criticisms that an individual's explanation for their educational influences in learning is merely subjective or anecdotal and not worthy of being a contribution to knowledge. The unit of appraisal of a community generated living-educational-theory is the explanation members of a collective agrees communicates their educational influences together. These are the educational influences they have in the learning of the collective, in the learning of other collectives they are part of and/or associated with and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice of the collective is located, with values of human flourishing

There is a distinction between an individual's living-educational-theory and a community generated living-educational-theory. The unit of appraisal of an individual's living-educational-theory is the individual's explanation of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located, with values of human flourishing.

Standards by which the validity of relationally dynamic knowledge claims are judged

The meanings of a professional practitioner's embodied values, which form the evaluative standards by which they judge their practice, are identified and clarified by various means, for example, analysing visual data using empathetic resonance (Whithead & Huxtable, 2024). The analysis of the video recordings of practice shows how the meanings of practical principles in explanations of educational influence in learning can be clarified and developed, in the course of their emergence in practice. These embodied values, also serve as the standards by which the validity of practitioner's knowledge claims, as contributions to the growth of a values-laden epistemology of the Discipline of Education, can be evauated.

In developing a relationally dynamic epistemology we recognise there are many forms of practitioner, professional practitioner and educational research that are given legitimacy by what Foucault refers to as 'regimes of truth'. For example, in both the American and British Educational Research Associations individuals, in powerful positions within the organisations, continue to promote education research engaged in by those working in the disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, history and philosophy of education, rather than educational research engaged in by professional practitioners. As a consequence, the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the disciplines of education, such as the sociology, philosophy, psychology and history of education, and the 'social' sciences obscure, and often exclude, knowledge which could contribution to the evolution of a global *educational* knowledgebase. This has implications for the growth of the academic legitimacy and influence of a relationally dynamic epistemology for educational research.

The rationality of a relationally dynamic epistemology can be supported using a modification of Habermas' (1976, pp 1-2) four criteria of social validity to validate the knowledge-claims made by professional practitioners in their living-educational-theories. The process of validating these educational knowledge-claims also owes much to Popper's idea of 'objectivity' being grounded in 'intersubjective criticism' where the mutual rational controls of critical discussion help to enhance the objectivity of explanations.

The use of validation groups has primarily focused on enhancing the knowledge-claims being made about practice. The procedures of enhancing the validation of explanations of educational influences in learning are focused on the following four questions that are asked within validation groups:

i) How could the comprehensibility of my explanation be improved?
ii) How could the evidence I use to justify my explanation be strengthened?
iii) How could the understandings of the sociocultural and sociohistorical influences in my practice and explanation be deepened and extended?
iv) How could the authenticity of my explanation in the sense of showing that I am living my values as fully as possible, be enhanced?

Some researchers, such as Winter (1989), prefer to focus on rigour rather than validity in overcoming bias in personal accounts of practice. Kok (1991) applied Winter's six criteria of rigour to overcome bias in her research account. The six criteria are reflexive and dialectical critique, risk, multiple resource, plural structure, theory-practice transformation. Strengthening the validity and rigour of explanations of educational in learning, using the above approaches, helps with the epistemological task of clarifying the unit of appraisal, standards of judgement and living-logics in the relationally dynamic epistemology that defines the rationality of the explanations.

Although these criteria have not often been overtly used to test the validity of the epistemological knowledge-claims, they have proved very useful when they have been, For example, Habermas's four criteria are overtly included in the publishing criteria of the Educational Journal of Living Theories, a well-established academic, peer-reviewed, online journal. The journal encourages professional practitioners to use multimedia narratives and the opportunity an online journal offers, for communicating, with digita visual data, their embodied meaning of the values that serve as their evaluative standards and explanatory principles in their explanation for their educational influences and knowledge-claims.

6. Some implications of the practical principles and relationally dynamic epistemology related to the 'values-laden missions' of professional practitioners as global citizens contributing to a Collective Imaginary with values of human flourishing

The implications of a relationally dynamic epistemology are related to the acceptance of an educational responsibility, of professional practitioners as global citizens, to live values of human flourishing as fully as possible and to contribute living-educational-theories to the growth of a global knowledgebase.

One important implication, for the academic legitimacy of a relationally dynamic epistemology, is in recognising that most professional practitioners live within the power relations of cultures and contexts

that can undermine the values of human flourishing. Hence the importance of recognising oneself as a living-contradiction and responding imaginatively to contributing to the creation of a future in which the values of human flourishing can be lived more fully. The idea of creative compliance (Macdonald,1987), has been useful to both of us in reminding us to act prudently within organisations where managers are not supportive of our values-laden research. The prudence is important because of the danger of risking one's job, by pushing managers further than they wish to go. Using the idea of creative compliance, we both can recognise power relations in our global context, society, culture and organisation that negate our values, whilst at the same time responding imaginatively to the creation of a future within which our values can be lived more fully.

In the process of validating contributions to a global educational knowledgebase there is a danger that individuals, communities and cultures, impose their rationality onto other individuals, communities and cultures. The validation process includes democratic evaluations in which individuals and communities share their living-educational-theories, with a rationality where the force of better argument holds sway within democratic forms of evaluation. There can be a tension between a democratic judgement and an individual's judgment in which they uphold the integrity of their judgement, sometimes in opposition to a democratic judgement. Such tensions highlight the power relations in regimes of truth in which individuals sometimes come into conflict with group norms. We include the idea of creative compliance in recognising the importance as being seen to conform to accepted norms whilst working subversively to transcend these norms. Whitehead (1993) has analysed his contributions to such transcendence in responding to institutional norms that: denied the quality of his teaching and research and asserted that he had disturbed the good order and morale of the School of Education; claimed that he had not made an original contribution to knowledge; claimed that his writings were not consistent with his duties; claimed that his academic freedom had not been breached, without any acknowledgement of the pressure to which he had been subjected.

The use of multi-media narratives for the explication and communication of the meanings of practical principles with their flows of energy and values have been considered in terms of the creation of a relationally dynamic epistemology for educational knowledge. Implications have been explored of the practical principles and epistemology of Living Educational Theory Research for the realisation of the values-laden missions of international bodies such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Most importantly we have stressed the importance of each one us accepting our educational responsibilities as global citizens to ask, research and answer questions of the kind, "How do I improve my practice with values of human flourishing" and to contribute their knowledge to a global knowledgebase of education. You can access recent presentations at the 2023 Imbizo of Durban University of Technology of individuals who are accepting their educational responsibilities in their inquiries on '*Cultivating the use of Living Educational Theory Research for enhancing multimodal professional practice and reshaping the future of Higher Education*' (Chitanand at al., 2023)

We conclude with a 3:49 min video-clip from Whitehead's response to the award of his D.Litt. degree by the University of Worcester on the 12th September 2023. Whitehead asks us all to remember the sacrifices on which our freedoms, to live worthwhile lives within democratic forms of governance, rest:

https://youtu.be/rGiG93m6EmM

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