

Whitehead, Jack ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9644-0785> and Huxtable, Marie ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1808-0670> (2024) Researching inherent paradoxes experienced in practice to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too. In: CARN 2024 Online Conference: Talking Locally, Connecting Globally, 29 April - 1 May 2024, Online. (Unpublished)

Downloaded from: <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/7700/>

Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria's institutional repository 'Insight' must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria's institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available [here](#)) for educational and not-for-profit activities

provided that

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
 - a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

You may not

- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator's reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found [here](#).

Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing insight@cumbria.ac.uk.

Talking locally, connecting globally: Researching inherent paradoxes experienced in practice to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too.

Jack Whitehead (University of Cumbria)

Marie Huxtable (University of Cumbria)

Paper on work in progress presented CARN virtual conference
29/4/2024 11.00-12.00 (BST)

Abstract

The paper provides an overview of Living Educational Theory Research as an epistemology for values-driven practitioner-researchers researching questions such as, “how can I improve my educational influence in the learning of local and global social formations, and those who comprise them, to make a difference that matters?”. Accounts of living-educational-theories will be drawn on to exemplify valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanations for educational influences in learning, which contribute to the global growth of educational knowledge. Illustrative examples of action-reflection cycles used in the process of improving professional and educational practice will be given. Education is taken to mean a life-long values-laden practical activity of learning to flourish and helping others to do so too. Values of human flourishing are embodied in what practitioner-researchers, such as Educational Action Researchers, strive to accomplish through their professional practice and research. Examples will be given for how values are used as explanatory principles in the explanations of educational influences in learning. Dialogic processes of validation using the mutual rational controls of critical conversations will be described. These processes include critical reflection and analysis of the research in practitioner research communities to strengthen the research, improve practice and clarify and address methodological and epistemological issues that emerge.

Keywords: Living Educational Theory, practitioner-researchers, values-driven, educational influences, action-reflection cycles.

Introduction

While engaging in your Action Research projects have you ever wondered about the role your values play in your professional practice, development and research? Have you considered the implications of your actions intended to improve matters in the local context of your practice for other social formations and contributing to the creation of a more humane world and sustainable planet? How do you recognise and engage productively with the paradoxes you experience working to enhance individuals learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help other to learn to flourish too?

Professional practitioners have responsibilities to develop practice with values of human flourishing that contributes to the social formations they are part of to produce something of use locally and globally, learn to flourish and in the process make a worthwhile contribution to the learning of Humanity to flourish in and of the complex inter-related world now and for eons to come. There are paradoxes inherent in this endeavour not

identified or addressed with Action Research or any other research paradigm or methodology.

Action Research, irrespective of how it is termed, whether collaborative, participatory, educational etc is a well tried problem-solving model used to create solutions to local practical problems as presented to, or conceived by, a practitioner. The articles in the latest issue of EAR illustrate this. Action Research does not require the practitioner to identify, or give consideration to, the implications for others of actions taken by them to address a local problem they identify. Action Research also requires the practitioner to offer 'exploration', 'reflections' or solutions to a problem. There is no requirement to clarify: the question their research is intended to offer an answer to; the values-laden criteria by which the efficacy of the solution can be evaluated; or to provide a valid values-laden explanation for the consequences of the action. Accounts of 'educational' Action Research often focuses on the effectiveness of practice within an institution of Education, such as a school, college, or university, to deliver a prescribed curriculum without reference to the 'educational' purpose of the social formation. Accounts of 'educational' Action Research are also often focussed on remedying a social issue without reference to what constitutes the productive and educational, values-laden *raison d'être* of the social formation, which forms the context of the practice. In Whitehead & Huxtable (2023) we analyse the problem of not clarifying the purpose of 'education' and what constitutes 'educational' knowledge that contributes to the growth of a global 'educational' knowledgebase.

This paper introduces Living Educational Theory Research as an epistemology for professional practitioners aiming to enhance their educational influence in the learning of local and global social formations and Humanity learning to bring into being a better world. The meaning of 'educational' reflects the meaning of education as a lifelong, life-wide values-driven activity, with values of human flourishing at its core. The work of practitioners who have researched such questions in the realisation of their responsibilities as professionals and global citizens is drawn on.

We start with clarifying the research problem and aims that are the focus of this paper. We then move on to detail the research methodology, which includes a summary of what distinguishes Living Educational Theory Research and living-educational-theories. The methodology section includes the rationale for the selection of accounts of living-educational-theories for this paper with the readers of 'Educational Action Research' in mind. The findings below highlight how the professional practitioner's values serve as explanatory principles in accounts for their educational influences in learning, validated through dialogic processes like critical conversations. When discussing the findings the accounts drawn on will illustrate how Action Research projects has been drawn on and how action-reflection cycles have been used by professional practitioners in the process of improving professional and educational practice through Living Educational Theory Research. Values of human flourishing are embodied in what practitioner-researchers, such as Educational Action Researchers, strive to accomplish through their professional practice and research. Examples will be given to illustrate how professional practitioners use their embodied values as evaluative standards and explanatory principles in their explanations for educational influences in people learning to flourish and helping others to do so too. Professional practitioners experience tensions while researching their practice to improve the learning of individuals and communities to flourish locally and globally. The examples are also used to demonstrate how Living Educational Theory Research can help professional practitioners to identify and manage paradoxes they experience in practice to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too.

Research problem and aims

The research problem this paper addresses concerns how professional practitioners can realise their values-laden responsibilities as practitioners contributing to a social formation realising its *raison d'être* and to Humanity learning to flourish as a benign presence in and of the world. These responsibilities include continuously exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions to improve their professionalism. For example, 'How do I improve my educational influences: in my learning to improve my practice? This includes in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located and in the learning of those who comprise it. This educational learning includes the values of human flourishing and helping others do so too. The responsibilities of a professional educator include contributing to the growth of a global knowledgebase of education by making public the knowledge created by the educator in the course of engaging in professional practitioner educational research.

Methodology

Living Educational Theory Research is a form of professional practitioner educational research, which enables practitioners to realise their responsibilities as practitioners, professionals and global citizens to make a difference to Humanity learning to flourish as a benign presence in and of the world.

A practitioner creates their living-educational-theory methodology as it emerges in the course of generating a valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanation for their educational influences in their learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located (Whitehead, 2018).

Overview of Living Educational Theory Research as a methodology and paradigm

The methodology of Living Educational Theory Research is influenced by its epistemology (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2024) in the form of its unit of appraisal, its epistemological standards of judgement and its logic. As well as contributing to knowledge the methodology is also focused on making explicit the standards that can be used to evaluate the educational influences in learning the practice has.

The unit of appraisal is the individual's valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanation for 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, with values of human flourishing. The methodological implication is that the practitioner-researcher, in exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my educational influences in learning with values of human flourishing and help others do so too?' generates and makes public such valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanations for their educational influences in learning.

The epistemological standards of judgment include the unique constellation of values that the practitioner-researcher uses to give meaning and purpose to their professional educational practices.

The living-logic, of the explanation of educational influences in learning, is the form of reason used by the practitioner-researcher is appropriate for comprehending their living-educational-theory as rational.

Overview of a living-educational-theory research methodology

A living-educational-theory research methodology describes and explains how the valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanation for educational influence in learning, with values of human flourishing, was generated and shared. It includes the clarification and communication of the unique constellation of the practitioner-researcher's values that were clarified, communicated and used as explanatory principles in the course of their emergence in practice. When the practitioner recognise themselves as a living-contradiction, and/or their values of human flourishing negated, they begin to imagine possibilities and actions to enable values of human flourishing to be expressed as fully as possible.

The methodology includes an explanation of how the validity of the explanations was evaluated in terms of the mutual rational controls of critical discussion (Popper, 1975, p. 44) and tested in terms of its comprehensibility, evidence, sociohistorical and sociocultural understandings and authenticity (Habermas, 1976, pp. 2-3)

Methods

The methods used by a Living Educational Theory Research are those that are appropriate for researching the question, 'How do I improve my professional practice with values of human flourishing and help others do so too?'. Because the question involves improving practice, Living Educational Theory Researchers usually use action-reflection cycles at some point in their research journey. Using the method of action-reflection cycles involves: expressing a concern when values are not realised through practice as fully as they could be; imagining ways of improving practice and creating an action plan; acting and gathering data with which to evaluate the educational influence the actions have had in learning of the social formation and those who comprise it to realise their values-laden *raison d'être* and be productive evaluating the educational influences of the actions; modifying the concerns, ideas and actions in the light of the evaluations. Whitehead (2014) has analysed the importance of reflexivity in evaluating the educational influences in research supervision:

To show how enacting reflexivity in research supervision in creating a living-educational-theory can address the notion of self in ways that go beyond navel-gazing in both improving practice and generating knowledge in making scholarly, academically legitimate, and original contributions to educational knowledge. This paper on educational reflexivity in supervision stresses the importance of clarifying and communicating the values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity in explanations of educational influence from self-study researchers. In the same way that not all learning is educational, not all reflexivity supports the values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Hence, the paper is focused on educational reflexivity in supervision to emphasise the importance of living these values as fully as possible in the creation of living-educational-theories.

Because other approaches to educational research did not involve the clarification and communication of the meanings of the unique constellation of values that the practitioner-researcher used as explanatory principles, in their explanations of their educational influences in learning, it was necessary to create an appropriate method for this clarification and communication. The method of 'empathetic resonance with digital visual data' was created to clarify and communicate the meanings of these values and to identify living-contradictions. Following Feyerabend's (1975, p.17) insight that the meanings of embodied

values, such as freedom, can only be understood in the course of their emergence in practice, the action-reflection cycles were used to focus on the lexical definitions of the values as these emerged in practice. However, the meanings of the embodied values carried flows of energy in a relationally dynamic that required ostensive clarifications of meaning using a method of empathetic resonance. (Whitehead, 2010)

Findings

We are focusing our findings on ‘talking locally, connecting globally: Researching inherent paradoxes experienced in practice to enhance individuals’ and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too.’ The local context is the place in which the question, ‘How do I improve the educational influences of my professional practice?’ is asked researched and answered. The global context comprises the complex, relationally dynamic and multidimensional ecologies of Humanity’s existence. Examples of living-educational-theories (LETR, 2024) provide valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanations for educational influences in learning, which contribute to the global growth of educational knowledge. .

Perhaps the clearest illustration of the use of action-reflection cycles used in the process of improving professional and educational practice is that of Eames (1987). Eames’ M.Phil. thesis is presented within a number of action-reflection cycles. In his doctoral thesis Eames, (1995) transcends the limitations of framing an explanation of educational influences in professional practice, within action-reflection cycles, in his explanation of his professional, educational development. This is presented as a valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanation of his educational influences in his own learning and in the learning of others:

The second contribution is concerned with how we represent an individual's claim to know their own educational development. These contributions contain an analysis in terms of a dialectical epistemology of professional knowledge, which includes contradiction, negation, transformation and moral responsibility within a dialogical community (Abstract).

An example to illustrate how the embodied values of the practitioner, clarified as they emerge through the research, are used as explanatory principles in the explanations of educational influences in learning and as evaluative standards of practice has been given by Naidoo (2005):

In telling the story of the unique development of my inclusional and responsive practice I will show how I have been influenced by the work of theatre practitioners such as Augusto Boal, educational theorists such as Paulo Freire and drawn on, incorporated and developed ideas from complexity theory and living theory action research. I will also describe how my engagement with the thinking of others has enabled my own practice to develop and from that to develop a living, inclusional and responsive theory of my practice. Through this research and the writing of this thesis, I now also understand that my ontological commitment to a passion for compassion has its roots in significant events in my past.

Naidoo (pp. 188-190) uses video-data to clarify and communicate her embodied expressions of her meanings of a passion for compassion. In Living Educational Theory Research the meanings of values requires both lexical definitions and ostensive expressions of meaning. The meanings of the words we use, especially in lexical definitions where words are defined

in terms of other words are necessary in communicating the meanings of values. But they are not sufficient because some of the meanings are expressed with flows of energy in our practice. They are embodied in what we do. Both lexical definitions and ostensive expressions of meaning are both necessary and sufficient for the clarification and communication of the values of human flourishing and distinguish our practice and learning as educational.

An 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, can be questioned in terms of its validity. It could be criticised on the grounds that the explanation is merely subjective and anecdotal. To counter such criticism a Living Educational Theory Researcher draws insights from the ideas of Popper (1975, p. 45) in which he claims that the objectivity of statements is grounded in intersubjective criticism. Popper's insight that objectivity can be enhanced through the mutual rational controls of critical discussion, is used in validation groups of some 3-8 peers where they respond to four questions derived from Habermas' (1975, pp. 2-3) ideas on social validity. The four questions are:

- How could I enhance the comprehensibility of my explanation?
- How could I strengthen the evidence I use to justify my knowledge-claims?
- How could I deepen and extend my sociohistorical and sociocultural understandings of their influence in my practice and explanations?
- How could I enhance the authenticity of my explanation in the sense of showing that I am living my values as fully as possible.

Discussion

The discussion starts with a brief overview of Living Educational Theory Research as an epistemology for values-driven practitioner-researchers researching questions such as, "how can I improve my educational influence in the learning of local and global social formations, and those who comprise them, to realise their values-laden *raison d'être*?" The data presented in the results section are used to illustrate the implications for professional practitioners who have undertaken Action Research projects of engaging in Living Educational Theory Research. The implications discussed include the purpose served by professional practitioners drawing on their Action Research projects as data to create their living-educational-theories as contributions to a global educational, values-laden knowledgebase, and the methodological and epistemological challenges addressed in the process.

Our discussion is focused on 'Talking locally, connecting globally: Researching inherent paradoxes experienced in practice to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too.'

We understand Living Educational Theory Research to be a form of professional practitioner, educational research and we distinguish a 'professional' practitioner from a practitioner who is a member of a profession. To be a member of a profession an individual must meet the standards set by the profession. The self-set standards of being a professional include the unique constellation of values that they individual uses to give meaning and purpose to their educational practice.

Education has many meanings such as schooling, mentoring, coaching, training. Here education is taken to mean a life-long, life-wide values-laden practical activity of learning to live humanely a satisfying, productive and worthwhile life and helping others do so too. Our understanding of educational research has been influenced by Medawar's (1969) idea that:

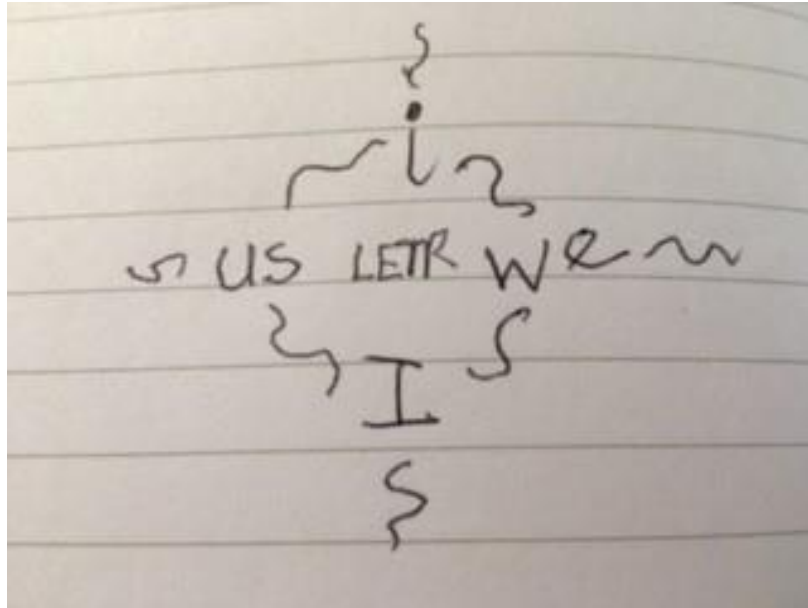
The purpose of scientific enquiry is not to compile an inventory of factual information, nor to build up a totalitarian world picture of natural Laws in which every event that is not compulsory is forbidden. We should think of it rather as a logically articulated structure of justifiable beliefs about nature. It begins as a story about a Possible World – a story which we invent and criticise and modify as we go along, so that it ends by being, as nearly as we can make it, a story about real life. (p.59)

In generating a valid, evidence-based and values-laden story of real life professional practice we have stressed the importance of validation using the mutual rational controls of critical conversations. The validation groups serve two purposes. They test the validity, of the claims to knowledge by professional practitioners, in their explanations for their educational influences in learning. The group also suggests ways of improving the comprehensibility, evidence, sociocultural and sociohistorical understandings and authenticity of the explanations.

Foci for this discussion are some implications of asking, researching and answering a values-driven, practitioner-researcher's question "how can I improve my educational influence in the learning of local and global social formations, and those who comprise them, to realise their values-laden, educational practice within a Living Educational Theory Research perspective?". In this perspective a practitioner-researcher accepts their responsibility for their own professional learning, as they generate valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanations of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning across the social formations within which the practice is located.

The response is intended to overcome the limitation revealed by Mounter (2024) in Living Educational Theory Research. This is the limitation that the explanatory principles in explanations for educational influences in the learning across social formations are not clearly explicated nor well understood.

Mounter's explanatory principles for explaining educational influences in the learning of social formation include nurturing responsiveness to nurturing connectiveness. Mounter explains how understanding the meanings of nurturing responsiveness and nurturing connectiveness requires an understanding of the meanings of the tllde's ~ linear representation in ~i~we~l~us~ relationships and their non-linear representation:



The ~ (tilde) represents relational nurturing responsiveness deepening over time to nurturing connectiveness of educational influences in learning. The problem with the linear representation is that we read from left to right and the linear representation can give the false impression of a movement from left to right. The non-linear representation is intended to correct this mistaken perception.

Nurturing Responsiveness deepening to Nurturing Connectiveness is the energy captured in the tilde ~ in the relational value of ~i~we~l~us~ relationships. Nurturing responsiveness is the connection with another person exploring through research within a social formation. Nurturing connectiveness is a deeper connection and energy within the tilde~ where the social formation includes the values that influence us, our reflections, connections, ideas and understandings:

The clarification of ~i~we~l~us~ relationships, a dynamic, ontological relational value, Integral to my living-educational-theory-research methodology came over a long period of time and was inspired by a range of sources. Reading Buber's (2013) I and Thou Theory and Whitehead and Huxtable's (2016) i~we~i explanation, as well as the South African understanding of Ubuntu (Eze, 2010), supported my interest in how we can capture relationally dynamic and educational influences in learning. (p.121)

We have explored the implications of Living Educational Theory Research as an epistemology for values-driven practitioner-researchers (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2024):

This book explores a value-based research methodology, Living Educational Theory Research (LETR), which aligns a values-based approach with key tenets of professional development to inform and inspire future educators' practice.

Written by world-leading scholars in the field of LETR, the chapters are global in reach and promote the evolving and dynamic nature of the methodology and its application with real-world professional training within higher education. Through discussion and dialogue on the evolution of Living Educational Theory Research, the chapters explore topics such as professional development and community-based

contexts, supporting academics wishing to improve their practice by placing the theory within a scholarly paradigm to legitimise its use for scholarly learning.

Demonstrating how insights from disciplines such as philosophy, sociology and psychology are integrated within the generation of living-educational- theories, this outwardly looking volume will appeal to postgraduate students, scholars and researchers involved with educational theory, action research and other forms of practitioner research, and education research methods more broadly. (Book cover)

Conclusion

The paper provided an overview of Living Educational Theory Research as an epistemology for values-driven practitioner-researchers researching questions such as, “how can I improve my educational influence in the learning of local and global social formations, and those who comprise them, to make a difference that matters?”. Valid, evidence-based and values-laden explanations for educational influences in learning, which contribute to the global growth of educational knowledge were given to illustrate how values are used as explanatory principles in the explanations of educational influences in learning. Dialogic processes of validation using the mutual rational controls of critical conversations we described. The work of practitioners, who have researched questions in the realisation of their responsibilities as professionals and global citizen, has been drawn on.

Living Educational Theory Research encourages professional practitioners to recognise and work with paradox and living-contradictions creatively, as a challenge rather than a threat. In talking locally we focus on questions of the kind, ‘How do I improve my educational influences in my professional practice with values of human flourishing?’. In connecting globally we generate and share publicly our validated, evidence-based, values-laden explanations of our 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, with values of human flourishing and to help others to do so too. In connecting globally we deepen and extend our sociohistorical and sociocultural understandings of how these influence our practice and continuously evolving global understandings, with values of human flourishing.

In connecting globally we have encountered paradoxes as we work within contexts with different cultural values to our own. Whilst we identify with the vision of the Global Education Network Europe (GENE):

A world of greater social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, international understanding, respect for diversity, inclusion, and the realisation of all human rights for all peoples and a decent life for all, particularly the most vulnerable and excluded, locally and globally. Quality Global Education for all can play an important role in the realisation of such a world. (Dublin Declaration, 2022),

We recognise that global contexts include problems such as those identified by Brown (2021) that can influence educational provision and opportunities for the professional development of teachers. These include issues concerning global health; climate change and environmental damage; nuclear proliferation; global financial instability; the humanitarian crisis and global poverty; the barriers to education and opportunity; global inequality and its biggest manifestation, global tax havens.

In acting locally we take for granted our economic security, our access to health services and a political economy governed by democratic principles that continue to work to protect our physical safety and our secular values and beliefs. As we extend our educational influences into global contexts, we are facing paradoxes that are grounded in different cultural values and beliefs. As we work with the planning group of the Fourth International Conference on Transformative Education Research and Sustainable Development (TERSD 2024) we are aware of the influence of Islamic values in the Indonesian culture. As we work with Indian researchers we are facing issues related to the growth of the influence of Hindu nationalism. With South African researchers we are aware of the influence of the values of Ubuntu within the 1994 South African constitution. We are aware of the following. Our secular values and beliefs are different from those grounded in theistic expressions of values and beliefs that often include submission to a deity. Hence, we seek to avoid any colonizing tendencies on our part to impose our values and beliefs on others whilst resisting any attempts by others to impose their values and beliefs on us. What we do in global contexts is to focus on living as fully as possible the values that we identify with the values of human flourishing, whilst recognising and acknowledging the right of individuals with different values to use these values as explanatory principles in their explanations of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which their practice is located, and helping others to do so too, in ways that avoid colonizing influences. In this way we are seeking to work and research with others to enhancing the flow of values and understandings that contribute to human flourishing.

In researching inherent paradoxes experienced in practice to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too we are debating the usefulness of the concept of paradox in relation to the meaning of 'living-contradictions'. A definition of contradiction, based on Aristotelian logic, holds that propositions A and not-A cannot both be true simultaneously. As professional practitioners in the course of creating our living-educational-theories we identify where we experience ourselves as 'living-contradictions', where we hold together the experience of holding certain values together with their negation by ourselves, other people or the context of our practice. We formulate and enact plans to improve matters in the direction of our values to realise them as fully as possible within the constraints of our situation, holding ourselves to account by researching our educational influences in learning and contributing the knowledge created in the process to the growth of a global educational knowledgebase. To date most practitioners have engaged in Living Educational Theory Research to improve what they do to enhance the educational, values-laden learning of those who comprise the social formation, which is the context of the practice, to contribute to the social formation realising its 'values-laden' responsibilities to contribute to the flourishing of their local community and of Humanity globally. As Mounter (2024) points out, few as yet, have focussed on researching their practice to understand and improve what they are doing to enhance their educational, values-laden, influences in learning within and across social formations and contribute the valid explanations for their educational influences in local and global social formations with values of human flourishing (i.e. learning their living-educational-theory) they generate in the process and contribute it to the growth of a global knowledgebase of 'local' social formations and Humanity learning to flourish.

The question we have begun to explore in the creation of this paper is whether a concept of paradox might be of use in researching to enhance individuals and communities learning to flourish as they accept their global responsibilities to help others do so too.

A paradox is a statement or situation that appears to be self-contradictory or absurd but, upon closer examination, reveals a deeper truth or meaning. Unlike a contradiction, a paradox is not necessarily logically inconsistent, but it challenges our understanding of reality and forces us to think beyond conventional wisdom. <https://thecontentauthority.com/blog/contradiction-vs-paradox>

So, what constitutes a paradox in research? Medawar (1969) points to one where he says research scientists don't use the scientific method they espouse. Human sciences, education and professional practitioner educational research appear paradoxical to social scientists as they have an expectation the research will progress in a systematic manner starting with a clear statement of a researchable question, an established methodology will be applied and well known methods will be used to gather and analyse data. The paradox might be summarised as 'how do you know where you are going and how you will get there before you, or another, has already gone there?' Finding 'a gap in the literature' may enable evidence to build support for one established argument or another but it cannot enable new arguments to be formed. You find what you are looking for – but how to know what to look for when it hasn't been seen before? How a practitioner can improve their educational influence in the learning of individual people by identifying and addressing where they experience themselves as a living-contradiction is well established. How a practitioner can improve their educational influence in the learning of a social formation which is the context of their practice by identifying and addressing where they experience themselves as a living-contradiction in that context has also been explored, even though not often. When a practitioner has not been able to resolve their experience of living-contradictions to their satisfaction they have either stopped their research or left and found other employment leaving the situation unchanged.

We wonder whether a shift in thinking when seeking to enhance educational influence in the learning of a social formation to flourish and the social formation helping other social formations to do so too from focusing on resolving contradictions and values of human flourishing denied to identifying paradoxes, working with members of social formations to find ways of addressing problems they have in common to enable Humanity to flourish and generating their individual and collective living-educational-theories.

This is the first time we have thought about 'paradox' and our question and answer is as yet not well formed. We are looking forward to seeing what emerges as we continue to engage in Living Educational Theory Research with the hope of enhancing the learning of individual people and social formations to contribute to bringing into being a world where Humanity flourishes.

We are particularly interested in contributing our understandings to the Chartered College of Teachers work on professionalism (Professionalism, 2024)

References

Brown, G. 2021. *Seven Ways to Change the World*. London; Simon & Schuster.

Creswell, J. W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. California, London, New Dehli; Sage.

Dublin Declaration (2022) European Declaration on Global Education to 2050. Retrieved from <https://www.gene.eu/ge2050-congress>

Eames, K. (1987) *The Growth of a Teacher-Researcher's Attempt to Understand Writing, Redrafting, Learning and Autonomy in the Examination Years*; M.Phil., University of Bath.

Eames, K. (1995) *How do I, as a teacher and educational action-researcher, describe and explain the nature of my professional knowledge?* PhD., University of Bath. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/kevin.shtml>

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. P. (2000) *Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as subject*, pp. 733-768 in Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, California; Sage Publications.

Feyerabend, P. (1975) *Against Method*. London: Verso.

Habermas, J. (1976) *Communication and the evolution of society*. London : Heinemann.

LETR (2024) *Living Educational Theory Doctorates*. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

Living Posters (2024) *Living Poster's Homepage*. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2023.pdf>

Magna Charta Universitatum (2020) Retrieved from <https://www.magna-charta.org/magna-charta-universitatum/mcu2020#:~:text=MAGNA%20CHARTA%20UNIVERSITATUM%20%2D%20MCU%202020%20%2D%20ENGLISH&text=The%20Magna%20Charta%20Universitatum%2C%20a,of%20the%20University%20of%20Bologna>.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2009a) *You and Your Action Research Project*, 3rd Edition. London; Routledge.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2009b) *Doing and Writing Action Research*. London; Sage

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2011) *All you need to know about action research*. London; Sage Publications.

Medawar, P. (1969) *Induction and Intuition in Scientific Thought*, London; Methuen & Co LTD.

Mounter, J. (2024). *A Living Educational Theory Research Approach to Continuing Professional Development in Education*. PhD Thesis, submitted to the University of Cumbria in January 2024.

Naidoo, M. (2005) *I am because we are (A never ending story). The emergence of a living theory of inclusional and responsive practice*. PhD Thesis, University of Bath. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/naidoo.shtml>

Popper, K. (1975) *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, London; Hutchinson & Co.

Professionalism (2024) *Chartered College of Teachers' Professionalism Report*. London; Chartered College of Teaching.

Tight, M. (2016) *Phenomenography: the development and application of an innovative research design in higher education research*. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 19(3); 319-338.

Whitehead, J. (2018)

Whitehead, J. (2009) *How do I influence the Generation of Living Educational Theories for Personal and Social Accountability in Improving Practice? Using a Living Theory Methodology in Improving Educational Practice*, pp. 173- 194, in Tidwell, D, L., Heston, M. L. & Fitzgerald, L. M. (Eds.) (2009) *Research Methods for the Self-Study of Practice* , Chicago; Springer.

Whitehead, J. (2010) *Meanings of Empathetic Resonance and Validity in Visual Narratives: A passion for compassion and loving what we are doing*. Retrieved from <https://actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwempatheticresonancepaperopt.pdf>

Whitehead, J. (2014) *Enacting Educational Reflexivity in Supervising Research into Creating living-educational-theories*. *Journal Educational Research for Social Change* 3(2); 81-93.

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2024) *Living Educational Theory Research as an Epistemology for Practice*. London; Routledge.

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2023) *Why a focus on 'what is educational?' matters so much in reconstructing education?* *Irish Educational Studies*. September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2023.2251451>. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/IESeducational180923.pdf>

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2023) *Developing professional learning through collaboration and learning from other professions with living-educational-theories*. Paper presented at the International Professional Development Association conference on 29th June 2023 at Aston University, Birmingham, UK. Retrieved from <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3.spangleftish.com/s/1298/documents/papers/23jwmhipda280623.pdf>

Whitehead, J. & McNiff, J. (2006) *Action Research Living Theory*. London; Sage.