

# Reflections on leadership preparation programs and social justice: Are the power and the responsibility of the faculty all in the design?

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – Fundamental aspects of educational leadership preparation programs regarding social justice are embodied in program design elements, yet the scholarly community did not adequately address these issues.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The essay suggests that organizational theories dealing with person-environment fit can shed light on the models, possibilities, and limitations of various preparation programs.

**Findings** – The essay proposes a meta-conceptual framework that builds on Schneider's attraction-selection-attrition theory and on the socialization literature to classify leadership preparation programs by design. In addition, the paper reflects on the implications of program design in relation to the power and the responsibility of the faculty.

**Originality/value** – The essay argues that design decisions made by the faculty a priori enable and constrain its power and responsibility. The conclusion is that design decisions should be made by faculty with awareness of these issues.

**Keywords:** leadership preparation, moral leadership, social justice, social activism, social change

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The notion that "with great power comes great responsibility" is presumed to have appeared as a warning during the period of the French Revolution. Since then, this idea found its way into popular culture, expressing the understanding that ability or desire to bring about great change involves both an opportunity and a risk.

Educational administration literature frequently discusses school leaders in the context of social justice, power, and responsibility; the power and responsibility of those who train school leaders, however, has been only minimally addressed (e.g., Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy, 2005). Scholars discussing educational leaders' orientation toward development of social justice often seem to avoid framing these initiatives as part of a broader logic of social activism or social change efforts. I do not consider this "black hole" in scholarly discourse to be incidental. Critical analysis of discourse teaches us that what is being omitted is as informative as what is being said (Garnsey and Rees, 1996); thus, I suspect that this lacuna is intended to mask the roles intended by program developers for future school leaders.

This viewpoint has been developed in continuation of my previous work on social justice, which aspired to broaden the understanding of the range of roles educational leaders can fill in regard to social justice (Berkovich, 2014a). When I began this work, I focused mostly on creating a realistic account regarding the various manifestations of social justice efforts in education and on the manner in which they can affect a complex social system. But in the course of the study, I came to realize that the scholarly discourse about the development of educational leaders with regard to social justice is quite limited and concerns mainly the specific roles of educators. I claim that understanding the ways in which educational leaders are trained to think, speak, and act in practice can assist in revealing the underlying conceptions of program faculty about their own power and responsibility. I identified three designs of leadership preparation programs with respect to social justice: traditional, attitude development, and activist.

As a scholar of educational administration, a field that adopted a functionalistic perspective on structures and peoples, I tend to view these ideal types as rooted in design. Therefore, I suggest in this essay that organizational theories dealing with person-environment fit from complementing perspectives such as Schneider's attraction-selection-attrition theory and socialization literature can shed light on the models, possibilities, and limitations of various programs. I aim to expand these theories, which currently explore the issues of fit within organizations, to

include the notion of fit embedded in the design of preparation programs. Moreover, as the title of this essay suggests, faculty is behind the design decisions. The program faculty cannot be viewed as professionals detached from the hegemonic order or social injustices; on the contrary, they play an active role and position themselves and their professional work in relation to the social situation. Their choices, whether conscious or incidental, have implications for the power and responsibility of the faculty.

### **Social justice leadership preparation programs: A meta-conceptual framework**

The literature offers several noteworthy frameworks specifying concrete suggestions for social justice-oriented leadership preparation. Among these are the influential works of Young and Laible (2000), Pounder *et al.* (2002), Brown (2004), Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005), Capper *et al.* (2006), Evans (2007), McKenzie *et al.* (2008) and recently, Furman (2012). For example, Brown (2004) combined theoretical perspectives, focusing on adult learning, transformative learning, and critical social theory, with instructional focus on critical reflection, rational discourse, and policy praxis. Following an extensive literature review, Capper *et al.* (2006) suggested a framework based on a horizontal axis representing critical consciousness, knowledge, and practical skills, and a vertical axis representing curriculum and pedagogy. Based on practitioners' input, McKenzie *et al.* (2008) adopted a more action-oriented approach to preparation, and described a framework incorporating elements of selection of trainees, program content, and induction after graduating from the program. Recently, Furman (2012) took a step forward by making the concept of action an equal partner of reflection in educational preparation for social justice. Furman recommended that programs develop reflection and action capabilities along five dimensions: personal, interpersonal, communal, systemic, and ecological.

Although the frameworks described above offer insights into the "how" and "why" of educating for social justice leadership, a broader perspective that can be used to comprehend variance between preparation programs is still missing. The present essay offers a meta-conceptual framework for designing leadership preparation programs aimed at social justice and its implications. Based on the literature, I identify three program designs with regard to social justice: traditional design, attitude development design, and activist design. Traditional preparation programs for school leaders focus on the development of management and leadership

skills (Bush, 2008; Cuban, 1988). According to the literature, the curriculum in these programs is often segmented into discrete subject areas, topics such as partnerships with communities are not addressed, and programs fail to link theory with practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). The discussion of social injustice in traditional programs is usually marginal at best.

Scholars distinguish between two types of leadership preparation programs for social justice: reflection-oriented and action-oriented (Furman, 2012; McKenzie *et al.*, 2008). Thus, such programs might be oriented toward attitude development or toward inter-organizational and social activism. Attitude development programs aspire to develop the students' critical consciousness and promote a broad perspective in matters of power structures, privileges, and inequities (Brown, 2004; Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy, 2005; Capper *et al.*, 2006; McClellan and Dominguez, 2006). In such programs, students address the causes and effects of poverty and how poverty interacts with other social justice issues (Lyman and Villani, 2002). These programs are based on philosophies that identify a direct relationship between power and knowledge in modern societies, with specific knowledge becoming "true" and other becoming "false" (Foucault, 1980). Although it is impossible to disconnect knowledge from all power systems, it is possible to act with the aim of "detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, with which it operates at the present time" (Foucault, 1980, p. 133). Beside reflection-oriented programs there are also action-oriented programs. The effect of activism programs is strongly associated with action-oriented learning goals, such as developing community partnerships and skills for social activism (Heggart, 2015).

Based on a comparative analysis of current frameworks suggested in the literature (see Table I), I argue that a specific program design is determined by two complementary aspects, which are admission policy and the curricular and pedagogical focus of the program.

**Table I.** Comparison of conceptual frameworks for leadership preparation programs and social justice by design

	<b>Origin of framework</b>	<b>Main conceptual ideas</b>	<b>Settings</b>	<b>Admission policy</b>	<b>Curricular and pedagogical focus</b>	<b>Type of design</b>
<b>Brown (2004)</b>	Theory-driven analysis and literature content analysis	Interaction between 3 theoretical perspectives (adult learning theory, transformative learning theory, and critical social theory) and 3 pedagogical perspectives (critical reflection, rational discourse, and policy praxis)	Program	N.A.	Reflective social justice focus (exposes students to information and ideas beyond their comfort zones)	Attitude development
<b>Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005)</b>	Literature content analysis	Practiced reflexivity that combines academia and the field	Program	Inclination toward social justice (candidates who have high-quality instructional skills and come from diversified backgrounds)	Reflective social justice focus (encourages students to think differently about structures and roles in education)	Attitude development

<b>Capper, Theoharis and Sebastian (2006)</b>	Systemic literature content analysis	Interaction between 3 domains (critical consciousness, knowledge, and practical skills) and 3 emotional safety learning atmosphere domains (curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment)	Course, set of courses, or program	N.A.	Reflective social justice focus (developing critical consciousness, expanding theoretical and evidence-based knowledge, and assessing the change in students' dispositions about social justice)	Attitude development
<b>Evans (2007)</b>	Historical case analysis	Pedagogical themes (critical theory of deconstruction and reconstruction, transformational constructivism, democratic participation, and cohort delivery model of dialogue and relationships)	Program	Inclination toward social justice (candidates with preexisting leadership status and interest in social justice issues)	Reflective social justice focus (helps students learn more about their economic and social conditions)	Attitude development
<b>Furman (2012)</b>	Theory-driven analysis, case studies literature content analysis, and teaching experience analysis	Leadership as praxis (i.e., reflection and action) across 5 arenas (personal, interpersonal, communal, systemic, and ecological)		N.A.	Pragmatic social justice focus (develop students' capacities for both reflection and	Activist

<b>McKenzie <i>et al.</i> (2008)</b>	Literature content analysis, and teaching and research experience analysis	3 program elements: selection; knowledge and skills (related to critical consciousness, effective teaching for "every" child and day, and supportive school systems and structures); and induction period	Program	Social justice commitment (candidates with propensity for critically questioning educational inequities, also with strong teaching skills and leadership abilities)	action) Pragmatic social justice focus (exposes students to highly practical ideas and prepares them for social justice work; includes also an induction stage after graduation)	Activist
<b>Pounder, Reitzug, and Young (2002)</b>	Literature content analysis	4 program elements: knowledge (understandings about disadvantaged pupils' multiple needs; other professionals working with children and their families; collaborative professional communities; assessment of effective collaborative school community), structure (cohort model, multi-disciplinary curriculum), field experience with critical	Program	Social justice commitment (candidates are identified and recruited by program faculty and local district administrators)	Pragmatic social justice focus (enhances students' capacity to build democratic and collaborative school communities and assess effectiveness of change efforts)	Activist

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<b>Young and Laible (2000)</b>	Teaching experiences analysis and literature content analysis	reflection, and proactive faculty and students Pedagogical framework of anti-racism (understanding of oppressing system, its operation and countering actions) and pedagogical strategies (intimacy, positive learning environment, discussion of racism as a system of oppression, opportunities for self-reflection, peer dialogue, and anti-racist activities)	Course in traditional program	Open admission (candidates with diverse understandings of oppressions and different levels of social justice-related identity)	Reflective social justice focus (promotes students' examination of attitudes and role in an oppressing system)	Attitude development
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**Conceptualizing educational leader preparation programs by design**

I suggest that the ideal types of the preparation programs described above (traditional, attitude development, and activist) vary as a function of two elements in program design: admission policy and curricular and pedagogical focus. Regarding the first element, Schneider (1987) contended that organizational behavior is person-based and that “the people make the place.” He stressed the centrality of attraction, selection, and attrition processes in increasing homogeneity in organizations. Schneider's theory emphasizes the person-organization fit (i.e., value congruence) between applicants (self-selection) and the recruiting organization (recruiter selection). The model received empirical support from several studies. For example, Cable and Judge (1996) investigated job seekers and employers and found that individuals are attracted by and selected based on similarity in values. Regarding academic education, recent empirical research found that value-based self-selection occurs as early as the first week of studies (Arieli *et al.*, 2015). In a longitudinal study, Cooman *et al.* (2009) found that the probability of a person leaving an organization is negatively correlated with the person-organization fit at entrance. Note that fit can be used with other selection criteria, but the literature suggests that it is prioritized and used as the fundamental decision heuristic in selection processes related to social justice (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008).

In addition to admission policy, another element emerges as significant in shaping the values and future actions of the preparation program graduates: curricular and pedagogical focus. I view the program focus as directly related to the socialization of graduates it plans to achieve. Socialization aims to help adapt newcomers to new the environment and experiences, and it focuses specifically on transforming an "outsider" into an active and contributing "insider" (Feldman, 1976). Allen (2006) suggested that socialization is about embeddedness in a specific context, as the individuals become enmeshed in a web that connects them to their role and mission in the organization. Successful socialization promotes attachment, role clarity, task mastery, and congruence of values (Bauer and Green, 1998; Cable and Parsons, 2001).

The two elements described above have complementary relations in practice, as shown in Figure I<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, elements of program admission policy (i.e., open admission / inclination toward social justice / social justice commitment) usually match program curricular and pedagogical focus (i.e., general management and leadership focus / reflective social justice focus / pragmatic social justice focus).<sup>2</sup>



**Figure I.** Ideal types of educational leadership programs.

#### *Program admission policy*

In general, program admission policy can take one of three forms: open admission, selection of applicants by their inclination toward social justice, or selection of applicants by their social justice commitment. Participants' values in leadership preparation programs are highly relevant because in a professional context the

<sup>1</sup> The pyramid presentation is intended to point out the interdependence in levels of specificity between the two dimensions (i.e., admission policy and curricular and pedagogical focus). Although this analytical framework focuses on social justice leadership preparation, the principles discussed here may be relevant to leadership preparation programs with other socio-moral focuses (e.g., environmentalism, pacifism).

<sup>2</sup> The explanation presented here concerning a match between participants' perception and program orientation is suggested as the guiding rationale in the designers' sense making. Note, however, that individuals in different stages of life can "progress" along a "ladder" of social justice preparation programs. One's values and actions are likely to be linked with one's way of knowing the self, the world, and the interaction between them. A constructive developmental perspective suggests that adults can develop higher-stage abilities in the cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal domains, which may enable them to deal with greater complexity (Drago-Severson, 2016). Thus, in time, individuals can develop from one way of knowing to another, which is more complex.

dominant mainstream social group sets the tone (Marshall, 2004). When social justice issues are set as goals, McKenzie *et al.* (2008) criticized the open admission practice as ineffective because admitted students may have "no understanding of social justice" or "even have deficit views toward historically marginalized groups" (p. 117).

Scholars often claim that some initial level of student commitment to social justice is critical for program success in developing social justice-oriented graduates (Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy, 2005; Evans, 2007). A preparation program that aims to challenge deep-seated beliefs and misconceptions must attune to its student selection process, because such situations might present "threats to psychological security" (Brown, 2004, p. 81).

At the same time, developing leaders who are to become agents of actual social change requires working with leaders who already underwent a reflective process. Activism-oriented programs are likely to select applicants with strong social justice commitment. In this regard, McKenzie *et al.* (2008) argued that:

Not selecting students who already lean toward a social justice orientation will mean that considerable territory must be covered in the common 2 short years of the principalship program. Without these student strengths, a program would have to devote significant time to raising consciousness of students about social justice, a demand that would be difficult to satisfy within the relatively brief duration of a leadership preparation program. (p. 118)

McClellan and Dominguez (2006) suggested that the faculty of educational administration programs should select applicants based not only on academic record but also on demographic variety and the evidence of the applicants' activism. In the same vein, Cochran-Smith (2009) suggested two guidelines for the selection of participants in programs oriented toward social justice: (a) diversification of demographic background in the area of cultural, racial, and linguistic composition; and (b) recruiting candidates whose beliefs and values are consistent with social justice goals. A similar claim in support of the central role of preexisting values as selection criteria with regard to social activism was made by Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford (1986), who argued that successful activism depends largely on initial focus on the values of prospective members.

Several scholars suggested certain selection procedures that are aimed at discovering the applicants' beliefs and commitment with respect to issues of social justice (Brown, 2004; Garcia and McGovern-Robinett, 2004; McKenzie *et al.*, 2008). Among the strategies mentioned as enabling the evaluation of prospective students' attitudes were (a) evaluation of the portfolio and social identity documents that applicants submit, (b) use of psychological instruments that measure attitudes, (c) use of group activity simulation activities, and (d) observations by faculty of the applicants' conduct and performance at work.

### *Program curricular and pedagogical focus*

I suggest that the curricular and pedagogical focus of a development program can also take one of three forms: general management and leadership, reflective social justice, or pragmatic social justice. These programs are structured around a mainstream view of ideal administrative practice with a heavily managerial focus (Hess and Kelly, 2007). Traditional leadership preparation programs have been widely criticized for their curriculum reflecting a bias toward maintaining the status quo and reproducing the social reality, with its existing injustices (Black and Murtadha, 2007). The voices of immigrant, ethnic, poor, disabled, gay/lesbian, and disenfranchised community groups are not necessarily absent from such programs, but they are often marginalized (Marshall, 2004), and the curriculum reflects “cultural homogeneity” (Parker and Shapiro, 1992). There is evidence that in traditional academic programs, such as business studies, time and training only account for a small change in students' values (Arieli *et al.*, 2015).

Social justice-oriented leadership preparation programs can be value-oriented or task- and competence-oriented. Although in many cases leadership preparation programs have multiple foci (Huber, 2004), there is a significant dilemma regarding which focus to emphasize. In reflective leadership programs, focus is on identity and value clarification with regard to social justice. These programs encourage individuals to develop consciousness of the self and of societal process. Programs reflective of attitudes are based on the assumption that leaders must become aware of various forms of oppression in order to embrace and advocate social justice issues (Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy, 2005; Capper *et al.*, 2006; Evans, 2007; Jean-Marie *et al.*, 2009). Writing about the transformative framework needed for preparing leaders for social justice advocacy, Brown (2004) described several delivery methods suited for

this goal, including cultural autobiographies, life histories, prejudice reduction workshops, reflective analysis journals, controversial readings, cross-cultural interviews, educational plunges, and diversity panels. Similarly, McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) argued that community interviews, book study groups, and equity audits in schools can raise student awareness of social inequities. Furthermore, analysis of dilemma cases was suggested as an instructional strategy for embedding social justice issues in educational leadership preparation. Such cases can provide opportunities for leaders to examine complexities in a secure environment, make informed decisions, and take a stance on issues (Shapiro and Hassinger, 2007).

In contrast, social justice preparation programs with pragmatic focus contain two elements: (a) strengthening preexisting participants' social justice values and (b) suggesting an operational course of action and supporting the students' ability to follow it. In discussing such curricular focus, scholars made several recommendations to strengthen students' activist values (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008; Pounder *et al.*, 2002): (a) the faculty must personally serve as role models; and (b) the program should focus on the close work of faculty and students, and on mentoring rather than on the traditional instructional pedagogy.

Programs with a pragmatic focus are likely to develop the leaders' ability to act in one of the two operational courses of action: intra-institutional and extra-institutional activism. Educational preparation programs focusing on intra-institutional activism attempt to develop their graduates' ability to achieve the following results (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008): (a) raise the academic achievements of all students in the school, (b) prepare students for participation in critical citizenship, and (c) create heterogeneous and inclusive learning environments.

Preparation programs focusing on extra-institutional activism (also known as social activism) attempt to develop their graduates' abilities to promote social justice goals at the communal, systemic, and ecological levels (Furman, 2012). To become extra-institutional activists, leaders must develop practice-related analytical skills that would allow them to analyze the social context and decide what targets require their engagement (Gerstein and Ægisdóttir, 2007). Activism preparation programs also include the development of network and collaborative skills (Pounder *et al.*, 2002). These skills are needed to create a shared vision and collective empowerment, and are essential for accumulating the critical mass that enables social change (Marwell and Oliver, 1993).

### Reflections on the power and the responsibility of faculty

I connect between the design of the program, as reflected in the admission policy and its focus on one hand, and the boundaries the faculty chose to form a *priori* in order to enable and constrain its power and responsibility. Table II presents a comparison of the various program designs from the perspective of faculty power and responsibility.

**Table II.** Comparison of educational leadership program characteristics with respect to social justice and social change

		Leadership program's design		
		Traditional design	Attitude development design	Activism design
Faculty's power	Type of graduates' commitment to social justice	Uncommitted	Occasionally committed	Highly personally committed
	Type and nature of social change promoted	Status quo maintenance (if change of injustices occurs it will be local and sporadic in nature)	Versatile social change, diverse and incremental in nature	Focused social change, systematic and incremental in nature
Faculty's responsibility	Accountability to graduates' initiatives	Service provider, does not bear responsibility	Enabling factor, has indirect responsibility	Motivating factor, has direct responsibility
	Accountability to social change effectiveness	Lack of criteria of social goals	Reflective oriented criteria of social goals (attitudes etc.)	Action oriented criteria of social goals (behaviors, networking etc.)

*From program design to faculty power*

Lippitt *et al.* (1952) defined social power as: "the potentiality [...] for inducing forces [...] in other persons [...] toward acting or changing in a given direction" (39). This definition, as many other definitions of the concept of power, stress that those with power are like an archer shooting an arrow and setting both its direction and speed. Similarly, leadership programs both define graduates' social justice values (i.e., promoting specific agenda within the range of social justice discourse) and their practical ability to address inequities (i.e., building skills toward specific social actions). I view the two as strongly interrelated.

How is the program designed by the faculty related to the social justice agenda and action orientation of the graduates? Existing research supports my claim that swaying individuals in a given direction or guiding them toward certain action is primarily a matter of design. Adams (1983), in his characterization of the members of a voluntary association (i.e., the Red Cross), identified parallel elements of selection and socialization as key factors tying members to the organization and its goals. Based on these two elements, he found four types of possible members: (a) high in selection and low in socialization (e.g., informally committed board members); (b) low in both selection and socialization (e.g., uncommitted walk-ins); (c) low in selection and high in socialization (e.g., informally occasionally committed volunteer workers); and (d) high in both selection and socialization (e.g., formally committed paid staff).

If we think about social justice as an imagined voluntary association, we can view the design of preparation programs as associated with developing different models of practitioners committed to social justice values and activity. As the fourth type of member is irrelevant for preparation programs, I suggest focusing on the other three. Based on Adams's (1983) typology, we can conclude that the more active the role members play, the greater the emphasis on their selection processes. Other studies on activists support these conclusions. Downton and Wehr (1998) conducted interviews with peace activists and conceptualized the process of activist commitment. They identified activist identity, a shared vision with other activists, and a supportive group as being central in long-term activism. Similarly, in his comparative analysis of the labor, peace, and feminist movements, Klandermans (1993) found that group attitudes toward ideology and goals ("action orientation") are vital for enhancing long-term activist commitment.

How is the program designed by the faculty related to desired social change? I argue that program design reflects the nature of desired social change to be promoted by the graduates' activity. When agreement between individuals exists, incremental social change is more likely, whereas conflict is likely to produce chaotic social change (Smucker and Zijderveld, 1970). In traditional leadership preparation programs that have an open admission policy and focus on general management and leadership, graduates' values regarding social justice are highly heterogeneous, and social justice practices are seldom discussed. Thus, programs primarily end up maintaining the status quo. If few graduates of these programs are determined to combat social injustices, they will promote chaotic social change, as everyone would act at one's own discretion. In attitude development leadership programs, participant selection is based on the candidates' affinity with social justice issues, but because the development processes attempt to clarify values, their operationalization into practices aimed at addressing inequities is not debated meaningfully. Such programs aim to promote versatile social change, and graduates act to advance social justice in various ways, based on their individual understanding. In activism leadership programs, participants are positivity pre-oriented and committed to social justice and the development process. Thus, these programs attempt to strengthen activist values and offer preferred operational courses of action. The goal of preparation programs of this type is to promote focused social change. Every graduate operating in the field is expected to contribute to the desired social change incrementally.

#### *From program design to responsibility of the faculty*

According to Schlenker *et al.* (1994), responsibility is defined by the fulfillment of the following conditions: (a) clear prescriptions for an event, (b) these prescriptions binding individuals' conduct, and (c) an informal or formal connection between the individual and the event with respect to initiation or control. I suggest that the responsibility of the faculty is connected to two event manifestations: graduates' initiatives and desired social change.

Traditional leadership preparation programs focus on managerial issues rather than addressing social justice (Hess and Kelly, 2007; Jean-Marie *et al.*, 2009). Generally, these programs separate training from the activity of the graduates, which enables the faculty to avoid controversy in a highly competitive environment with increasing institutional pressures (Dill, 1997; Saunders, 2010). Most traditional



leadership preparation programs do not evaluate the graduates' performance against program goals (Black and Murtadha, 2007). The fact that faculty do not assume the responsibility does not absolve them from moral accountability. Educational leaders are required to work under vague, diverse, and fragmented conditions (Peterson and Cosner, 2005). Therefore, dispatching educational leaders from preparation programs into the real world without assisting them in developing a moral stand reflects an individualistic and relativistic worldview. Broadly speaking, traditional leadership preparation programs promote the preservation or non-disruption of the neoliberal hegemonic order. Others might disagree with these conclusions and suggest that such programs express primarily a libertarian viewpoint and the belief that external agencies should not intervene in individuals' freedom.

Attitude development programs aspire to promote social change by influencing participants' attitudes. But reflective discourse is less effective in promoting social change. Hemphill and Haines (1997) and Combs (2002), who examined diversity training at work places, claimed that increasing awareness is a good start, but more important is to discuss behaviors and practices that can counter injustice. In the same vein, Dees, Emerson, and Economy (2001) argued with regard to social action that "feeling accountable to all" sometimes leads to "being accountable to none" (p. 107). The lack of systemic assessment in preparation programs has also been noted in social justice-oriented programs (Black and Murtadha, 2007). Although social justice preparation programs of this type focus on raising awareness, in many cases the shortcomings of critical theories are in their practicality (Anyon, 1994), leaving graduates that have a more developed core of moral ideals without a clear operational direction.

Alternatively, activism-oriented programs aspire to promote focused social change by preferred practices (Pounder *et al.*, 2002; McKenzie *et al.*, 2008; Furman, 2012). With high expectations from graduates, scholars supporting pragmatic focus in social justice preparation programs recommend that students be provided with an induction period during post-preparation (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008). Although in general developers have no effect on school leadership selection processes (Bogotch and Reyes-Guerra, 2014), developers in activism-oriented programs are likely to be highly involved informally in assisting graduates to achieve their own leadership positions. For example, supporting graduates in job searches by mentoring, sponsorship, or networking has been associated with attempts by faculty members to increase the

representation of underrepresented groups in leadership positions (Young and Brooks, 2008). Such programs are not shielded from criticism. Some view them as having tunnel vision: in a complex environment that involves multiple stakeholders, they ignore the fact that often practical choices must be made between conflicting ethical ideals (Eyal *et al.*, 2011). Others argue that the unequal power balance between faculty and students, and the pressures of group conformity, can lead to indoctrination (Landorf and Nevin, 2007).

### **The faculty side of the story**

In this part, I focus on faculties and their agency, in order to offer some useful ideas on how faculties can develop academic leadership that supports social justice, and on how they can work together in programs that embrace promoting social justice as a central goal. The suggestions presented below are most fitting for academic cultures that define professional success broadly, involving the integration of research and teaching responsibilities with public service. In my opinion, igniting "fire in one's belly" in a way that produces academic activism (Jean-Marie, 2010) among faculty members is most likely in settings of this type.

The literature suggests that faculty members change their attitudes and behaviors if they develop a desire to change, experience a supportive work environment, acquire applicative knowledge about goals and action paths, and are rewarded for embracing the change (Kirkpatrick, 1994). To develop academic leadership that supports social justice, I suggest that faculties initiate two types of activities: inward-directed ones, aimed at stimulating identity-related discourse (*encounter groups*), and outward-directed ones, aimed at stimulating field-related discourse (*a hybrid professional learning community*). The intention of these activities is to enable faculty members of leadership preparation programs to jointly formulate a moral vision and design their programs to promote either versatile or focused social change. Such arrangements can enable them to incrementally stimulate collective action and accumulate the critical mass of activists needed (Marwell and Oliver, 1993) to effectively promote social justice change.

Academics are seldom asked to discuss in depth their personal and professional perceptions. This lack of reflective identity-related discourse is a serious problem when the goal is to develop social justice-oriented programs. Establishing an encounter group for faculty members can be extremely valuable. An encounter group

is a safe setting for dialogic communication (Rogers, 1970). Such groups lack a structured agenda and are based on interpersonal dialogue that involves self-exposure and reflection (Berkovich, 2014b). Successful encounter group dynamics are said to promote personal growth through self-awareness, increased sense of authenticity, and increased group collaboration (Campbell and Dunnette, 1968). Using of a skilled facilitator can contribute to guiding the members toward establishing dialogic communication (Berkovich, 2014b). For example, a topic that can be discussed in such a group is faculty members' conceptions of ideal teaching. Although some members may perceive teaching as a cognitive enterprise based on knowledge transmission, others may view it as an identity-related enterprise, seeking transformative affective change in the students (McLean *et al.*, 2008). Another topic that can be discussed in such settings is the dominant "professional" culture and how it is shaped by hegemony. Often, "professional" culture blocks the tenure of faculty belonging to non-hegemonic groups, disapproves when they express their non-hegemonic identity at the workplace, and discourages them from teaching and exploring topics that they consider valuable to disadvantaged groups (Dowdy, 2008; Marshall, 2010).

This is far from being an easy process. Members' defenses, such as resistance to change or low willingness to recognize the shortcomings of their current teaching, can undermine the efforts (McLean *et al.*, 2008). But confronting resistance in a constructive manner is the basis for promoting social justice (Theoharis, 2007). Not all members have similar commitment to the idea of a social justice program, therefore individuals with higher commitment to social justice ideals must behave proactively, for example, by serving as "risk-taking role models" who publicly discuss their shortcomings as teachers and their teaching mistakes (Simpson *et al.*, 2006).

Another initiative I suggest to establish is a hybrid professional learning community, which is "a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth-promoting way" (Stoll *et al.*, 2006, p. 223). I propose a specific type of professional learning community that combines both academics and practitioners in non-competitive settings. Zeichner (2010) called such settings "hybrid spaces" because they are intended to create a discourse in which practical and academic knowledge, theory and practice are integrated in new ways. Note that in activism-oriented

programs, faculty members not only wish to be in tune with the field in order to promote the interconnections between theory and practice, but have a more extended role perception because they view their role as involving bridging disjoint domains. Such *bridge leaders* understand their work as "rooted in traversing spaces between people" across boundaries of equity, opportunity, productivity, time, and geography (Tooms and Boske, 2010, p. xviii).

The two activities outlined above should become an integral part of the program routine for two reasons. First, I argue that faculty members need to be *reflective practitioners* (Schön, 1983). Embracing Foucault's viewpoint that power is relational in nature, embedded in social practices and visible only when exercised (Townley, 1993), one must acknowledge that faculties need to constantly criticize and reflect on their practices. For example, one such practice has been discussed earlier with reference to its centrality in candidate selection. Despite its intuitive nature, it is important to acknowledge that application of the fit is quite fluid, as it is highly sensitive to various biases. Tooms, Lugg, and Bogotch (2010) contended that fit is a compound construct that integrates the beholder's identity, the social construction of what a school leader is, and an inherent bias toward the hegemonic groups' culture and customs. Empirical evidence supports the existence of such fit-related biases. For example, in an experimental study, Bye *et al.* (2014) found that individuals perceived as having low cultural fit were six times less likely to be hired. Smith (2013) explored the selection of assistant principals and found that candidates with specific personality types, all of which included high extroversion, were more likely to be selected for the positions. It appears, therefore, that the current social construction of school leadership shows a favorable bias toward extroversion. Open, ongoing discussion of such inherent biases regarding the fit in candidate selection, as well as of other program practices, is vital to eliminate the pervasive effects of biases. Second, I contend that translating abstract ideals of social justice into meaningful values or concrete aspects requires a high level of *system thinking* (Shaked and Schechter, 2014) on the part of faculties because their and their students' efforts are likely to face different barriers. Among possible barriers one can note (Berkovich, 2014a): (a) ethical commitment to uphold rules, (b) hindering policies, (c) traditional community values, (d) convergence of multiple socio-economic challenges, and (e) contradictory social justice goals. Fostering understandings and strategies about how to deal with

such barriers is crucial for programs that want to have a real-world effect. A collective discussion of how to overcome these barriers is needed.

The transformation of a faculty that shows initial interest in social justice issues into one that targets social justice as a primary mission is far from simple; it involves incremental progress and requires determination and patience. Monitoring of the progress being made is extremely important not only to navigate the process but also to demonstrate to faculty members that change is possible. The effectiveness of an intervention can be identified based on the following criteria (Kirkpatrick, 1994): (a) faculty feedback about satisfaction with the initiative; (b) evidence that learning has occurred in the areas of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the faculty; (c) evidence that faculty learning has led to behavioral changes that were implemented in their work with students; and (d) evidence that faculty learning produced results among students and has affected their attitudes and actions.

It should not be taken for granted that faculty seek to make social justice their main mission. The unique potential of faculty to influence others is related to their advantaged position in socio-political power relations. Embracing Foucault's (1980) perception of the direct link between power and knowledge leads to recognizing that academia plays a key role in the formation of socio-political relations. Scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it contribute to perceptions of the "objectivity" of knowledge (Townley, 1993). Therefore, higher education plays an active role in oppressing non-hegemonic identities, and faculty members enjoy their socially privileged positions. In light of this analysis, it is not surprising that critical scholars have argued that academic institutions are inherently biased toward maintaining the *status quo*, and that they support mostly "toothless critique" that does not threaten it (St Clair, 2004, p. 42). Meaningful initiatives to influence the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of faculty are likely to face a lack of institutional support, manifested in unsupportive leadership, refusal to allocate time and resources, failure to change evaluation and reward systems, and even direct institutional opposition. We cannot ignore the possible risk that faculty decisions to promote social justice preparation programs might lead to their marginalization by some policymakers and potential sponsors (Bogotch and Reyes-Guerra, 2014). For these reasons, change is unlikely to come from institutional leadership. Promoting social justice in higher education depends primarily on bottom-up initiatives by faculty members.

**Concluding remarks**

School leadership is a role that is said to involve multiple imperatives, including managerial, social, instructional, political, and moral (Greenfield Jr, 1995). The moral imperative, which is often translated into care, respect, promotion of inclusion and equity, critical perspective, and cultural sensitivity, is viewed by critical and functionalist scholars alike as an important part of the profession (Greenfield Jr, 2004). It is therefore safe to say that there is a general consensus that morality is an integral basic element of educational leadership. But the scholarly community is somewhat divided around four questions: (a) is there a hierarchy of imperatives, and if so, should the moral imperative be at the top? (b) what is the extent to which the socio-political power relations operationalize the various imperatives? (c) what is the level of interdependence between the various imperatives? and (d) what is the extent to which the "conventional" operationalization of the various imperatives constrains leaders' ability to exercise the moral imperative meaningfully?

Those advocating a social justice agenda suggest that the various imperatives are highly interrelated and that the moral imperative should lead. This approach produces a moral alternative to the manner in which socio-political power relations operationalize school leaders' work and heavily limit the leaders' ability to be moral agents (Bogotch and Shields, 2014; Capper and Young, 2014; Lyman *et al.*, 2012; Normore and Brooks, 2014; Oplatka and Arar, 2015; Shields, 2013; Theoharis, 2007; Zembylas and Iasonos, 2016). Those who do not advocate a social justice agenda provide different answers to the questions above, tending to place other emphases on preparation programs, such as developing instructional or transformational abilities, or both (e.g., Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2009; Murphy, 1992).

The present work, which advocates a social justice agenda, builds on prior works in the field that argue that educational leaders must "purposefully, knowledgeably and courageously" work for social justice in education (Marshall and Young, 2006, p. 308). Brown (2004) claimed that in order to develop social justice leaders, a fundamental change must occur in traditional leadership preparation content, delivery, and assessment. Embracing this view, the field is preoccupied mainly with conducting pedagogical discussions, but such discussions are only part of the issue. There is a need to expand our discussion and address the "transparent" involvement of program faculty in the process. Changing dominant tendencies in academia depends on "how clearly the participants understand what they are doing —

and how effective they can become at persuading others of the significance of what they are engaged in" (Sullivan, 1999, p. 12).

Awareness of the gravity of program design decisions can enable individuals and groups in organizations to make moral choices. Attention to various elements in the design of preparation programs can enable program faculty to lead by "accepting responsibility for task, self, and the fate of others" (Davies *et al.*, 1991, p. 7). The present work aimed to stress the central role of academic stakeholders in the moral leadership discussion. The aspiration of this essay is to stimulate a dialogue that can assist program faculty in making informed decisions about the design of their program and its moral implications. The significance of such discussion is augmented in light of the observation by Brown (2004) that the faculty of leadership preparation programs do not take the time to clarify their individual social justice commitments or program agendas. I share other scholars' and practitioners' view that few social justice preparation programs (either reflective or action-oriented) exist, despite their importance in developing a moral educational leadership. I hope that fellow academics may want to initiate new programs aimed at promoting social justice reflection and activism.

Foremost, I view social justice preparation programs as especially valuable in socio-economic contexts that can be termed as "challenging." These contexts often include multiple elements that are known to be associated with lower chances of students to achieve academic success (such as low socioeconomic background, high immigration ratio, location in the geo-social periphery, etc.). The school effectiveness literature suggests that in such settings school leaders must face challenging circumstances in order to promote their schools (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006; Chapman and Harris, 2004; Hargreaves and Harris, 2015; Harris, 2002; Potter *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, social justice preparation programs are particularly relevant for these contexts, and most likely easier to initiate because universities and districts are more inclined to partner and create collaborative leadership programs (Orr and Barber, 2007) that address dominant local needs. It is possible to argue that not all programs should be social justice-oriented because not all social settings pose key challenges associated with social injustice. This is certainly a valid claim, but those advocating social justice are likely to identify a chicken and egg scenario in such an argument: how can one know whether the social settings in which one operates pose such challenges without knowledge about social justice? One must acknowledge, however,

that social justice programs are not immune to criticism. For example, activism-oriented leadership programs are likely to have their limitations, including focused training, which can promote a rigid mindset among trainees, which in turn, and paradoxically, can become a liability when trying to address complex challenges in a multiple-stakeholder environment.

Evaluation of the impact of leadership preparation programs is lacking, because most programs fail to follow up and assess whether preparation indeed influences their graduates' concepts, work, and outcomes (Black and Murtadha, 2007; Davis and Darling-Hammond, 2012). Faculties supporting social justice agendas should be at the forefront of these efforts. There is a crucial need for developing self-concept measures of graduates' social justice attitudes and commitment (e.g., disposition in ethical judgment toward social justice); for developing behavioral measures to assess graduates' social justice-related behaviors in leadership positions (e.g., leader's distributive justice rules that prioritize students' needs); and for developing outcome measures at the students' level (e.g., value-added achievements, sense of inclusion, and respect), at the school level (e.g., culture supportive of social justice), and at the community and government levels (e.g., legitimacy and laws). Additional research on these topics is greatly needed.

Reviewing the social justice leadership in education literature, Bogotch and Reyes-Guerra (2014) identified three generations of research: the first generation aspired to define what social justice leadership in education is; the second generation attempted to describe what leadership behaviors are used to address social injustices within schools; the third wave focused on the development of social justice-oriented leadership preparation programs. The present work demonstrates the need for the third-generation social justice leadership research to direct its critical attention also to faculty involvement and agency in the development of social justice leadership. Finally, the present work draws on Western notions of social justice and training, particularly those originating in North-America and Anglo-Saxon countries. Therefore, future works may also consider whether the present typology and its implications are transferable to other, non-Western countries.



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