Living citizenship: transcending the cultural divide

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Living citizenship emerging from reflection on an international educational partnership makes a unique contribution to the field and importantly fulfils the British Educational Research Association aim of improving educational practice for the public benefit. This paper explores the conceptual framework of ‘living citizenship’ as a means for developing international continuing professional development through action research projects. Adapting Whitehead’s living educational theory approach to action research, living citizenship supports and problematises international educational partnerships through the influence of enabling participants as critically active citizens. Such pro-active fieldwork links the values and objectives of social justice and knowledge exchange to proffering educational change within authentic international continuing professional development professional learning environments.

Keywords: citizenship; active; values; living; partnership; participation

1. Introduction

Encouraging people to engage in activities that benefit others in society is the crux of effective citizenship education. The UK Government seeks to reform post-16 education with the inclusion of voluntary work for students, with other governments across the world looking to promote more active engagement from their citizens in social and political processes. It is therefore surprising that there remains a lack of pedagogy for citizenship education. Living citizenship helps to fill this gap by addressing the question of how we can engage people in activities to encourage them to become more active citizens through socially relevant action research projects.

Several authors have asked the question: how can we teach effective citizenship? Kerr (1999) raises concerns about the quality of citizenship education in US schools, with the majority of teaching proceeding from the use of the textbook, and says that there remains debate about what might be considered as effective teaching of citizenship. Gearon (2003) in the British Educational Research Association professional user review highlights the need to address the question: how do we become good citizens?

Traditionally, citizenship education in US schools has focused on transmission of civic knowledge as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). However, recent work (Homana, Barber, and Torney-Purta 2005) has advanced a broader notion of citizenship education. As such, citizenship education
is defined as the opportunities provided by US schools to engage students in meaningful learning experiences and active teaching strategies to facilitate their development as politically and socially responsible individuals. As far back as 1974, in their Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, UNESCO were calling for participation by students to link education and action to solve problems at the local, national and international levels (UNESCO 1974). The international study of citizenship education by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA 2010) indicated that the participating countries increasingly were seeing civic and citizenship education as including not just knowledge and understanding but also activities that promote civic attitudes and values alongside opportunities for students to participate in activities in and beyond the school (Eurydice 2005; Torney-Purta, Schwille, and Amadeo 1999). The intention of citizenship education, according to the UK’s now defunct Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA 2008a, 2008b), is to equip people to play an active role in wider society as global citizens. Overall, the evidence suggests that there has been a shift towards attempts to engage people in activities that encourage them to become more active citizens. Yet, there remains a lack of pedagogical support for the delivery of this engagement. The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study conducted by the UK’s National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER 2010) shows that schools need help with embedding citizenship education into the curriculum, school culture and wider community.

The notion of ‘living citizenship’ has emerged from the study of an international educational partnership between the researchers’ own school in Salisbury, UK and a school in the black township of Kwamashu in Durban, South Africa. The research focuses on how to make a difference to people’s lives by embedding and sustaining an international educational partnership and evaluating how the education of the participants has been influenced through the activities of the partnership. It addresses questions about how to deliver the goal of more informed citizens through enabling an ‘authentic’ citizenship education and through research identifies the transferable pedagogical protocols as new knowledge for designing and developing international education as part of a new continuing professional development framework (i-CPD). Advice is then provided for government agencies and educational leaders on how best to extend and validate educational partnerships that transcend the cultural divide through enabling an i-CPD framework.

Using Sayers’ (2002) notion of effective citizenship education as something which touches the hearts of students and encourages them to be good citizens, the research seeks to show how through establishing, developing, embedding and sustaining an international educational partnership the participants in this form of cross-cultural i-CPD can become better citizens as they critically engage to live out their values more fully. The project looks at how over a 10-year period the partnership activities between the two schools have influenced the continuing education of the participants. Through a series of reciprocal visits, some funded by the British Council, and through diverse curriculum activities, fundraising projects and personal contacts, the partnership has developed to become a powerful influence on the lives of the participants in both cultures. As it has developed, certain underpinning values have emerged. These values have been articulated as social justice, equal opportunities and the African notion of Ubuntu, or humanity. The
partnership between the schools has enabled the teaching of these values in a meaningful context.

The principal researcher for this doctoral project is an educational practitioner-researcher who seeks to live out his values more fully as part of his professional life, with the aim of making an original contribution to educational knowledge and theory that will inspire others to do the same. Building on the African notion of Ubuntu (Louw 1998; Tutu 1999), the project seeks to bring humanity closer together through the medium and conceptual framework of living citizenship.

2. Research methodology and the role of media technology

The research methodology adopted is a self-study participant living theory action research approach. This authentic action research field approach enables methodological inventiveness within practitioner research and validates the importance of allowing practitioners the opportunity to critically account for their own learning and the learning of others through a range of creative means and methods. Real-life social research is also validated by Harré (1993), who argues for authentic social data in the form of ‘real strips of life’ that are used as evidence for discursive discourse analysis. Harré also validates a social science paradigm in which the participant researcher is engaged in ‘critical reflection on the nature of the world to be investigated’ (1993, 24). Gardner and Coombs maintain that a, ‘critical self-reflective encounter of practice could also be understood as an experiential research paradigm’ (2010, 53), and also describe this process as ‘an empowering philosophy that puts freedom to research for the researcher into the same democratic situation as Rogers’ (Rogers and Freiberg 1994) original conception of freedom to learn for all participant learners’ (2010, 61).

Such a biographical case-study approach towards action research is also validated by McNiff (2006), who proffers the living educational theory paradigm of developing case-study narrative as authentic research evidence. By engaging in a self-study reflective research paradigm one can see how practice as a professional educator can be improved through such narrative-based inquiry and fed back as improvement to teaching (Doyle and Carter 2003). Such an applied social research process underpins Doyle and Carter’s concept of ‘Learning to Teach’ and espouses the ethical virtues of Schön’s (1995) reflective practitioner as a means of authentic on-the-job continuing professional development and the subsequent development of a meaningful curriculum through such anchored instruction as situated learning (Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989). Consequently, the principal researcher formulated his own question and found meaningful ways of solving it. Wright-Mills (1959, 1) maintains that the, ‘methods must not prescribe the problems; rather, problems must prescribe the methods’.

The research methodology and paradigm assumes a participatory action research approach supported by the use of media technology in the form of video, pictures and commentary to show and elicit the educational influence on the lives of the people in these two communities. This has enabled the principal researcher to reflect on how the activities of the partnership have influenced the education of himself and his fellow participants. The research design adopted two content-free framework methods for analysis of video data from exchange visits in 2006 and 2007. These frameworks comprised the following:
(1) Using a systematic process for the analysis of qualitative data developed by the principal researcher building on the work of Coombs (1995). Coombs and the principal researcher have built upon Harri-Augstein and Thomas’ (1991) academic model of self-organised learning, Kelly’s (1955) personal construct theory and Slater’s (1976) laddering-up scaffolding procedure. This epistemological framework underpins Coombs’ (1995) talkback scaffolding procedure by articulating a series of experiential ‘content-free’ templates that provide a sequence of stages for eliciting findings from qualitative data. The researcher has used these templates to analyse some of the video data captured for the research project in order to make discursive sense and derive useful findings from the data.

(2) Using ATLAS.ti® software, which flexibly allows for a similar qualitative analysis process to be embedded within it.

Both approaches use a process of researcher-derived discursive discourse analysis (Coombs and Potts 2009). This is a process in which conversations between participants are systematically analysed by the researcher who then, supported by the analysis tools, holds an inner conversation critically checking and re-formulating the interpretation of the data, matching it to pre-agreed focus issues. The manual method and the electronic (ATLAS) method are compared, contrasted and evaluated using authentic case-study examples drawn from the research project (Coombs and Potts 2009). Some useful insights toward the adoption of a video case research methodology are provided for other researchers faced with resolving similar problems with qualitative data. Video case studies (or videocases) are becoming increasingly popular as a way of bridging the gap between theory and practice in pre-service education (Cannings and Talley 2003; Stigler and Hiebert 1999). The videocase allows not only the demonstration of practice, but also helps the development of reflective practice for learning (Cannings 2003). Both of the methods referred to enable the researcher to critically analyse the qualitative video data and elicit findings from it in a systematic way using a universal procedure that is both transparent and independent of the project data; that is, representing a transferable qualitative analysis process for any similar project. These methods can therefore be used within different research frameworks because of their universality and the potential to transfer to any other similar project. Potentially this form of qualitative data collection and analysis represents a new contribution and enhanced validity to the field of social research.

3. Findings

3.1. Clarification and communication of shared values to distinguish international educational partnerships

The following shared values emerged from the dialogue surrounding the partnership and the activities that were developed. It is recognised that they are contested concepts and so their meaning in the context of the research project is explained.

3.1.1. Ubuntu

In Ubuntu the individual is defined in terms of his/her relationship with others (Shutte 1993). Being an individual in this sense means ‘being-with-others’ (Louw...
1998). This is not the same as the western concept of individuality as a solitary aspect of human life, where an individual exists independently from the rest of the community or society. In an Ubuntu sense the individual is not independent of others but is interdependent with others. Khoza (1994) argues that Ubuntu needs to broaden respect for the individual and tackle the negative elements of collectivism. Ndaba (1994) points out that Ubuntu describes how the individual can thrive in a situation where they have ongoing contact and interaction with each other. In this sense Ubuntu requires dialogue and this preserves the uniqueness of the other in his/her otherness. Ubuntu in the sense of the thriving individual describes very well the way that the participants have come to behave in engaging in the activities of, say, an international educational partnership. Through dialogue and interaction the individual participants in this research project have thrived and been able to identify and live out their values more fully transcending any cultural divisions that existed. Thus, we have assumed an interpretation of Ubuntu which sees the individual participant as interdependent with others.

3.1.2. Social justice

The term social justice has been understood in the sense that Rawls (1971) uses it to mean an increase in egalitarianism and equality of opportunity. This is the meaning of social justice shared by other participants in the partnership, as shown by this statement from Siyabonga, the School Pupil President, when commenting on the higher education bursaries that are provided: ‘If two or three learners get successful or achieve their goals that will make a huge difference in their lives and in the life of South Africa, because they will be able to help other pupils’ (Potts 2012, 235). This idea of social justice as engagement by the participants in social acts to increase equity and fairness as part of the social improvement research goals and ‘social manifesto’ (Coombs 1995; Coombs and Smith 2003) is included in the notion of ‘living citizenship’, and forms the ethical and philosophical basis of its unique academic paradigm. The pursuit of social justice, along with Ubuntu, becomes another of the underpinning principles that distinguishes our meaning of ‘living citizenship’.

3.1.3. Equal opportunities

Whilst recognising the criticisms levelled at the notion of equal opportunity and that it is controversial as to which form of equal opportunity, if any, is morally acceptable, the way that the term is assumed in the research project is, in the substantive sense, Chomsky’s (1976) reference to the need for a decent society to overcome inequality of condition in order to enable individuals to be accorded their intrinsic human rights. This is in the sense of equality of rights and echoes the arguments of Rawls (1971) and Parekh (2005). Potts (2012) refers to the participants in the partnership having a ‘moral duty’ to address the inequality of condition between the pupils at the two schools. When participants provide bursaries for pupils at Nqabakazulu School to attend university there is an attempt to address inequality of condition and create fairer equality of opportunity in the Rawlsian sense, as these pupils would not otherwise have access to the funds to enable them to pay the entry fees. When participants learn about fair trade through the partnership, there is a recognition that fair trade can, if the money is spent by the
recipients, for example, on education, lead to less inequality of condition and fairer equality of opportunity. Our value of equality of opportunity becomes, alongside Ubuntu and social justice, another standard of judgement applied to the actions of the participants in the partnership and yet another value that we use to distinguish our meaning of ‘living citizenship’.

3.2. Living out the shared values

Recognition of these shared values leads to actions to live them out. As a result, many participants engage in activities for the partnership to provide social justice and more equal opportunities arising from their concern for individual and societal well-being. The following examples illustrate this response.

3.2.1. Example 1 – Black Dust

The first example is the publication of a book by an internationally renowned author to raise funds for bursaries to enable students from the South African school to attend higher education. A member of staff at the UK school engaged designers, proof-readers and printers to make the publication happen. He involved his students in the marketing and selling of the book. Many advance orders were taken and Black Dust was launched at a local book shop in 2005. Sufficient funds have been raised to offer scholarships to the South African students for eight years and sales of the book continue to this day. This illustrates the humanity of these participants. Their human spirit was touched to react in this way to a problem. The giving of their time and creativity to help others in this way is a symbol of their humanity. The author shows that he was motivated by social justice to engage in these activities to raise funds for the school, as this quote from his speech at the book launch indicates:

When I was eighteen I wanted to change the world and everyone told me that you can’t change this world. Well, maybe they are right, but what is true is that you can change the world for one person and you can change the world for ten people and projects like this are here to remind us about what you can do. (Dvd – Black Dust; Roberts 2005, 10.33–10.54)

3.2.2. Example 2 – Beautizulu jewellery

This project was initiated by the South African school. Zulu jewellery made by the students and members of the South African community at the school is sent to the UK school and sold, with all profits being returned to the South African community. This has been taken on by the Head of Business Studies with his students as a marketing project. The Business Studies students research the marketing of the jewellery and then price each item up and make it ready for sale. Sales are made in school lunch times and at school events. Video footage was taken and this shows business students preparing for the sale, a packed school hall, students busy selling the jewellery, and students, staff and parents buying the jewellery. The students show that they have learned about the principles of fair trade and why they are buying the jewellery. Here are some quotes from students in the video:

All the money that is made from the sale on Friday is going back to South Africa, back to the people who made what we are selling. (Student A)
The Beautizulu jewellery project has led to the establishment of a fair trade group at the UK school comprising students, teachers, support staff, governors and members of the Salisbury community. This group is promoting fair trade within the school and the community and is working to gain Fair Trade status for the School. It is a good example of how the activities of the partnership can lead to associated activities that broaden participants’ learning.

There is high-quality learning going on as the participants in the jewellery project discuss the cultural differences between the South African market and the UK market for jewellery. Lessons are being learned as the business progresses and the South African suppliers are gradually adapting their products to suit the UK market.

3.2.3. Example 3 – long-term impact on Student C

Evidence of long-term impact of the partnership on the life of a participant is in relation to Student C. An interview was conducted with her five years after her visit to South Africa as a student member of the group in 2005. In the video interview she says that participation in the partnership confirmed her desire to study international development at university and:

Whilst I was at university I was very committed to my course because I knew that I wanted to do something to work with people like those that we had visited at the School, so it had a big impact on me. (Quoted in Potts 2012)

Subsequently, she is now working full-time for a children’s charity.

These examples show participants in the educational partnership acting to live out their values of social justice, equal opportunity and Ubuntu more fully. The researcher and other participants in the partnership have recognised the injustice of the situation in the black township and have advocated change. Participants have mobilised others to recognise the lack of social justice and equality of opportunity and to take action to change the situation. In this sense, the shared values have driven the activities of the international partnership.

There is agreement with the author of the article (Anon. 2001, 15) in the Development Education Association publication who says:

Teachers need to recognise their own values and attitudes as part of the process of encouraging pupils to explore theirs.

Through the partnership activity, teachers, parents and adult members of the community are recognising their own values and attitudes. Their reflections are leading to actions to live out their values more fully. This is encouraging students to do the same.

The hearts of the participants were sufficiently touched by the activities of the partnership that they had an impact on their own lives and on their subsequent actions. The international partnership led to sustained long-term impact on learning on several fronts. The long-term impact has been to produce a response that improves the lives of citizens in both communities.
3.3. Transferable pedagogical protocols for teaching citizenship through international educational partnerships

Another key contribution is to the field of citizenship education, with the identification of a set of pedagogical protocols for active citizenship education based around an international educational partnership. This set of protocols provides a practical application of Sayers’ (2002) notion of citizenship education as touching the hearts of participants. They are informing practice through publication on open source websites and through their inclusion in the Global Schools Partnership Sustainability Toolkit. They help to address the concerns of Martin (2007) about international educational partnerships as a means of tackling negative prejudice. The absence of a pedagogy for citizenship education led to the question being posed by Gearon (2003): how do we learn to become good citizens? The set of protocols identified address this question, as well as the question posed by Zammit (2008) regarding what a partnership based on equality, mutual respect and understanding would look like. The fact that these questions were posed illustrates the need for pedagogical protocols in both citizenship education as well as international educational partnerships. The protocols build on the work of Crick (1999) with an emphasis on citizenship education as a means of exploring and identifying values and developing human relationships. In a wider context the protocols provide a practical example of Sachs’ (1999) notion of an activist teaching profession concerned with eliminating exploitation, inequality and oppression.

The pedagogical protocols that can be derived from this research can be summarised as follows:

• The development of a common set of socio-educational values and a shared language through dialogue between the participants. These shared and common cross-cultural values serve to provide purpose and direction for the activities of the partnership.

• The encouragement of participation and a democratic approach to the activities of the partnership. Widening participation leads to greater sustainability of the partnership and widens the sphere of influence of the partnership, providing more participants with the opportunity to live out their values. A democratic approach is important because of the opportunity that it provides for modelling this important value.

• The activities of the partnership are most effective when they touch the hearts of the participants and inspire them to live out their values more fully. These activities give the values of the partnership meaning to the participants and engage them in becoming better citizens. Personal contact and the development of friendships between the participants is an important element in this.

• The development of activities that tackle stereotypes and encourage a critical approach from participants. Participants must be challenged to assess their own prejudices and to reflect on their own views of each other so that a different perspective can emerge. This process is facilitated by emphasising the shared values and language of the partnership. Again, the development of personal relationships and trust is important in this respect.

• The activities of the international educational partnership should aim at nothing less than meaningful social change identified and agreed by partners. In a partnership where there is clear evidence of inequality and social
injustice, then correcting these injustices through social change becomes a key motivational factor for the participants. Social change can be achieved through frame alignment (Snow and Benford 1988), by reaching agreement between participants on the need for change and then through the development of activities that meet this need.

- The importance of developing activities that have long-term impact and sustain the partnership. Funding from supportive bodies, such as the British Council, does not last forever. To sustain the partnership beyond the provision of external funding, activities with a wider scope are needed. Thus, involving members of the wider community, setting up sustainable curriculum projects and inspiring participants to continue their involvement over a sustained period of time are strategies that are needed.

- Participants should be encouraged to construct narratives that are put into the public domain to encourage discussion and debate, thus raising the status of international educational partnerships as a means of levering up standards and providing teacher participants with evidence of professionalism as part of an official i-CPD process.

These protocols are transferable to other educational partnerships and can help to provide a pedagogical framework for the delivery of citizenship education in a way that enables participants to become living citizens through actively transcending cultural divisions.

3.4. Implications for educational practice and recommendations for the design of i-CPD

Table 1 provides a summary of the implications of the evidence derived from the study.

3.5. Clarification of the notion of ‘living citizenship’ in continuing professional development for participants in international projects

I want to see if I can captivate your imaginations with the idea of your living educational theory. I see your accounts of your learning, to the extent that they are explaining your educational influence in this learning, as constituting your own living educational theory. (Whitehead 2005)

The living theory approach to action research is one that best suits the perception of people as human beings who live in relation to each other and who are participants in educating themselves and creating their own lives. This links to a more authentic and humanistic research policy as espoused by Heron (1981), who argues that humans are intelligent creative beings, who are self-determining and who take up freely the thinking that determines their actions. It also fits with Rom Harré’s (1998) notion of people as:

active beings using all sorts of tools, including their own brains, for carrying on their life projects according to local norms and standards. (1998, 1)

Drawing on this notion of living theory, living citizenship in relation to an international educational partnership can be understood as explaining the
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<th>Evidence in terms of implications for educational practice</th>
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<tr>
<td>The importance of establishing international educational partnerships as a means of delivering effective citizenship education and of levering up educational standards.</td>
<td>Governments should be encouraging the establishment of international educational partnerships as a vehicle for social and educational change to support the work of UNESCO, DFID, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Global Perspectives Institute and other organisations.</td>
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<td>The focus on socio-educational values as a key part of international citizenship education.</td>
<td>Governments should provide guidelines that emphasise the importance of embedding cross-cultural values in establishing an international educational partnership.</td>
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<td>The establishment of a network of dialogues between participants to encourage discussion of the underpinning values that are shared. This can take many years.</td>
<td>Participants in international partnerships should develop channels of communication to encourage discussion of values so that they can reach consensual agreement on the core underpinning values.</td>
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<td>The extension of participation and the importance of a democratic approach to decision-making in the partnership.</td>
<td>Guidelines should emphasise the importance of the adoption of a democratic approach to decision-making. This is on two levels, between schools and in each of the communities, recognising the existence of hierarchies in some communities making the democratisation process difficult.</td>
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<td>The development of a shared language to communicate the common values and the shared vision of the partnership.</td>
<td>A Partnership Agreement between the partners should emphasise the values that underpin the partnership and provide a shared vision. Recognition that this is a living document that will evolve over time as part of the educational development process, and hence will need to be reviewed and updated regularly.</td>
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<td>The development of activities that touch the hearts (affecting the engagement of the emotional side) of participants and encourage them to live out the agreed values of the partnership more fully, thus becoming active, socially responsible citizens. These values underpin the nature and quality of subsequent actions by the participants.</td>
<td>Guidance can be given on the sorts of activities that can encourage wider participation and that promote learning and active citizenship. This to be linked to the UK’s Department for Education guidance on citizenship education and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools in the United States. This is related to raising standards through the development of socio-educational values. Emphasis to be given to those activities that challenge values, change dispositions and lead to actions and the embedding of the partnership as a form of ‘living citizenship’.</td>
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<td>The importance of embedding shared values for educational change. Identification of the activities that have had the most impact on learning through challenging pre-conceptions, changing values and dispositions leading to frame alignment and motivating action.</td>
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educational influence of the participants’ actions as active citizens upon themselves, others in the partnership, and on the social formations of the communities in which they live. In this form of i-CPD the living citizen acts publicly and is accountable for his/her own actions. They hold themselves to account for their actions as citizens and their potential influence on the lives of others in the partnership.

The notion of living citizenship emerged from the research project as a synthesis of the research approach adopted and the actions of the participants as global intercultural citizens. It can be defined as a description of the way that participants in international educational partnerships can identify and then live out their values in a practical way, through their actions. In relation to living citizenship, we are accepting Habermas’ (2000, 264) point that, ‘The private autonomy of equally entitled citizens can be secured only insofar as citizens actively exercise their civic autonomy’. Participants who are living their values of living citizenship in a practical way are exercising civic autonomy, and as a consequence they are securing the private autonomy of equally entitled citizens.

Moreover, living citizenship is a creative act. It can be linked to the values and aspirations of the $5 \times 5 \times 5 = 	ext{Creativity project}$ (John and Pound 2011). Living citizenship is about the development of human relationships to unlock participants’ creativity in their response to problematic situations where they see the need to live out their values as citizens more fully. It supports the development of a democratic society in the sense that, ‘a democratic society depends on everyone taking responsibility and contributing what they can, which is possible only when each of us feels we belong and are seen as uniquely creative, capable and self-determining individuals’ (John 2011, 2).

The key ideas that underpin the notion of living citizenship are those that have been discussed in this article: Ubuntu, social justice and equal opportunities. By ‘doing Ubuntu’, participants are showing their humaneness and their respect for each other and demonstrating community connectedness, and cross-cultural

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<td>Development of activities, other than visits, that effectively replicate the benefits of direct experience; for example, embedding of video into practice.</td>
<td>Consideration of the second-order impact tools; that is, those tools that have most impact for those who cannot afford, or do not have the opportunity to have, direct experience of the other culture through the partnership.</td>
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<td>Pursuit of a reflective, action-based approach to i-CPD giving additional status to international education. This links to the national professional standards for teachers in modelling values for students.</td>
<td>Implications for the design of i-CPD with a focus on an action research approach with an attendant accredited postgraduate qualification.</td>
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<td>Encouragement of participants (teachers and others involved in international development work) to put the findings from research projects into the public domain and to have them validated through accreditation by universities.</td>
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<td>Possible transferability to other cultural contexts (e.g. disability).</td>
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understanding. By taking actions to help those that are marginalised by society to have equal access to education, participants are promoting social justice in the Rawlsian (Rawls 1971) sense of the creation of a more just or equitable society. Their actions are an attempt to address inequality of condition and create fairer equality of opportunity. The actions must be taken as a result of genuine dialogue that values the voice of all of the participants and that gives priority to any disadvantaged participants so that they are able to drive the partnership forward to realise their own vision of progress and development. The research project highlights the originality of living citizenship, as a relationally dynamic standard of judgement that includes a holistic appreciation of Ubuntu, social justice, equal opportunity, partnership and development.

This notion has epistemological significance for the nature of educational knowledge. The idea of using living citizenship in the creation of one's own living educational theory focuses attention on a process of accountability that engages with issues of power and privilege in society. The research can be seen as a response to Ball and Tyson’s (2011) claim that educational researchers have fulfilled the American Educational Research Association mission to advance knowledge about education and to encourage scholarly enquiry related to education, but have only weakly fulfilled the mission to promote research to improve practice and serve the public good. This action research project is grounded in a commitment both to improve practice and to generate knowledge that serves the wider public good, both at home and abroad through the living standard of judgement that underpins living citizenship.

The implications of this research are clear for citizenship education. Effective citizenship education needs to focus on active participation in partnership work alongside critical reflection on values by the participants through dialogue, thus generating new meanings and understandings for the participants. The researchers are looking to develop a living global citizenship approach in schools, with participants in Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) projects and with aid agencies such as OXFAM and ActionAid.

4. Conclusion
The evidence presented in this research project demonstrates that international partnerships have the potential to embed citizenship education in schools by raising awareness of international issues, challenging existing cultural perspectives, promoting discussion about values and encouraging more active citizens who live out their values with a view to making a difference to their own lives and the lives of others. Thus participants can become ‘Living Citizens’ and in so doing they promote greater community cohesion. Therefore, traditional locally delivered and passive citizenship education in the United Kingdom, the United States and in other countries can be reconceptualised using an international educational partnership as a vehicle for the development of activities that touch the hearts of participants and mobilise them to act to live out and identify their values more fully. These ‘citizenship’ values should be negotiated and agreed by the participants in the partnership so that they become shared and underpin the activities that are carried out. This process gives rise to the notion of ‘living citizenship’.

Given that there is widespread agreement that effective citizenship education is about more than knowledge transmission and that what is required is to engage students in meaningful learning experiences and to use active teaching strategies to
facilitate their development as politically and socially responsible individuals (see Eurydice 2005; IEA 2010; Torney-Purta, Schwille, and Amadeo 1999; UNESCO 1974), international educational partnerships offer an opportunity to embed citizenship education as an authentic form of ‘living citizenship’ not just in the curriculum, but also in the school culture and wider community. The researchers identified findings that suggested the need for citizenship education to be linked to an international dimension through reconceptualising the purpose of continuing professional development. This idea led to the notion of i-CPD operating as an opportunity to lever transcultural knowledge through participatory action research projects and how this might also lead to useful applied social research impact evidence. We therefore argue for an international educational i-CPD policy that validates, levers, and celebrates the transcultural activity of living citizenship fieldwork.

‘Living citizenship’ can be both understood and achieved through enabling practical projects, such as participants living out their values through acts to further social justice, equality of opportunity and Ubuntu (humanity). The original intention of citizenship education in the United Kingdom (QCDA 2008a, 2008b) was to equip people to play an active role in society as global citizens. Clearly, there is a powerful and synergetic link here between the curriculum of citizenship and the goals of international education and exchange partnerships. Living citizenship illustrates three of the conceptions of the ‘good’ citizen as outlined by Westheimer and Kahne (2004, 237): ‘personally responsible, participatory and justice orientated’. Living citizenship i-CPD projects can address the question posed by Gearon (2003) in the British Educational Research Association Professional User Review: how do we learn to become good citizens? Such i-CPD recognised projects provide examples of state support and status given for groups rewarding civic virtue (Cooter 2000).

Research into living citizenship enables individuals to create their own living theories that advance knowledge, encourage scholarly inquiry and improve practice for the public good. Clarifying and communicating the meanings of living citizenship through an i-CPD project with the creation of an action researcher’s living educational theory, makes an original and significant contribution to the field of living educational theory.

Furthermore, living citizenship carries a message of hope for humanity. Participants within i-CPD partnerships are actively engaged in negotiating, discovering and then living out their shared values more fully and in so doing cultural divisions are transcended, real lives are improved and the research social manifesto is achieved. In this way, living citizenship can become normalised as an authentic socio-educational research process that seeks wider community engagement through enabling a living consensus agenda for change that impacts positively upon society.

Note

References


