



Theorizing Education at the Confluence of Cognition, Culture, and Values: Contemporary Perspectives from Emerging Educational Studies

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Editorial

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With this second issue of Volume 2, the Journal of Emerging Educational Studies (JEES) reaffirms its commitment to advancing theoretically grounded, methodologically pluralistic, and socially responsive educational scholarship. The articles collected in this issue collectively engage with foundational questions concerning how learning, teaching, and development are conceptualized in contemporary educational contexts, which are shaped by globalization, diversity, sustainability concerns, and shifting epistemological paradigms. Rather than approaching education as a unidimensional or purely instructional process, the contributions in this issue foreground education as a complex, situated, and value-laden phenomenon that unfolds across formal, informal, and nonformal learning environments.

A unifying feature of this issue is its emphasis on theoretical integration. Across diverse populations and contexts—gifted students, pre-service teachers, parents, and the global research community—education is examined through lenses that intersect cognition, sociocultural interaction, and ethical orientation. In doing so, the studies respond to a growing call within educational research to move beyond reductionist models and toward frameworks capable of capturing the multifaceted nature of learning in the twenty-first century.



Methodological Orientations and Theory - Method Alignment

Before engaging with the thematic contributions of the individual studies, it is worth noting that this issue also reflects significant developments in methodological thinking within educational research. The articles collectively employ quantitative survey designs, mixed-methods approaches, and bibliometric analysis, illustrating a commitment to methodological pluralism grounded in theoretical purpose rather than procedural convention. Such diversity highlights a critical epistemological stance: complex educational phenomena necessitate research designs that are sensitive to both measurable patterns and the contextualized meaning - making processes that underlie them.

The mixed-methods studies included in this issue demonstrate how quantitative findings gain explanatory depth when complemented by qualitative insights, particularly in the investigation of constructs such as intercultural competence, willingness to communicate, and value orientation. At the same time, the bibliometric analysis offers a meta-level methodological lens, enabling reflection on how knowledge in a given field is produced, organized, and circulated. Taken together, these methodological choices reinforce the importance of theory - method alignment in emerging educational studies and contribute to more nuanced and robust forms of academic inquiry.

Rethinking Gifted Education: Cognition, Context, and Domain Specificity

Two articles in this issue make substantial contributions to the theoretical discourse on gifted education by challenging essentialist and monolithic conceptions of giftedness. The study examining gifted high school students' critical thinking skills in daily life situates crucial thinking as a transferable, context-dependent competence rather than as an automatic outcome of high cognitive ability. Drawing implicitly on constructivist and sociocultural perspectives, the study emphasizes the formative role of educational experiences and learning environments in shaping higher-order thinking skills.

The finding that critical thinking levels vary significantly across talent domains, while remaining unaffected by gender or grade level, raises essential theoretical questions regarding domain specificity and instructional differentiation. In particular, the comparatively lower performance observed in the "questioning" dimension highlights the need to reconceptualize gifted education curricula as spaces where inquiry, epistemic curiosity, and reflective thinking are systematically cultivated across all domains, including the arts. This perspective aligns with contemporary gifted education theories that advocate for interdisciplinary learning and the integration of cognitive, creative, and metacognitive processes.

Complementing this micro-level analysis, the bibliometric study of gifted education research offers a macro-theoretical contribution by mapping the intellectual structure of the field. Through its examination of publication trends, citation patterns, institutional productivity, and international collaboration networks, the study situates gifted education



within a global knowledge production system. The prominence of keywords such as equity and giftedness reflects an ongoing shift in paradigm toward more inclusive and socially attuned frameworks.

At the same time, the concentration of scholarly influence within specific countries and institutions invites critical reflection on issues of epistemic authority and representation. From a theoretical standpoint, this study highlights the value of bibliometric approaches not only as descriptive tools but also as instruments for examining the sociopolitical dimensions of academic knowledge production.

Intercultural Communicative Competence and Teacher Agency

The third contribution in this issue addresses a central concern in contemporary teacher education: preparing educators for linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. By examining the relationship between Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) among pre-service EFL teachers, the study advances a theoretically rich understanding of communication as a socially situated and affectively mediated practice.

The strong predictive relationship between ICC and WTC supports theoretical models that conceptualize communication as an emergent phenomenon shaped by cognitive awareness, emotional orientation, and cultural sensitivity. The particular significance of the affective and cognitive dimensions of ICC aligns with sociopsychological and intercultural theories that emphasize empathy, openness, and self-reflection as foundational to communicative agency.

Importantly, this study challenges instrumental views of teacher competence that prioritize the acquisition of technical skills over the relational and ethical dimensions of teaching. By positioning ICC as a core component of teacher preparedness, the research contributes to a growing theoretical discourse that frames teaching as an inherently intercultural, dialogic, and value-infused practice—especially within globalized educational landscapes.

Values Education, Sustainability, and Informal Learning Ecologies

Extending the theoretical scope of the issue beyond institutional settings, the final article examines the relationship between parental awareness of circular fashion and children's value orientations. Grounded in perspectives from values education, sustainability education, and social learning theory, the study conceptualizes learning as an ecological process that unfolds through everyday practices and intergenerational interaction.

The findings reveal a familiar yet theoretically significant tension between knowledge, attitudes, and behavior—one that has long occupied scholars of moral education and educational psychology. While parents may possess substantial awareness of environmental



issues, this awareness does not consistently translate into behavioral change. Nevertheless, parental awareness emerges as a determining factor in children's prioritization of values such as thrift, responsibility, compassion, and respect for nature.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the argument that values education cannot be confined to formal curricula. Instead, it must be understood as a distributed process shaped by family practices, cultural narratives, and material conditions. By framing circular fashion as both an environmental and moral practice, the study contributes to the expansion of conceptualizations of education for sustainability and highlights the pedagogical significance of informal learning contexts.

Concluding Reflections: Toward an Integrated Theoretical Vision

Taken together, the studies in this issue exemplify the intellectual orientation of the Journal of Emerging Educational Studies: an orientation that values theoretical depth, methodological rigor, and social relevance. Across diverse contexts and populations, the articles converge on a shared insight—that education is a relational, contextual, and ethically grounded endeavor that resists simplistic explanation.

By integrating micro-level analyses of learners and families with macro-level examinations of research systems and theoretical constructs, this issue advances a more holistic vision of emerging educational studies. It invites scholars to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue, to critically examine dominant paradigms, and to develop theoretical frameworks capable of addressing the complexities of contemporary education.

On behalf of the editorial board, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the authors for their substantive contributions and to the reviewers for their critical engagement and scholarly rigor. It is our hope that this issue will not only inform ongoing debates but also inspire future research that continues to theorize education in ways that are both intellectually robust and socially meaningful.

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Editor-in-Chief

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