

Participatory Research Approaches in Global Contexts

Dr Esther Priyadharshini has experience of leading research projects in British and Indian contexts, working with a range of educational institutions, social and business organisations. Her expertise lies in combining critical theoretical perspectives (post colonialism and feminism) with participatory research methodologies in contexts of ambiguous power relationships. Some of these contexts include situations of 'studying up' involving elite/powerful subjects or organisational interests as well as those more traditional subjects of social science research like school pupils and university students. She has conducted academic and commercial research with a range of Indian academic institutions and universities, business and charitable organisations in India and the UK. She is interested in the dynamics of research encounters in fieldwork sites, and the inter-twined nature of the subjectivities of researchers and their participants/subjects.

Professor Anna Robinson-Pant has extensive experience in educational research, teacher education and development planning for various international and local development agencies in the UK and South Asia (particularly Nepal). Her research interests include adult literacy and participatory development, gender and education, children's participation and intercultural learning. She places a strong emphasis on participatory research as evidenced by her action research projects with children and teachers in Norfolk primary schools on participation and voice, as well as with international students on their experiences in UK higher education. As UNESCO Chair in Adult Literacy and Learning for Social Transformation, she is developing programmes with partner universities in Nepal, Egypt and Ethiopia to engage practitioners and policy makers in the research process.

Dr Catherine Jere has a background in education and international development, working across research, evaluation, training and practice. She has led research projects within Malawi and sub-Saharan Africa, encompassing both non-formal and formal approaches to education provision, as well as cross-cutting issues of gender, poverty and the social impact and mitigation of HIV/AIDS. Working alongside local stakeholders, she has used participatory research to explore the educational constraints and resilience of communities in rural Malawi, and to inform educational programming and policy regarding school-related gender-based violence and out-of-school children and youth. Through her research and teaching, Catherine is keen to promote transformative mixed-methods research designs that embed participatory methods within all stages of the research process and foreground social action and change.