Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies
Vol. 3. **Issue** 2, 2026. Pp. 1-12
ISSN: 3048-7005

Journal homepage: https://sijmds.com/index.php/pub



Article

Phenomenology Beyond Method: Reclaiming Philosophical Rigour and Ethical Responsibility in Educational Research

Upasana Ray[1], Latika Khullar[2*]

1. Central Institute of Educational Technology, National Council of Educational Research and Training , Delhi, India.
2. Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Milia Islamia, Delhi, India.

*Corresponding Author:
latikaciet@gmail.com

Article History

Received:	06-01-2026
Revised:	17-04-2026
Accepted:	03-05-2026
Published:	01-06-2026

DOI: 10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46

Abstract:

Phenomenology has become an influential approach in educational research, often invoked to foreground lived experience, voice, and meaning. Yet its growing popularity has coincided with a tendency to treat phenomenology as a generic qualitative method rather than a philosophically grounded mode of inquiry. This paper argues that such usage risks diluting phenomenology's epistemological rigour and ethical responsibility. Drawing on classical and contemporary phenomenological scholarship, the paper examines how phenomenology's foundational commitments to intentionality, lifeworld, bracketing, reflexivity, and interpretation are often selectively adopted or applied superficially in educational studies. Particular attention is given to the unresolved methodological tension between descriptive and hermeneutic phenomenology and the ethical risks that arise when this tension is obscured. The paper contends that methodological ambiguity contributes to interpretive drift, aestheticised representations of experience, and weakened accountability in research involving teachers and learners. Rather than proposing phenomenology as a flexible toolkit, the paper repositions it as an epistemic and ethical commitment that demands philosophical clarity, methodological restraint, and reflexive responsibility. The paper concludes by outlining implications for educational research cultures and teacher education, emphasising the need to reclaim phenomenology as a disciplined and ethically grounded research paradigm.

Keywords: Phenomenology, Educational Research, Lived Experience; Qualitative Methodology, Reflexivity, Research Ethics, Teacher Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, phenomenology has gained sustained visibility within educational research, frequently invoked as a qualitative approach capable of capturing the depth, texture, and meaning of lived experience. Researchers have drawn upon phenomenology to examine teacher identity, student engagement, inclusion, trauma, digital learning, and embodied pedagogy, often positioning it as an ethically sensitive alternative to positivist and outcome-driven research traditions (Makoe, 2008; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Yet despite its widespread uptake, phenomenology's growing popularity has coincided with a gradual conceptual dilution. In many contemporary educational studies, phenomenology functions less as a philosophically grounded mode of inquiry and more as a stylistic label attached to interview-based qualitative research. This paper argues that such usage risks hollowing out phenomenology's epistemological rigour, ethical demands, and interpretive responsibility.

Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies is a peer-reviewed open-access journal. © 2026 The Author(s). This is an open-access article published by Synergy Publication under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). This license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited. The Author(s) retain copyright of their work. Synergy Publication is granted a non-exclusive right to publish the article and to identify itself as the original publisher. For more information, *See http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.*

OPEN ACCESS

At its philosophical core, phenomenology is not simply a method for collecting rich descriptions but a radical reorientation toward how meaning appears within consciousness and is constituted through lived experience. Originating in Husserl's critique of psychologism and positivism, phenomenology emerged as a response to approaches that reduced human experience to measurable variables or causal explanations (Husserl, 1973). Husserl's insistence on intentionality, epoché, and the lifeworld foregrounded experience as the primary site of meaning, challenging assumptions that reality could be fully apprehended through detached observation alone (Dowling, 2007; Laverty, 2003). Subsequent developments in hermeneutic and existential phenomenology, particularly through Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and later educational phenomenologists, further complicated this stance by emphasising historicity, embodiment, and situatedness as constitutive of understanding (Neubauer et al., 2019; Stolz, 2015; Stolz & Thorburn, 2026).

However, as phenomenology migrated into applied educational research, its philosophical commitments were often selectively adopted or softened. Terms such as "lived experience," "reflection," and "voice" have become common currency in qualitative educational studies, frequently detached from the rigorous methodological discipline required to sustain phenomenological inquiry (van Manen, 2017; Smith, 2017). In such contexts, phenomenology risks being reduced to an aesthetic preference for narrative richness rather than being maintained as an epistemologically demanding research paradigm. Critics have noted that this trend can lead to descriptive excess without analytic depth, where participant accounts are presented as self-evident truths rather than subjected to careful phenomenological reduction and interpretive responsibility (Zahavi, cited in Williams, 2021; Frechette et al., 2020).

This dilution is not merely a methodological concern; it carries significant ethical implications. Phenomenological research positions participants' experiences as deeply personal, often emotionally charged, and morally significant. Treating such accounts as data to be displayed rather than meanings to be carefully interpreted risks aestheticising experience and obscuring the power relations inherent in representation (Walker, 2007). When researchers invoke phenomenology without sustained reflexivity or philosophical clarity, they may inadvertently reassert epistemic authority while claiming neutrality, thereby undermining phenomenology's ethical promise to attend responsibly to the lifeworlds of others (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Chan et al., 2013).

Within educational research, these concerns are particularly acute. Teaching and learning are not abstract processes but lived, embodied, and institutionally situated practices shaped by cultural norms, policy regimes, and historical conditions (Makoe, 2008). Phenomenology offers a powerful framework for examining such complexity precisely because it resists reductionism and foregrounds meaning as it emerges within concrete educational contexts. Yet when phenomenology is treated as interchangeable with other qualitative approaches, its capacity to interrogate ethical tension, existential meaning, and interpretive responsibility is significantly weakened (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010).

This paper intervenes in this methodological moment by arguing that phenomenology in educational research must be reclaimed as a philosophically grounded, ethically demanding, and epistemically disciplined form of inquiry rather than a generic qualitative label. Drawing on classical and contemporary phenomenological scholarship, the paper examines how phenomenology's foundational commitments have been selectively appropriated within education and explores the methodological and ethical risks that follow from such appropriation. Rather than offering a comprehensive overview of phenomenological traditions, the paper focuses on the tensions that arise when phenomenology is detached from its philosophical roots, particularly the unresolved methodological divide between descriptive and hermeneutic approaches.

The central contribution of this paper is threefold. First, it clarifies why phenomenology cannot be reduced to a set of techniques without compromising its epistemological integrity. Second, it examines how methodological ambiguity in educational phenomenology poses ethical risks regarding representation, reflexivity, and interpretive authority. Third, it proposes a reorientation toward phenomenological rigour that foregrounds responsibility, philosophical consistency, and ethical restraint in educational research practice. In doing so, the paper positions phenomenology not as a flexible methodological option but as an ongoing commitment to understanding educational experience in its full existential, embodied, and contextual complexity.

2. PHENOMENOLOGY IS NOT "JUST QUALITATIVE": PHILOSOPHICAL BOUNDARIES AND METHODOLOGICAL MISUSE

Phenomenology is frequently grouped under the broad umbrella of qualitative research in education, often treated as one approach among many for eliciting rich, subjective accounts of experience. While this classificatory move may appear pragmatically convenient, it obscures a fundamental philosophical distinction. Phenomenology is not simply a qualitative technique for gathering data; it is a rigorously articulated epistemological and ontological stance concerning how meaning comes to be constituted within human experience. To conflate phenomenology with generic qualitative inquiry is therefore not a neutral simplification but a conceptual error with significant methodological and ethical consequences (Laverty, 2003; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010).

Conventional qualitative research in education is typically aligned with interpretivist or constructivist paradigms that prioritise understanding socially constructed meanings through interviews, observations, and textual analysis (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Such approaches emphasise context, subjectivity, and reflexivity, and they rightly

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46

challenge positivist assumptions about objectivity and measurement. However, phenomenology departs from these traditions in a decisive way: it does not begin with social construction as its primary explanatory frame but with the structures of experience as they present themselves to consciousness. Its concern is not merely with what participants say or do, but with how phenomena are lived, perceived, and rendered meaningful prior to theoretical abstraction (Husserl, 1973; Dowling, 2007).

This distinction becomes especially important in educational research, where phenomenology is often invoked to legitimise interview-based studies without sustained engagement with phenomenological philosophy. Terms such as "lived experience" and "meaning-making" are frequently employed as descriptive shorthand, detached from the methodological discipline required to access experience phenomenologically (van Manen, 2017; Smith, 2017). In such cases, phenomenology risks becoming a rhetorical marker of depth rather than a coherent research paradigm.

At the heart of phenomenology lies the concept of intentionality—the insight that consciousness is always directed toward something and that meaning arises through this relational orientation (Laverty, 2003). This foundational claim differentiates phenomenology sharply from approaches that treat experience as either a repository of internal states or a socially constructed narrative detached from perceptual life. In educational contexts, intentionality foregrounds how teachers and students encounter curricula, institutions, technologies, and relationships as meaningful phenomena rather than neutral stimuli (Badil et al., 2023). Reducing phenomenology to qualitative description obscures this relational structure and shifts analytical focus away from the constitutive processes through which educational meaning emerges.

Phenomenology's challenge to positivism further clarifies why it cannot be assimilated into generic qualitative research without distortion. Positivist paradigms rest on the assumption that reality exists independently of human consciousness and can be known through objective measurement and causal explanation. Phenomenology directly contests this assumption by insisting that reality is always encountered as lived and meaningful within the lifeworld—the pre-reflective horizon of everyday experience that precedes scientific abstraction (Husserl, 1973). Educational phenomena such as learning, motivation, inclusion, and burnout cannot be adequately understood when stripped of their experiential texture and treated solely as variables (Makoe, 2008; Mahar, 2025).

Yet the rejection of positivism does not license methodological looseness. Phenomenology does not replace objectivity with unexamined subjectivity; rather, it redefines objectivity as fidelity to the phenomenon as it appears, achieved through disciplined attentiveness and methodological restraint (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010). Epoché, or bracketing, for example, is not a procedural ritual but a philosophical stance that requires researchers to suspend habitual assumptions to attend more carefully to participants' lived meanings (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015). When phenomenological studies invoke bracketing superficially—without documenting how presuppositions are identified, examined, and managed—the concept loses both methodological force and epistemic credibility (Badil et al., 2023).

The tendency to treat phenomenology as interchangeable with other qualitative approaches also obscures its distinctive ethical orientation. Phenomenological inquiry demands that researchers approach participants' experiences not as data to be extracted but as meaningful lifeworlds that require careful interpretation and ethical responsibility (Walker, 2007). This responsibility extends beyond procedural ethics such as consent and confidentiality to include questions of representation, voice, and interpretive authority. When phenomenology is reduced to narrative collection, researchers may inadvertently aestheticise experience—presenting evocative accounts without engaging the interpretive labour necessary to situate those experiences within broader existential, cultural, and institutional contexts (Frechette et al., 2020; Chan et al., 2013).

In educational research, this risk is amplified by the institutional pressures that favour efficiency, outcomes, and demonstrable impact. Phenomenology's slow, reflective, and philosophically demanding orientation sits uneasily within research cultures oriented toward productivity and policy relevance (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). As a result, phenomenological language is often retained while phenomenological rigour is quietly abandoned. Lived experience becomes a tokenised entry point rather than the grounding of inquiry, and reflexivity is invoked as a generic ethical gesture rather than sustained as an epistemological necessity (Neubauer et al., 2019; Sloan & Bowe, 2014).

Distinguishing phenomenology from generic qualitative research, therefore, requires more than terminological precision; it requires reasserting the philosophical commitments that make phenomenology methodologically distinctive. These include a commitment to first-person experience as a legitimate source of knowledge, an insistence on intentionality and lifeworld as analytic foundations, and a recognition that interpretation is both unavoidable and ethically consequential (Laverty, 2003; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010). Without these commitments, phenomenology risks becoming a methodological aesthetic—valued for its language of depth while stripped of its critical and ethical force.

This section has argued that phenomenology cannot be responsibly practised as "just another" qualitative approach in educational research. Its philosophical origins, epistemological demands, and ethical orientation set it apart in ways that require explicit acknowledgement and methodological discipline. The failure to maintain these boundaries does not merely weaken phenomenological studies; it undermines phenomenology's capacity to offer a meaningful alternative to both positivist reductionism and unstructured interpretivism. The next section examines how these tensions crystallise in the

longstanding methodological divide between descriptive and hermeneutic phenomenology, a divide that carries profound consequences for how educational research claims meaning, rigour, and responsibility.

3. THE DESCRIPTIVE–HERMENEUTIC TENSION: HUSSERL AND HEIDEGGER AS METHODOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCE

Within educational phenomenology, the distinction between descriptive and hermeneutic approaches is frequently acknowledged yet rarely taken seriously in its full methodological and epistemological implications. Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenologies are often presented as complementary traditions that can be selectively combined according to the researcher's preference or pragmatic need. This paper rejects that assumption. While both traditions share a commitment to lived experience as the ground of meaning, they diverge fundamentally in how experience is accessed, interpreted, and ethically represented. Treating this divergence as a minor methodological variation obscures the real consequences these philosophical commitments impose on educational research practice (Laverty, 2003; Dowling, 2007).

Husserl's descriptive phenomenology emerged from a sustained critique of psychologism and positivism, grounded in the conviction that scientific explanations had obscured the conditions under which meaning becomes possible in the first place (Husserl, 1973). His central methodological innovation, epoché, called for the suspension of the natural attitude in order to attend to experience as it presents itself to consciousness. This suspension was not intended as a denial of reality but as a disciplined redirection of attention away from taken-for-granted assumptions toward the intentional structures through which phenomena are constituted (Laverty, 2003). In educational research, this orientation demands that researchers resist premature interpretation and instead engage in careful, textural description of how teaching, learning, or inclusion is lived from the participant's first-person perspective (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015).

Central to Husserl's method is phenomenological reduction, a systematic analytic movement that transforms raw experiential descriptions into meaning units and, through imaginative variation, reveals the essential structures of experience (Dowling, 2007; Qutoshi, 2018). These essences are not statistical generalisations but eidetic insights—features without which an experience would no longer be what it is. In educational contexts, such analysis aims to clarify what constitutes, for example, the experience of inclusion, teacher burnout, or student engagement beyond surface-level variation (Mahar, 2025). The rigour of this approach depends on sustained methodological restraint and an ongoing effort to bracket presuppositions, even while acknowledging that complete neutrality may remain aspirational rather than fully attainable (Badil et al., 2023).

Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology constitutes a decisive departure from this project. Rejecting the possibility of presuppositionless description, Heidegger argued that all understanding is fundamentally interpretive and grounded in being-in-the-world (Dasein), where meaning emerges through situated engagement rather than reflective detachment (Neubauer et al., 2019). From this perspective, attempts to bracket historical, cultural, or linguistic horizons are not only futile but conceptually misguided. Understanding is always shaped by fore-structures—prior experiences, traditions, and expectations—that condition how phenomena appear and are interpreted (Laverty, 2003; Frechette et al., 2020).

In educational research, hermeneutic phenomenology foregrounds the contextual embeddedness of teaching and learning. Classrooms are not neutral sites of experience but historically and institutionally structured spaces where meanings are negotiated through relationships, language, and power (Makoe, 2008). The hermeneutic circle—the iterative movement between parts and wholes—captures how educators and learners continually reinterpret their experiences, integrating new insights into evolving narratives of self and practice (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). From this stance, reflexivity replaces bracketing as the central methodological obligation, requiring researchers to explicitly acknowledge how their own positionality shapes interpretation rather than attempting to suspend their own positionality (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

The methodological consequences of this divergence are profound. Husserlian phenomenology demands disciplined description oriented toward eidetic clarity, while Heideggerian phenomenology embraces interpretation as constitutive of meaning. Yet in much contemporary educational research, these orientations are collapsed into a vague middle ground where bracketing is invoked rhetorically and interpretation proceeds implicitly, without philosophical accountability (Smith, 2017). This hybridisation often results in studies that neither achieve descriptive rigour nor sustain interpretive transparency, leaving phenomenological claims methodologically underdeveloped and epistemologically ambiguous.

The ethical implications of this ambiguity are rarely acknowledged. Descriptive phenomenology places ethical weight on fidelity to participants' experiences, cautioning against interpretive overreach that might distort lived meaning. Hermeneutic phenomenology, by contrast, locates ethical responsibility in reflexive interpretation, recognising that meaning is co-constructed and that researchers must account for their interpretive influence (Walker, 2007). When educational researchers oscillate between these positions without explicit justification, ethical responsibility becomes diffuse. Participant accounts risk being treated either as self-evident truths or as interpretive resources shaped primarily by the researcher's analytic agenda (Chan et al., 2013; Frechette et al., 2020).

Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on embodiment further complicates this landscape. By locating meaning in the lived body rather than in detached consciousness, Merleau-Ponty challenges both strict descriptivism

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46

and overly textual interpretation (Stolz, 2015; Stolz & Thorburn, 2026; Stolz, 2013). Educational experiences unfold through bodily engagement with space, tools, and others, making embodiment an indispensable dimension of phenomenological analysis. However, even embodied phenomenology requires methodological clarity: whether bodily experience is described as pre-reflective perception or interpreted as culturally mediated practice carries significant analytic consequences.

Despite these distinctions, educational phenomenology frequently adopts a conciliatory tone that downplays philosophical disagreement in favour of methodological flexibility. While such flexibility may appear pragmatic, it often conceals a lack of conceptual precision. As Zahavi cautions, phenomenology risks devolving into "experientialism" when its philosophical tensions are ignored rather than worked through (Zahavi, cited in Williams, 2021). For educational research, this risk manifests in studies that invoke phenomenological language while relying on analytic practices indistinguishable from generic thematic analysis.

This paper contends that educational phenomenology must confront, rather than obscure, the descriptive–hermeneutic tension at its core. Choosing between bracketing and reflexivity, essence and situated meaning, is not merely a technical decision but a philosophical commitment that shapes what counts as knowledge, how meaning is justified, and where ethical responsibility resides. Researchers cannot legitimately claim phenomenological rigour while remaining agnostic about these commitments. Methodological coherence requires that phenomenological studies explicitly articulate their philosophical grounding and accept the constraints that follow from it (Laverty, 2003; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010).

Recognising this tension does not require declaring one tradition superior to the other. Rather, it demands honesty about the limits and possibilities each entails. Husserlian phenomenology offers tools for clarifying experiential structures but risks abstraction if divorced from context. Heideggerian phenomenology illuminates situated meaning but risks interpretive overreach if reflexivity is inadequately theorised. Educational research must navigate these risks deliberately, not by collapsing distinctions but by assuming responsibility for methodological choice.

4. CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL PHENOMENOLOGY: METHODOLOGICAL DRIFT AND ETHICAL RISK

The increasing visibility of phenomenology in educational research has not been matched by a corresponding increase in methodological rigour. Instead, what has emerged in many contemporary studies is a form of methodological drift, in which phenomenological concepts are adopted rhetorically while their philosophical and ethical demands are progressively weakened. This drift is not accidental; it reflects broader institutional pressures within educational research that privilege efficiency, accessibility, and narrative appeal over philosophical discipline and epistemic accountability (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

One of the most visible symptoms of this drift is the inflationary use of the term lived experience. While phenomenology was originally concerned with how experience is constituted through intentionality, embodiment, and lifeworld structures, contemporary educational research often treats lived experience as synonymous with personal narrative or self-report (van Manen, 2017; Smith, 2017). Interviews are conducted, experiences are transcribed, and participants' words are presented as if their descriptive richness alone guarantees phenomenological validity. Yet without phenomenological reduction or sustained interpretive engagement, such accounts remain experiential data rather than phenomenological insight (Dowling, 2007; Qutoshi, 2018).

This tendency produces a form of descriptive excess, where participant voices are amplified but analytically under-theorised. Researchers may reproduce extended quotations to demonstrate authenticity while refraining from the interpretive labour required to situate these experiences within broader existential, cultural, or institutional structures (Frechette et al., 2020). In such cases, phenomenology becomes a representational practice rather than an interpretive one, and the distinction between faithful description and uncritical reproduction is quietly erased.

Bracketing provides another instructive example of methodological erosion. In Husserlian phenomenology, epoché is a demanding philosophical stance that requires researchers to actively identify, interrogate, and suspend their habitual assumptions to attend more carefully to the phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015). In much educational research, however, bracketing is reduced to a brief methodological declaration—often a single sentence asserting researcher awareness—without documentation of how presuppositions were examined, managed, or revisited throughout the analytic process (Badil et al., 2023). Such ritualized bracketing satisfies formal expectations while bypassing the epistemic work phenomenology requires.

Hermeneutic approaches are not immune to similar risks. Reflexivity is frequently invoked as a corrective to bracketing, yet it too is often treated superficially. Reflexive statements may acknowledge the researcher's background or positionality without demonstrating how these factors actively shaped interpretation or constrained analytic claims (Walker, 2007; Sloan & Bowe, 2014). When reflexivity becomes performative rather than analytic, interpretation proceeds unchecked, and phenomenological analysis risks collapsing into impressionistic commentary rather than disciplined inquiry (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

These methodological slippages carry serious ethical implications. Phenomenological research frequently engages with deeply personal and emotionally charged experiences—burnout, trauma, exclusion, identity conflict—particularly in educational contexts marked

by inequality and institutional constraint (Makoe, 2008; Brunzell et al., 2015). Treating such experiences as narrative artefacts rather than meaning-laden lifeworlds risks aestheticising suffering and obscuring the researcher's interpretive authority. Participants' voices may appear foregrounded while their meanings are subtly reshaped to fit analytic frames that remain philosophically unexamined (Chan et al., 2013).

The ethical risk here is not misrepresentation alone but epistemic asymmetry. Researchers retain control over selection, framing, and interpretation, even as phenomenological language suggests relational equality and experiential fidelity. Without explicit acknowledgement of this asymmetry, phenomenological studies may unintentionally reproduce the very power dynamics they claim to resist (Walker, 2007; Frechette et al., 2020). This concern is especially salient in research involving marginalised students, teachers under institutional pressure, or individuals navigating trauma and exclusion, where the ethical stakes of interpretation are heightened (Suarez & McGrath, 2022).

Institutional research cultures further exacerbate these tendencies. Educational researchers are increasingly required to demonstrate impact, relevance, and productivity, often within compressed timelines and standardised formats. Phenomenology's slow, reflective, and philosophically demanding orientation sits uneasily within such environments (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). As a result, phenomenological commitments are frequently softened to accommodate practical constraints, producing studies that retain the language of phenomenology while abandoning its methodological discipline (Neubauer et al., 2019).

The popularity of applied phenomenological frameworks, particularly in teacher education and professional practice research, has also contributed to conceptual drift. While approaches inspired by van Manen emphasise pedagogical sensitivity and narrative depth, their widespread adoption has sometimes encouraged methodological pluralism without philosophical coherence (van Manen & Van Manen, 2020). Interviews, observations, and reflective texts are combined with limited justification, and phenomenology is described as an attitude rather than a rigorous research paradigm (Greenberg et al., 2003). Without a clear articulation of epistemological grounding, such pluralism risks diluting phenomenology into an eclectic qualitative style.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) illustrates a parallel tension. While IPA explicitly acknowledges interpretation and has developed structured analytic procedures, its uptake in educational research has not always been accompanied by sustained engagement with phenomenological philosophy (Smith, 2017; Mahar, 2025). When IPA is treated primarily as a coding technique rather than as an interpretive commitment rooted in phenomenological and hermeneutic principles, phenomenology is once again reduced to method rather than stance.

These developments suggest that the problem facing educational phenomenology is not one of misuse by individual researchers but of structural drift within the field itself. Phenomenological language circulates widely, but philosophical accountability is unevenly maintained. As a result, phenomenology risks becoming conceptually hollow, invoked for its ethical resonance and narrative appeal while stripped of its epistemic and interpretive demands (Williams, 2021).

This paper does not argue for a return to rigid methodological orthodoxy. Rather, it contends that phenomenological research in education must reclaim philosophical clarity and ethical seriousness by explicitly confronting the consequences of methodological choice. Whether researchers align with descriptive, hermeneutic, or embodied traditions, they must articulate how these commitments shape data generation, analysis, and representation—and where the limits of their claims lie (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010; Laverty, 2003).

Without such clarity, phenomenology risks losing its critical edge and ethical promise within educational research. The next section turns from critique to reconstruction, outlining what reclaiming phenomenological rigour would require in contemporary educational inquiry and why such reclamation matters for research practice, ethics, and the understanding of educational experience itself.

5. RECLAIMING PHENOMENOLOGICAL RIGOUR IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

If phenomenology in educational research is to retain its epistemic credibility and ethical force, it must be reclaimed not as a flexible qualitative option but as a philosophically grounded and methodologically demanding mode of inquiry. Such reclamation does not involve inventing new techniques or expanding phenomenology's scope indiscriminately; rather, it requires re-centring the commitments that originally distinguished phenomenology from both positivist reductionism and unstructured interpretivism. This section outlines what phenomenological rigour entails in contemporary educational research and clarifies the responsibilities that follow from adopting a phenomenological stance.

First, reclaiming rigour requires explicit philosophical positioning. Educational researchers cannot invoke phenomenology while remaining agnostic about its epistemological and ontological commitments. Whether a study aligns with Husserlian descriptivism, Heideggerian hermeneutics, embodied phenomenology, or a critically inflected variant, that alignment must be articulated and justified. Each tradition carries distinct assumptions about how experience is accessed, how meaning is constituted, and where interpretive authority resides (Laverty, 2003; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010). Methodological coherence demands that these assumptions guide analytic decisions rather than remain implicit or selectively invoked.

This requirement has immediate implications for research design. In phenomenological inquiry, methods are secondary to stance. Interviews, observations, and

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46

reflective texts are not phenomenological by default; they become phenomenological only insofar as they are oriented toward uncovering the structures of lived experience rather than producing thematic summaries or illustrative narratives (Dowling, 2007; Qutoshi, 2018). Reclaiming rigour, therefore, entails resisting the temptation to treat phenomenology as a toolkit and instead approaching data generation and analysis as philosophically informed acts of attention and interpretation.

Second, phenomenological rigour requires methodological restraint. In educational research contexts that reward novelty and breadth, phenomenology's commitment to depth, slowness, and analytic patience is easily compromised. Yet phenomenological insight emerges precisely through sustained engagement with a limited set of experiences, examined carefully rather than exhaustively (van Manen, 2017).

This restraint also applies to analytic claims. Phenomenological findings do not aspire to statistical generalisation; they offer eidetic or interpretive insights that illuminate possibilities of experience rather than predictive laws (Husserl, 1973). In educational research, this distinction is often blurred, leading to claims that extend beyond what phenomenological analysis can responsibly support. Reclaiming rigour requires acknowledging the limits of phenomenological knowledge and resisting pressure to translate experiential insight into universal prescriptions or policy directives (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010).

Third, reclaiming phenomenological rigour entails renewed commitment to reflexive accountability. Whether framed as bracketing or reflexivity, phenomenological inquiry demands ongoing examination of how researchers' assumptions, histories, and positionalities shape interpretation (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Walker, 2007). Reflexivity is not a preliminary declaration but a sustained analytic practice that accompanies every stage of the research process—from question formulation to representation of findings (Neubauer et al., 2019). In educational research, where researchers often share professional identities with participants, reflexive accountability becomes especially critical for managing proximity, authority, and ethical responsibility (Sloan & Bowe, 2014).

Ethical responsibility forms the fourth pillar of phenomenological rigour. Phenomenology engages with experiences that are often deeply personal, vulnerable, and morally chargeds, such as teacher burnout, student marginalization, and experiences of inclusion or exclusion (Makoe, 2008). Treating such experiences as mere data risks reduces lived meaning to analytic material. Reclaiming rigour, therefore, requires approaching phenomenological research as an ethical encounter, where interpretation is undertaken with humility, care, and awareness of epistemic asymmetry (Chan et al., 2013; Frechette et al., 2020). Researchers must acknowledge that they do not simply reveal meaning but actively shape how experience is rendered intelligible within scholarly discourse.

These commitments have concrete implications for educational research domains where phenomenology is frequently applied. In teacher experience research, for example, phenomenological rigour demands moving beyond catalogues of stressors or coping strategies toward examination of how teachers experience meaning, moral conflict, and professional identity within institutional constraints (Makoe, 2008; Mahar, 2025).

Student-centred phenomenological research likewise benefits from this reorientation. Rather than treating student voice as an end in itself, phenomenological inquiry examines how students experience learning, motivation, and marginalisation through intentional engagement with curricula, peers, and institutional norms (Badil et al., 2023). Such work requires attentiveness to temporality, embodiment, and situatedness, recognising that educational meaning unfolds across time and is shaped by past experiences and future horizons (Neubauer et al., 2019).

Crucially, reclaiming phenomenological rigour also entails resisting the instrumentalisation of phenomenology within outcome-driven educational frameworks. Phenomenology does not readily align with metrics, competencies, or standardised indicators of success. Its value lies in illuminating aspects of educational life that remain inaccessible to measurement—ethical tension, existential meaning, embodied engagement (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Stolz, 2015; Stolz & Thorburn, 2026). Preserving this critical potential requires protecting phenomenology from being absorbed into technical regimes that prioritise efficiency over understanding.

This section has argued that reclaiming phenomenological rigour in educational research requires philosophical clarity, methodological restraint, reflexive accountability, and ethical seriousness. Phenomenology is not a methodological supplement to existing paradigms but a demanding orientation that reshapes how research questions are posed, how experience is interpreted, and how knowledge claims are justified. The following section turns to the broader implications of this reorientation for educational research cultures and teacher education, examining how phenomenological responsibility might be cultivated institutionally rather than left to individual researcher discretion.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Reclaiming phenomenological rigour has implications that extend beyond individual studies to the cultures of educational research and teacher education in which phenomenological inquiry is situated. If phenomenology is understood not as a flexible qualitative option but as an epistemic and ethical commitment, then its practice cannot be sustained solely through individual methodological choice. Rather, it requires institutional conditions that support philosophical clarity, reflexive accountability, and interpretive responsibility across research training and professional formation.

Within educational research, one of the most pressing implications concerns methodological education. Graduate training in research methods often presents phenomenology alongside other qualitative approaches as a set of techniques differentiated primarily by data collection strategies or analytic procedures. Such framing obscures phenomenology's philosophical grounding and encourages its uptake without corresponding engagement with its epistemological and ontological commitments (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010; Laverty, 2003). Reclaiming rigour requires that phenomenology be taught as a distinct mode of inquiry with clearly articulated assumptions, limits, and responsibilities, rather than as a stylistic variation within qualitative research.

Supervisory practices also play a critical role in shaping how phenomenology is practised. Doctoral and early-career researchers frequently adopt phenomenological language without sustained philosophical guidance, resulting in studies that invoke lived experience while relying on analytic practices indistinguishable from thematic analysis (Smith, 2017). Supervisors and examiners bear responsibility for ensuring methodological coherence, challenging superficial invocations of phenomenology, and requiring researchers to justify their philosophical positioning and interpretive choices (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). Without such scrutiny, methodological drift is likely to persist regardless of individual researcher intent.

Ethical review processes constitute another domain where phenomenological implications are often overlooked. Institutional ethics frameworks tend to focus on procedural safeguards such as consent, confidentiality, and risk minimisation, which, while necessary, do not exhaust the ethical demands of phenomenological research (Chan et al., 2013). Phenomenology raises distinct ethical questions related to representation, interpretive authority, and epistemic asymmetry, particularly when engaging with vulnerable populations or emotionally charged experiences (Walker, 2007). Ethics committees and research governance structures must therefore expand their evaluative criteria to include consideration of interpretive responsibility and reflexive transparency in phenomenological studies.

The implications for teacher education are equally significant. Phenomenology has long informed reflective practice in teacher preparation, encouraging educators to attend to their own experiences and those of their students (van Manen, 2017). However, when reflection is detached from phenomenological discipline, it risks becoming an introspective narration rather than a critical inquiry. Reclaiming phenomenological rigour within teacher education requires cultivating interpretive awareness rather than merely encouraging self-expression. Teachers must be supported in examining how their experiences are shaped by institutional structures, cultural norms, and historical conditions, and how these factors influence pedagogical judgment (Makoe, 2008).

Phenomenological approaches to teacher education also foreground the ethical dimensions of teaching as a lived practice. Teaching involves ongoing encounters with difference, vulnerability, and moral ambiguity, particularly in contexts of inclusion, diversity, and institutional constraint. Phenomenology's emphasis on lifeworld, embodiment, and situatedness offers a framework for engaging these complexities without reducing them to technical competencies or standardised outcomes. Yet this potential can only be realised if teacher education programs resist instrumentalising phenomenology as a reflective tool and instead treat it as a mode of ethical and epistemic formation.

At the level of research culture, reclaiming phenomenological rigour challenges prevailing assumptions about productivity and impact. Phenomenological research is inherently time-intensive and resists rapid publication cycles, large datasets, and immediate applicability (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Institutions that value quantity over depth may inadvertently discourage rigorous phenomenological work, favouring studies that adopt phenomenological language while conforming to dominant research norms. Addressing this tension requires recognising phenomenology's contribution not in terms of scalability or generalizability but in its capacity to illuminate dimensions of educational experience that would otherwise remain obscured (Stolz, 2015; Stolz & Thorburn, 2026).

Finally, reclaiming phenomenological rigour has implications for how educational research engages with policy discourse. Phenomenological findings do not translate neatly into policy recommendations, nor should they be forced to do so. Their value lies in complicating simplified narratives, revealing unintended consequences, and foregrounding the lived realities of those affected by educational policies (Makoe, 2008; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Preserving this critical function requires resisting pressures to instrumentalise phenomenology as evidence for predetermined agendas, instead allowing experiential insight to inform ethical deliberation and reflective judgment.

This section has argued that the future of phenomenology in education depends not only on individual methodological choices but on institutional practices that support philosophical clarity, ethical responsibility, and interpretive rigour. The concluding section synthesises these arguments and articulates a final challenge to educational researchers who invoke phenomenology without assuming the responsibilities it entails.

7. CONCLUSION: PHENOMENOLOGY AS ETHICAL AND EPISTEMIC COMMITMENT

This paper has argued that phenomenology in educational research currently stands at a critical juncture. While phenomenological language has become increasingly visible across studies of teaching, learning, inclusion, and student experience, its philosophical and methodological commitments are often invoked selectively or superficially. As a result, phenomenology risks being reduced to a qualitative aesthetic—valued for its evocative descriptions and ethical resonance while stripped of the epistemic

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46

discipline and interpretive responsibility that originally defined it (Laverty, 2003; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010).

By tracing the tensions between descriptive and hermeneutic traditions, this paper has shown that phenomenology cannot be treated as a neutral or easily hybridised methodology. Decisions concerning bracketing, reflexivity, essence, and interpretation are not technical preferences but philosophical commitments with direct consequences for how educational experience is understood, represented, and ethically engaged (Husserl, 1973; Neubauer et al., 2019). When these commitments remain implicit or unresolved, phenomenological research becomes methodologically ambiguous and ethically vulnerable.

The analysis has further demonstrated that contemporary educational phenomenology is marked by methodological drift. Concepts such as lived experience, reflexivity, and voice circulate widely, yet are frequently detached from the disciplined analytic practices required to sustain phenomenological rigour (van Manen, 2017; Smith, 2017). This drift is reinforced by institutional research cultures that privilege efficiency, narrative accessibility, and policy relevance over philosophical clarity and epistemic restraint (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). In such contexts, phenomenology's critical potential is diminished, and its ethical promise is weakened.

Importantly, this paper does not argue for methodological purism or the reassertion of a single authoritative phenomenological tradition. Phenomenology has always been internally plural, and its development across descriptive, hermeneutic, embodied, and critical variants reflects the complexity of human experience itself. What is required, however, is intellectual honesty about the consequences of methodological choice. Researchers who invoke phenomenology must be prepared to articulate their philosophical grounding, justify their analytic stance, and accept the limits of the knowledge claims they produce (Zahavi, cited in Williams, 2021).

The ethical implications of this responsibility are especially salient in educational research. Phenomenological inquiry frequently engages with experiences shaped by vulnerability, marginalisation, and institutional constraint. Representing such experiences without sustained interpretive accountability risks aestheticising suffering and reproducing epistemic asymmetries under the guise of experiential fidelity (Walker, 2007; Chan et al., 2013). Reclaiming phenomenological rigour, therefore, requires recognising that interpretation is not a neutral act but an ethical engagement that demands reflexivity, humility, and restraint.

At a broader level, this paper challenges educational researchers to reconsider what phenomenology is for. Phenomenology does not exist to supply evidence for predetermined outcomes, nor to render educational experience more palatable within technocratic research frameworks. Its value lies in resisting reduction—whether to variables, competencies, or narratives—and in illuminating the existential, embodied, and contextual dimensions of education that resist easy classification (Stolz, 2015; Stolz & Thorburn, 2026). Preserving this value requires protecting phenomenology from instrumentalisation and reaffirming its role as a mode of inquiry grounded in responsibility rather than utility.

Phenomenology in education should not be understood as a method one applies, a label one adopts, or a style one performs. It is an epistemic and ethical commitment that reshapes how research questions are posed, how experience is interpreted, and how knowledge claims are justified. Without this commitment, phenomenology risks becoming conceptually empty and ethically compromised. With it, phenomenology remains capable of offering educational research a disciplined, critical, and deeply human way of understanding the lived realities of teaching and learning.

8. LIMITATIONS

This paper carries several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, as a theoretical and conceptual contribution, it does not present primary empirical data; its claims rest on critical engagement with existing literature rather than on original fieldwork. While this is consistent with the paper's objectives, it means that the arguments advanced here require further empirical validation across diverse educational contexts. Second, the paper draws predominantly on anglophone phenomenological scholarship and educational research traditions. This linguistic and geographic scope may limit the transferability of its critique to non-Western educational research cultures in which phenomenological inquiry is practised and theorised differently (Qutoshi, 2018). Third, although the paper addresses descriptive, hermeneutic, and embodied phenomenological traditions, it does not engage comprehensively with all variants of phenomenological inquiry, including feminist phenomenology, critical phenomenology, or post-phenomenology, each of which raises distinct methodological and ethical questions relevant to educational research (Ahmed, 2006; Weiss et al., 2020). Future scholarship should attend more fully to these traditions. Finally, the paper's critique of methodological drift is necessarily broad and cannot account for the many rigorous phenomenological studies that do engage carefully with the philosophical commitments under discussion. The argument is directed at a structural tendency within the field rather than at individual researchers or specific studies.

9. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Several directions for future scholarship emerge from this analysis. First, there is a need for empirical studies that examine how phenomenological rigour—or its absence—manifests across published educational research, using systematic review or meta-synthesis methods to document the prevalence and consequences of methodological drift (Mahar, 2025; Frechette et al., 2020). Such studies would provide an evidence base for the structural critique advanced here. Second, future work should develop more context-sensitive frameworks for supporting phenomenological rigour in resource-constrained and institutionally pressured research environments, particularly in the

Global South, where the conditions for slow, reflective inquiry may be structurally limited (Qutoshi, 2018). Third, scholars should examine how non-Western and indigenous epistemological frameworks can enrich and challenge phenomenological methodology in educational research, moving beyond the predominantly European traditions that currently dominate the field (Teo, 2020; Chilisa, 2020). Fourth, pedagogical research is needed on how graduate programmes and research training environments can more effectively cultivate phenomenological literacy among emerging researchers—not merely as a technical skill but as a philosophical formation (Neubauer et al., 2019; Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010). Finally, the relationship between phenomenological rigour and artificial intelligence-assisted research warrants urgent attention. As AI tools are increasingly used in qualitative data analysis, future scholarship must examine whether and how such tools can support or undermine the interpretive attentiveness, reflexivity, and ethical responsibility that phenomenological inquiry demands (Parey, 2025; Layeak, 2026).

DECLARATIONS

Author(s) Contribution

All the Author(s) work equally to prepare the manuscript.

Uses of AI Acknowledgement

The author acknowledge the use Grammarly for the Language assisting and content refinement.

Funding Information

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Availability of Data and Materials

No primary data were collected or used in this study. This paper is based entirely on secondary sources and theoretical analysis.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.r.

Clinical Trial Registration (if applicable)

Not Applicable

Human Ethics and Consent to Participate

The study did not involve any clinical interventions or experiments requiring formal ethical approval.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S. (2006). *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*. Duke University Press. Retrieved from https://www.thequeermathematicsteacher.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Ahmed-Queer-Phenomonology.pdf

Badil, Muhammad, D. M. D., Aslam, Z. a. Z., Khan, K. K. K., Ashiq, A. a. A., & Bibi, U. B. U. (2023). Phenomenology Qualitative Research Inquiry: A Review paper. *Pakistan Journal of Health Sciences*, 09–13. https://doi.org/10.54393/pjhs.v4i03.626

Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2015). Trauma-Informed Positive Education: Using positive psychology to strengthen Vulnerable students. *Contemporary School Psychology*, *20*(1), 63–83. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-015-0070-x

Chan, Z. C., Fung, Y., & Chien, W. (2013). Bracketing in Phenomenology: Only Undertaken in the Data Collection and Analysis Process. *The Qualitative Report*, *18*(30), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2013.1486

Chilisa, B. (2020). *Indigenous research methodologies* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dowling M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen. A review of different phenomenological approaches. *International journal of nursing studies*, *44*(1), 131–142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2005.11.026

Eddles-Hirsch, K. (2015). Phenomenology and educational research. *International Journal of Advanced Research, 3*(8), 251–260. http://www.journalijar.com/article/5631/phenomenology-and-educational-research/

Frechette, J., Bitzas, V., Aubry, M., Kilpatrick, K., & Lavoie-Tremblay, M. (2020). Capturing lived experience: Methodological considerations for interpretive phenomenological inquiry. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *19*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920907254

Greenberg, M. T., Weissberg, R. P., O'Brien, M. U., Zins, J. E., Fredericks, L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M. J. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *The American psychologist*, *58*(6-7), 466–474. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.58.6-7.466

Hammersley, M. (2013). *What is qualitative research?* Bloomsbury Academic. Retrieved from https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/58723/1/9781849666077.pdf

Hays, D.G. and Wood, C. (2011), Infusing Qualitative Traditions in Counseling Research Designs. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 89*(3), 288-295. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00091.x

Husserl, E. (1973). *The idea of phenomenology*. The Hague Martinus Nijhoff. (Original work published 1907) https://web.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Husserl_Idea_of_Phenomenology.pdf

Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and

applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *6*(5), 26–41. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26

Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *2*(3), 21-35. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200303

Layeak, A. M. (2026). Navigating pedagogical challenges in teaching literary criticism: A mixed-methods study of instructor experiences and student perceptions in higher education. *Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, *3*(1), 60–71. https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.1.48

Levitt, H. M., Bamberg, M., Creswell, J. W., Frost, D. M., Josselson, R., & Suarez-Orozco, C. (2018). Journal article reporting standards for qualitative primary, qualitative meta-analytic, and mixed methods research in psychology. *American Psychologist*, *73*(1), 26–46. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000151

Mahar, K. A. (2025). *A transcendental phenomenology: The lived experience and descriptions of teacher motivation—The essence of economic and occupational satisfaction* (Doctoral dissertation, Liberty University). https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7653&context=doctoral

Makoe, M. (2008). Using Phenomenological Psychology to Analyse Distance Education Students' Experiences and Conceptions of Learning. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, *8*(sup1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2008.11433979

Mortari, L., & Tarozzi, M. (2010). Phenomenology as philosophy of research: An introductory essay. In L. Mortari & M. Tarozzi (Eds.), *Phenomenology and human science research today* (pp. 9–54). Zeta Books. https://doi.org/10.7761/9789731997452_1

Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2019). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on Medical Education, 8*(2), 90–97. https://doi.org/10.1007/S40037-019-0509-2

Parey, M. A. (2025). Dialogic pedagogy as a liberatory praxis in schooling: Challenging power dynamics and neoliberalism in the context of schools in Kashmir. *Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, *2*(2), 105–115. https://doi.org/10.63960/SIJMDS-2025-2270

Qutoshi, S. B. (2018). Phenomenology: A Philosophy and Method of Inquiry. *Journal of Education and Educational Development, 5*(1), 215-222. https://doi.org/10.22555/joeed.v5i1.2154

Sloan, A., & Bowe, B. (2014). Phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology: The philosophy, the methodologies, and using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate lecturers' experiences of curriculum design. *Quality & Quantity: International Journal of Methodology*, *48*(3), 1291–1303. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-013-9835-3

Smith, J. A. (2017). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Getting at lived experience. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *12*(3), 303–304. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262622

Stolz, S. A. (2013). Phenomenology and Physical Education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *45*(9), 949–962. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2013.785355

Stolz, S. A. (2015). Embodied Learning. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *47*(5), 474–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2013.879694

Stolz, S. A., & Thorburn, M. (2026). A narrative approach exploring phenomenology in education and educational research: The use and abuse of phenomenology. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *58*(4), 309–327. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2025.2593291

Suarez, V., & McGrath, J. (2022). Teacher professional identity. *OECD Education Working Papers*. https://doi.org/10.1787/b19f5af7-en

Teo, T. (2020). Theorizing in psychology: From the critique of a hyper-science to conceptualizing subjectivity. *Theory & Psychology, 30*(6), 759-767. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354320930271

Van Manen, M. (2017). But is it phenomenology? *Qualitative Health Research*, *27*(6), 775–779. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732317699570

Van Manen, M., & Van Manen, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Classic writings for a phenomenology of practice*. Routledge.

Walker W. (2007). Ethical considerations in phenomenological research. *Nurse researcher*, *14*(3), 36–45. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2007.04.14.3.36.c6031

Weiss, G., Murphy, A. V., & Salamon, G. (Eds.). (2020). *50 concepts for a critical phenomenology.* Northwestern University Press.

Williams, H. (2021). The Meaning of "Phenomenology": Qualitative and Philosophical Phenomenological Research Methods. *The Qualitative Report, 26,* 366-385. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4587

Yüksel, P., & Yıldırım, S. (2015). Theoretical frameworks, methods, and procedures for conducting phenomenological studies in educational settings. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, *6*(2), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.17569/tojqi.59813

Zahavi, D. (2021). *Applied phenomenology: Why it is safe to ignore the epoché. Continental Philosophy Review*, *54*(2), 259-273. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-019-09463-y

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of Synergy Publication or the editor(s) of the journal. While reasonable editorial and peer-review procedures are followed, Synergy Publication and the editor(s) do not endorse any products, methods, or claims described in the content.

Author Bio:

1. Dr Upasana Ray is an Associate Professor at the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), a constituent unit of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in New Delhi. She specialises in educational technology, digital pedagogy, and the integration of ICT in school education. Her work focuses on designing multimedia educational resources, developing curriculum, and training educators nationwide on digital tools.
2. Latika Khullar is pursuing her Ph.D. in the Department of Educational Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia.

 https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.sijmds.3.2.46