



Journal of Transformative Praxis
Vol. 5, No. 1, 2024, pp. 0-9
<https://doi.org/10.51474/jrtp/15778>

Editorial

***Swa-Twam-Tat* Inquiry: Challenging Western-induced Epistemologies and Exploring Possibilities**

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Abstract

Western-induced epistemologies, rooted in individualism, rationalism, and empiricism, have been criticized for their shortcomings in addressing complex, interdisciplinary issues and for sidelining non-Western knowledge systems and/or *Gyana Pranali*. These critiques underline the need for more inclusive and diverse epistemological approaches aligned with relational ontologies that embrace cross-cultural perspectives and comprehensive knowledge systems. This editorial is an avenue for the scholar to examine the boundaries of such epistemologies mainly through the lenses of *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry and autoethnography, which reveal significant limitations in tackling complex, interdisciplinary issues and marginalizing non-Western knowledge systems. The *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry promotes a more inclusive approach by integrating diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems. It aims to challenge and expand beyond Western-centric epistemologies, engaging within the community of 'I' (i.e., self, you, and others) as a collective consciousness. This engagement is sensed in autoethnography, a research method that critically connects personal experiences with broader cultural, social, and political contexts, requiring researchers to reflect on their own experiences to gain insights into wider social phenomena. This approach often uses creative forms of representation to connect the person with the cultural phenomena. Bringing together these orientations into discussions, the final section of the editorial concludes with a brief summary of the articles and book review featured in Volume 5, Issue 1.

Keywords: *Western-induced epistemologies. Interdisciplinary. Swa-Twam-Tat. Autoethnography. Gyana Pranali. Cultural perspectives.*

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ISSN: 2717-5081 (Print); 2738-9529 (Online)

Journal Webpage:

1. <https://jrtp.kusoed.edu.np/>



Published by Kathmandu University School of Education, Hattiban, Lalitpur, Nepal.
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Introduction

Amidst the revolution in research and innovation, there has been a growing interest among researchers in cross-cultural and/or non-Western epistemologies that integrate diverse knowledge systems (Shahjahan et al., 2022) from the East, South, and North. Non-Western perspective offers critiques that challenge the so-called standard and well-established knowledge systems and/or methodologies. The Western is not a geographical territory but a mode of imperialism for promoting Western epistemologies and marginalizing the non-Western knowledge systems. So, the progress in non-Western perspectives and/or knowledge systems appears to be significantly hindered by the dominance of Western-induced epistemologies (Yeganeh et al., 2004), neglecting the relational ontologies (Slife, 2004). This alignment has led to numerous limitations in cross-cultural and/or non-Western research, creating barriers to further inquiries in spaces that are beyond the West. To this concern, the editorial examines the criticisms of Western-induced epistemologies—individualism, rationalism, and empiricism (Mackie, 1965)—and highlights the shortcomings in tackling complex, interdisciplinary issues and their propensity to marginalize non-Western knowledge system. The editorial offers more inclusive and diverse epistemological approaches incorporating cultural perspectives, knowledge systems, and methodologies such as *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry and autoethnography to uncover the phenomenology of lived meaning, the meaning of meaning and the source of meaning (van Manen, 2014) by engaging with different knowledge systems that promote relational ontologies. It emphasizes the importance of incorporating critical reflexivity to address biases in research, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration to integrate different perspectives challenging such Western-induced epistemologies, and advocating for inclusive policies in academic institutions and funding bodies. In this offering, we are optimistic about creating a richer, more equitable, and more innovative academic space by embracing epistemological diversity and inclusive research practices and working together to ensure that all voices are heard and valued in pursuing knowledge (Freire, 1970) within relational ontologies.

Epistemological Lenses

Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, examines the nature, sources, and limitations of knowledge, shaping our worldview and reality (Luitel & Dahal, 2020). It provides researchers with guiding principles for methodologies (Guba & Lincoln, 1985), closely linking epistemological positions with methodological approaches, which influence the research process by helping to develop questions, design studies, and adopt appropriate strategies. However, “research is based on a realistic perspective at ontological and epistemological levels.” (Yeganeh et al., 2004, p. 67) aligned with their respective knowledge systems. On the other side, it is argued that the Western research tradition of considering epistemology is complicated and fuzzy and cannot capture the essence of epistemological diversity (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996) aligned to relational ontologies. For example, researchers often make assumptions to understand and explain cultural phenomena. But, dealing with Western ways of knowing can make it harder to explore these cultural phenomena. Next, epistemology plays a crucial role in knowledge production by shaping our understanding of the world and guiding research methodologies. For instance, Western epistemologies, particularly based on individualism, rationalism, and empiricism, have historically dominated academic and research settings. This dominance often shapes the frameworks and methodologies used in scholarly inquiry, prioritizing scientific and empirical data while marginalizing other forms of knowledge, such as indigenous and experiential insights rooted in different epistemologies. As a result, non-Western perspectives and knowledge systems are frequently overlooked or undervalued, leading to a lack of diversity and inclusivity in research (Althaus, 2020). The hegemony of the Western epistemologies can limit the scope of academic exploration and hinder the development of more holistic and culturally sensitive approaches to knowledge production (Howarth, 2010) within the community of ‘I’ (i.e., self, you, and others).

Our Notion of West, Western, and ‘Western-Induced’

In our work, the concept of the ‘West’ is viewed with both admiration and skepticism and is associated with progress, capitalism, materialism, democracy, and individualism. Thus, the ‘West’ symbolizes a form of modernity, technological advancement, and confident lifestyle choices, often seen in fashion,

entertainment, and governance. However, this influence also raises concerns about cultural erosion and the loss of traditional values and identity such as oral traditions, spiritual insights, cultural practices, and experiential learning within(out) the cultural, social, and spiritual contexts. However, the ‘West’ is not to be referred to as geography, for geographically, other locations might have embraced the Western Modern Worldview (WMW). The ‘Western’ idea includes modernity and lifestyle changes influenced by Europe and North America, shaped by British India's proximity. Today, ‘Western’ signifies progress and innovation but also brings worries about losing traditional values such as oral traditions, spiritual insights, cultural practices, and experiential learning. On the whole, the ‘Western’ is not just about adjectives; instead, it refers to the cultural worldview promoting individual rights, freedom of expression, and secularism. Of course, the idea that the WMW could have misappropriated such notions. In the mask of these notions, the West appears to have promoted hegemony worldwide by imposing those ideas via (crypto) positivism (Kincheloe & Tobin, 2009). The term ‘Western-induced’ refers to changes brought by Western influence, leading to significant developments in research and innovation, education, governance, and infrastructure. This term reflects the complex balance between embracing progress and preserving cultural identity within(out) the cultural, social, and spiritual contexts, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of Western influence in the name of standard and well-established frameworks with several limitations and biases in Nepal. Of course, WMW and subsequent inquiry approaches arising in the West have far-reaching consequences in other parts of the world. The most disempowering influence of Western-induced ontology of materiality is to subtly inferiorise non-materialistic ontological models arising from spiritual, nature-worshipping, shamanistic, ancestor-worshipping traditions. Thus, the perception of the West in our research group is a balance between embracing progress and preserving oral traditions, spiritual insights, cultural practices, and experiential learning, showing how Western ideals are both welcomed and questioned for their impact on local culture, education, research and innovation.

In this regard, Luitel and Taylor (2019) highlighted the epistemological conflict encountered by non-Western scholars, who face resistance when promoting their epistemologies due to the dominant positivistic perspective that views research as testing pre-established hypotheses. Further, non-Western researchers can encounter difficulties in participating in such dominant language games as "research funding regimes and institutional productivity demands are very much tied to the positivist language of hypothesis testing, data analysis, and research findings" (Luitel & Taylor, 2019, p. 12). Thus, we do not necessarily reject the West, WMW, and Western-induced ontologies; instead, we seek rapprochement of co-constructive epistemologies. We do not intend to destroy the Western constructs; instead, we deconstruct them as a basis for creating antithesis and synthesis to “represent” the world better ontologically. If localized and indigenous notions are more appropriate for naming and categorizing, we prefer them in our research. The *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry is more effective than autoethnography because it incorporates first-person, second-person, and third-person perspectives. In contrast, autoethnography divides the world into two parts, even though it claims to focus on the dialectical relation between self and culture.

Critique of Western-induced Inquiries and Possibilities of *Swa-Twam-Tat* Inquiry

Western-induced epistemological frameworks often reduce complex phenomena to simpler components, potentially overlooking the holistic and interconnected nature of knowledge and/or knowledge systems or *Gyana Pranali* rooted in non-Western traditions. It emphasizes specific types of knowledge, such as scientific and empirical information (Guo & Sheffield, 2008), while sidelining other forms, like indigenous knowledge and experiential insights of relational ontologies. It overlooks *Gyana Pranali*, which aligns with the self-duties/*Karma* (i.e., *Swa*); existence of external world (i.e., *Twam*), and pantheistic viewpoint to explore the entirety (i.e., *Tat*). Western ways of knowing are often criticized for pushing a Eurocentric view, which might not fit or be relevant to non-Western contexts. This can result in a lack of cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness. The emphasis on objectivity can ignore the subjective and contextual aspects influencing knowledge production, such as the researcher’s background, context, positions, and societal influences. Furthermore, there is often an implicit assumption that Western ways of knowing are superior, which can devalue and undermine other epistemological traditions. These limitations emphasize the need for more inclusive and diverse epistemological approaches that recognize and integrate different cultural perspectives and knowledge

systems. Further, Western-induced epistemological frameworks invalidate non-Western ways of knowing in several ways, prioritizing scientific and empirical information as the primary sources of valid knowledge, which can devalue other forms of knowledge, such as oral traditions, spiritual insights, cultural practices, and experiential learning, central to non-Western cultures. These Western frameworks frequently operate from a Eurocentric viewpoint, assuming Western methods and theories are universally applicable and standard, and there are no other alternatives. This can lead to dismissing non-Western knowledge systems as inferior or irrelevant, ignoring their unique contributions and contextual significance. For instance, standardization of research methods based on Western principles can marginalize non-Western methodologies. However, the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry aims to 'go beyond' the Western-induced epistemological frameworks and advocates for knowledge construction approaches rooted in the ancient philosophical concept of 'Tat Tvam Asi,' meaning 'That Thou Art.' This phrase from the Chandogya Upanishads highlights the unity of the individual soul (i.e., Atman) with the universal soul (i.e., Brahman). In general, 'Tat Tvam Asi' highlights the unity between the individual self (*Atman*) and the ultimate reality, showing a deep connection and oneness among the community of 'I' as relational 'I'. The approach emphasizes self-inquiry and reflection to comprehend one's true nature and the interconnectedness of all existence. Thus, the *Swa-Twam-Tat* methodology involves deep introspection and meditation or contemplation, encouraging individuals to explore their personal experiences and their relationship with broader cultural, social, and spiritual contexts within the community of 'I'. It highlights the unity of the self with the ultimate reality, integrating diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems, or *Gyana Pranali*.

Western-induced epistemologies often lack cultural sensitivity, failing to recognize the importance of cultural context in knowledge production. This can result in the misinterpretation or misrepresentation of non-Western knowledge systems, further marginalizing those knowledge systems. Academic and research institutions, predominantly influenced by such epistemologies, may have inherent biases that favor Western ways of knowing. This can limit funding, publication opportunities, and academic recognition for research rooted in non-Western epistemologies. These factors contribute to the marginalization and invalidation of non-Western ways of knowing, so there is a need for more inclusive and diverse epistemological approaches that respect and integrate a variety of cultural perspectives. Next, the notion 'I exist because you are there' reflects the non-dual nature of existence, highlighting a deep connection and unity between the individual soul and the Supreme Self. This means 'I' is not separate from 'you' and 'others'. But 'I' is a relational construct formed by different ontologies. In *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry, *Swa* inquiry is the first-person inquiry focused on self-inquiry (i.e., self-reflection, autoethnography, dialogue, journaling, meditation, and introspection, to name but a few). Self-reflection is key to examining one's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Autoethnography is another methodology that involves writing about personal experiences to gain insights into cultural phenomena. Engaging in dialogue, whether with oneself or others, helps to gain deeper insights. Journaling is also important, as it involves keeping a personal diary to document and reflect on daily experiences. Meditation is practiced by exploring inner thoughts and emotions through mindfulness. Lastly, introspection involves looking inward to understand one's motivations and behaviors. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive approach to self-inquiry of *Swa* inquiry. *Twam* inquiry is a second-person approach that involves self-inquiry with research participants. This includes methods such as participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions, collaborative research, and case studies. So, *Twam* inquiry involves engaging with research participants through various methods. Participant observation entails immersing oneself in the natural settings of participants to observe their behaviors and interactions. Conducting interviews, whether structured or unstructured, helps gather detailed perspectives from participants. Focus groups facilitate group discussions to explore collective views and experiences. Collaborative research involves working alongside participants to co-create knowledge. Additionally, case studies provide an in-depth examination of individual or group experiences. These methods collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences. *Tat* inquiry is a third-person inquiry involving self-inquiry through various methods (i.e., ethnography, field research, document analysis, and comparative studies). Ethnography concentrates on examining cultures and communities from an external viewpoint. Field research involves collecting data in natural settings to better understand contexts. Document analysis is another method that includes reviewing existing documents, records, and archives to gather information. Comparative studies are also important, as they involve comparing different groups,

cultures, or phenomena to identify similarities and differences. Thus, these methods provide a comprehensive approach to understanding broader contexts and the perspectives of *Tat*.

Table 1: Comparison of Western-induced Epistemologies and *Swa-Twam-Tat* Inquiry

Aspect	Western-Induced Inquiries	<i>Swa-Twam-Tat</i> Inquiry
Core Framework	Grounded in individualism, rationalism, and empiricism. Claimed as standard and well-established frameworks.	Rooted in the ancient philosophy of ' <i>Tat Tvam Asi</i> ' emphasizing unity of the individual soul (Atman) with the universal soul (Brahman). Highlights interconnectedness and relational ontologies.
Focus on Knowledge Types	Emphasize scientific and empirical orientation while sidelining indigenous knowledge and experiential insights of relational ontologies.	Focuses on self-inquiry, reflection, and interconnectedness through <i>Swa</i> (self), <i>Twam</i> (others), and <i>Tat</i> (universal) inquiries, integrating diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems (Gyana Pranali).
Working Modality and Features	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce complex phenomena to simpler components, overlooking holistic knowledge systems. 2. Devalue oral traditions, spiritual insights, and cultural practices central to non-Western wisdom and cultures. 3. Operates from a Eurocentric viewpoint, assuming universal applicability of Western-induced methods. 4. Lacks cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness. 5. Assumes superiority of Western knowledge systems. 6. Lacks cultural sensitivity, resulting in misinterpretation or marginalization of non-Western traditions. 7. Academic institutions often favor Western-induced methodologies, limiting opportunities for non-Western epistemological research. 	<p>Hope to challenge 'Western-induced' dominance in epistemology, encouraging a comprehensive and inclusive understanding of knowledge that respects cultural contexts and diverse traditions. Promotes the interconnectedness of self and the community of 'I'.</p> <p>Works for integrating cultural, social, and spiritual dimensions of knowledge through introspection, meditation, and personal experience. Rejects dualistic perspectives and fosters relational connections.</p>
Methods of Inquiry	Relies heavily on empirical research, standardization, and objectivity.	<p><i>Swa</i> Inquiry: First-person self-reflection (journaling, meditation, introspection, autoethnography). <i>Twam</i> Inquiry: Second-person participant engagement (interviews, focus groups, collaborative research). <i>Tat</i> Inquiry: Third-person exploration of broader contexts (ethnography, field research, comparative studies, document analysis).</p>
Ontological Model	Largely relies on cultural inclusiveness evolved through 'post' and modern discourses, often marginalizing non-Western perspectives.	Proposed to promote inclusivity, encouraging respect for diverse cultural and philosophical traditions. Recognizes the importance of cultural and spiritual contexts in knowledge production.

Epistemological Goal	Prioritizes objectivity and rational analysis.	Explores self (<i>Swa</i>), relationships (<i>Twam</i>), and universal connection (<i>Tat</i>) through interconnected and reflective inquiry. Highlights unity of existence: 'I exist because you are there.'
Philosophical Foundation	Rooted in Eurocentric principles.	Grounded in ancient philosophy, focusing on unity and oneness with the universal reality, inspired by ' <i>Tat Tvam Asi</i> ' and aligned with Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, and Raaja Yogas.
Practical Application	Dominantly applied in academic and research institutions, often marginalizing alternative frameworks.	Encourages methods like autoethnography, collaborative research, and meditation to explore personal and collective experiences, integrating diverse knowledge systems into a holistic framework.

Swa-Twam-Tat Inquiry

Swa-Twam-Tat inquiry encourages individuals to explore their personal experiences and relationships within broader cultural, social, and spiritual contexts. This approach aligns with autoethnography, using narratives to gain insights into broader social phenomena. *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry challenges the dominance of Western-induced epistemologies and promotes a more inclusive and holistic understanding of knowledge, integrating diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems. Further, from the etymological perspective, *Swa* means the act of exploring one's own inner and outer existence (Varghese et al., 2024), reflection, nurturing, and expanding to uncover characteristics and duties with a broad understanding of dreaming as inner existence, breathing as relational existence of inner and outer existence, and experiencing or realizing as supreme existence of pantheistic viewpoint connecting it with *Karma*. From the *Karma Theory* perspective (Kachhara et al., 2017), self-gross body (Van Ommen, 2009) differentiates it from non-physical essentials comparable to the mind or soul as holistic and inclusive existence. Therefore, these three existences represent the visible, causal, and invisible relations (Dousa, 2024) with *Swa-Twam-Tat*. Thus, it is a holistic form of personal reality as a first person/self. For the transformative journey, these realities motivate individuals about eternal or multiple selves through ethical duties including second persons/you. The journey towards the ultimate truth nurtures us to realize the familial we for societal values and spiritual norms as second persons/you. The *Jnana Yoga* explores communal we (multiple *Kartaas*) with epistemic means of knowledge and ultimate truth with pantheistic schools of thought as third persons/others. The approach including all three persons is an integrative praxis of knowledge, power, and energy. It envisions and gains awareness as a process or method essential for conceptualizing *Brahma* as possible spiritual liberation, *Nirvana*, or *Moksha*.

Connecting *Swa* with wisdom (Rosenthal, 2018), we can argue that knowing self is the beginning of all wisdom. In this context, Hinduism stresses the *Swa* as the pantheistic tendency for multiple selves, the tendency to the syncretism of oneness, and the supremacy of consciousness for the enlightened self. Manusmriti, a representative of Hinduism, explores *Swa* as a primary object of analysis with the argument that every individual must learn their character by connecting with others. Similarly, Buddhism unpacks *Swa* as the concept of self-awareness (*Svasamvedana*) that highlights the momentariness of consciousness and establishes its durability (Watson, 2010). It seems that Buddhism's skepticism is rooted in the duality of momentariness and durability. At the same time, from the Gandhian perspective, *Swa* is discussed as an individualization of radical belief and actions, self-realization (*Aatmadarshan*), seeing God face to face (*Ishvarno Satshatkar*), and the liberation of the self (*Moksha*). Thus, *Swa* seems like a primary object for the analysis of spiritual actions and beings. From the etymological perspective, *Twam* means empathizing with others or embodying the truth 'that is you', such as a reader of the performance's product, document, or audience. In *Twam*, there seems to be a separation between *Sadhaka* (doer or agent) and *Sadhya* (accomplishment, perfection, and seeking

fullness as a form of audience or readers), while in *Twam*, the unity of *Sadhaka* and *Sadhya* can be experienced.

So, the development and diversity of consciousness bring about this kind of experience. In this, the existence of the *Twam* becomes secondary, and with the growth of consciousness, you/*Twam* begins to be expressed. This concept was first explored in Chandogya Upanishad 6.8-16. In this Upanishad, *Shvetketu* and *Uddalak* explored the *Twam* concept. Knowing *Shwetaketu*'s curiosity, *Sage Uddalak* started connecting *Shwetaketu*'s learning with clay, seeds, and salt as a theory with a practical aspect. They exemplified clay and pots, dolls, idols of Gods, gold, and its ornaments as *Twam* or 'that is you'. After that, it was established that *Tat Tvam Asi*, as a great statement, declared that "You are what you are searching for" as the finest essence (Brereton, 1986). *Swa* explores the individual self, and *Twam* represents a form of consciousness. When the essence of *Swa-Twam* becomes one or the same as the ultimate reality or he/she, it is called *Tat*. Thus, while exploring the *Tat*, it seems like a community of I, you, and he/she. It can be compared with the idea of Helskog (2019) about philosophizing the dialogue way toward wisdom as understanding others and oneself. Helskog's (2019) argument for understanding others seems similar to audiences, readers, *Twam*, and oneself with *Swa*. When *Twam* and *Swa* connect with each other, they will convert to *Tat* as a society or community. It encourages thinking alternatively and doing differently for consciousness and diversity in practice and experiencing and feeling differently with logical and critical thinking and actions. *Tat* has a similar concept with *Neti-Neti* of Brihadaranyak Upanishad as a neuter (Brereton, 1986) while *Swa* and *Twam* are not visible. Therefore, it explores out-of-box thinking with the concept of neither one thing nor another. It explores philosophizing the dialogue way toward wisdom based on *Prana*, the energy or natural system of breathing where the body and mind move and rest. From the linguist's perspective (Busley & Nübling, 2021), Neuter is a gender grouping of neither masculine nor feminine nouns. However, from the biological perspective (Hart et al., 2024), neutering is a veterinary medicine to prevent reproduction, such as spaying for females, castration for males, and the neuter for both. Thus, from the societal or community perspective, *Swa* looks like an agency where that is a non-neutral actor as a personal reality. However, *Twam* seems a negotiated reality, and *Tat* looks like a global reality. These seem to be different but interconnecting. Thus, the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry offers a holistic approach to understanding knowledge and existence by emphasizing the interconnectedness of the self, others, and the universe. This method encourages deep self-inquiry and reflection, helping individuals recognize their intrinsic connection to the broader cultural, social, and spiritual contexts. Likewise, the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry aligns with autoethnography and uses personal stories to gain insights into larger social phenomena. This approach challenges the dominance of Western-induced epistemologies by valuing diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems. It promotes a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of knowledge, recognizing the importance of multiple viewpoints and the interconnected nature of all existence and their relational ontologies.

***Swa-Twam-Tat* Inquiry and Autoethnography: Some Examples**

Swa-Twam-Tat inquiry explores the researcher's personal experiences and relationships within broader cultural, social, and spiritual contexts, considering the self as the first person 'I', the second person 'I', and the third person 'I' (See further details in Table 1). For instance, a study exploring cultural identity might use autoethnography to reflect on personal experiences within a specific community, while the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry connects these experiences to broader cultural and spiritual contexts, highlighting the interconnectedness of self and community. Another example is research on Indigenous knowledge systems, where a researcher narrates their journey of learning and integrating these systems through autoethnography, framed by the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry to emphasize the unity of diverse knowledge systems. In research practices, research might examine their teaching methods and how they incorporate diverse cultural perspectives, using the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry to align their philosophy with a holistic understanding of knowledge. Additionally, in health and well-being, practitioners could document their experiences with holistic health practices through autoethnography, connecting their health journey with broader cultural and spiritual practices using the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry. These examples demonstrate how combining autoethnography with the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry provides a rich, holistic perspective, challenging the dominance of Western-induced epistemologies and embracing diverse cultural insights.

Future Research

Embracing different epistemologies in future research and scholarship has the potential to significantly enrich and broaden the scope of academic inquiry (Tengö et al., 2014). Researchers can develop holistic and inclusive approaches to understanding complex phenomena, integrating diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge systems (Lim, 2024). This shift can lead to recognizing and validating non-Western ways of knowing, which have often been marginalized or overlooked. Though diverse epistemologies encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, fostering innovative methodologies that draw from a wide range of traditions and experiences. This inclusivity can enhance the relevance and applicability of research findings across different cultural contexts, promoting global knowledge exchange and mutual respect (Anjum & Aziz, 2024). Finally, embracing diverse epistemologies can challenge the dominance of Western-induced epistemological frameworks, leading to a more equitable and comprehensive understanding of the world and paving the way for groundbreaking discoveries and advancements in various fields. Overall, we are encouraging non-Western scholars to explore and validate multiple ways of challenging Western-induced epistemologies by incorporating various cultural, social, and experiential insights into research and practice. This inclusivity ensures that marginalized and non-Western knowledge systems are recognized and valued, fostering a more equitable academic environment. Additionally, integrating different epistemological approaches can lead to innovative methodologies and solutions as scholars draw from a wider range of traditions and experiences (Dhungana et al., 2024). These processes shall enhance the relevance and applicability of research across different cultural contexts and promote interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together scholars from various fields to address multifaceted problems. Thus, validating diverse epistemologies creates a more balanced and inclusive academic landscape, challenging the dominance of Western-induced epistemological frameworks. Furthermore, embracing different ways of knowing facilitates global knowledge exchange, fostering mutual respect and understanding among scholars from different cultural backgrounds. This enriches academic discourse by introducing new perspectives, questions, and debates, advancing the field and leading to more holistic and impactful scholarship in research and innovation, such as the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry.

Volume 5 Issue 1 Covers

Volume 5, issue 1 includes an editorial, seven original articles, and one book review. The editorial highlights the limits of Western-induced epistemologies and introduces the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry as one of the alternatives for challenging such epistemologies, connecting relational ontologies, cultural contexts, and diverse traditions. It also emphasizes the interconnectedness of the self and the community of 'I' as others. In the original article section, *Whitehead and Huxtable* envision a paradigm shift in research and education to foster a harmonious, peaceful world where individuals and communities can flourish. It highlights the challenges of the 21st century and emphasizes the responsibility of researchers, practitioners, and citizens to contribute to sustainable, values-led development and global educational knowledge. *Poudel* introduces 'motherly mathematics education' that creates a meaningful space bridging home and school to enhance traditional math instruction. It uses a transformative education method to explore how this pedagogy supports equity, diversifies student interests, and views assessment as a continuous developmental process. *Priya* investigates undergraduate students' experiences and perceptions of public speaking in English classrooms, identifying anxiety factors such as fear of judgment, mistakes, and non-conducive learning environments. It highlights the importance of a supportive environment for improving public speaking skills and offers insights for educators and policymakers on addressing public speaking anxiety. In her article, *Sunar* advocates for a shift from teacher-centric to learner-centric pedagogical practices in Nepal, emphasizing developing 21st-century skills over rote memorization. Using autoethnography, she reflects on 17 years of educational experience to highlight the need for critical pedagogy and the transformation of teaching practices. *Dhungana* examines continuous professional development (CPD) for university and schoolteachers in Nepal through a university-school partnership project and identifies four CPD methods: analyzing curriculums, adapting participatory assessment, enhancing action research skills, and improving envisioning practices, using poetic inquiry to reflect on the process. *Dhakai and Panta* discuss the challenges of autoethnography, particularly narcissism and biased subjectivity, and suggest improving research validity through critical reflexivity, self-critique, and diverse perspectives, contributing to the

credibility of the inquiry. *Dhungana* highlights the shift from traditional lecture-based teaching to integrated STEAM approaches to enhance harmony among teachers and students in a private school in Nepal. The study identifies four methods for fostering harmony: joyful learning, contextualized teaching, ICT integration, and valuing emotions, which transformed teachers' pedagogical practices. Finally, *Limbu* offered a book review of the book 'Collaborative Autoethnography,' which provides a comprehensive framework for collaborative autoethnography (CAE), covering the entire process from introduction to post-writing, addressing common and uncommon themes, emphasizing the importance of understanding researchers' roles and collaboration models in CAE, making it a valuable resource for practitioners.

Acknowledgements

The methodological concept of the *Swa-Twam-Tat* inquiry is introduced in Niroj's PhD thesis under Bal's supervision. Likewise, Purushottam contributed significantly to developing the notion of *Swa-Twam-Tat*, while Binod provided insights to finalize this editorial. We all equally appreciated and valued our contributions to this editorial. As editors, we declare no potential conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication.

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Suggested Citation:

Dahal, N., Ghimire, P., Luitel, B. C., & Pant, B. P. (2024). *Swa-Twam-Tat inquiry: Challenging Western-induced epistemologies and exploring possibilities* [Editorial]. *Journal of Transformative Praxis*, 5(1), 0-9. <https://doi.org/10.51474/jrtp/15778>