Toward a framework for preparing leaders for social justice

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this article is to propose one possible framework for conceptualizing the preparation of leaders for social justice. To this end, three central questions guided this conceptualization: “What are the common themes in the literature and research on preparing leaders for social justice?”; “How can this framework serve as a guide for developing a course, set of courses, or an entire program toward preparing leaders to lead socially just schools?”; and “How can this literature and conceptualization inform future scholarship in administrator preparation?”.

Design/methodology/approach – This work included a review of 72 pieces of literature. To address the research questions, the growing body of leadership for social justice literature was reviewed. Each of these articles was analyzed and explicit recommendations for preparing school leaders noted. These recommendations were then catagorized into the proposed framework.

Findings – Three domains: critical consciousness; knowledge; and practical skills focused on social justice are positioned on the horizontal dimension of the framework. To achieve these ends, requires curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment oriented toward social justice – the vertical dimension of the framework.

Originality/value – It is suggested using this framework to guide the review and development of administration preparation programs whose aim is to prepare socially just leaders. Additionally, this article calls for increased attention to assessing preparation programs and how they prepare leaders for social justice.

Keywords Social justice, Leadership, School leavers, Curricula

Paper type Literature review

Introduction

Scholars in the field of education prepare thousands of future school leaders every year, yet “there is not an overabundance of scholarship in the area of administrator preparation” (Murphy and Vriesenga, 2004, p. 28). Murphy and Vriesenga completed a review of the literature on preparation programs and concluded that while the research and scholarship is expanding in this area (see Cibulka, 2004; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Culberston, 1988; Donmoyer et al., 1995; English, 2000, 2002, 2004; Glasman et al., 2002; Grogan and Andrews, 2002; Hafner, 2004; Jackson and Kelley, 2002; Levine, 2005; Murphy, 1999, 2001, 2002; Peterson, 2002), empirical and theoretical work is needed in the area of administrator preparation programs.
In previous years, scholars in the field have debated what makes up the knowledge base that school administrators need, how to define and re-define that base, and who has a voice in this discussion (Bredeson, 1995; Capper, 1995; Cibulka, 2004; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Donmoyer, 1995; English, 2000, 2002, 2004; Ikpa, 1995; Levine, 2005; Littrell and Foster, 1995; Murphy, 2001, 2002; Shakeshaft, 1995). More recently, a growing interest and body of scholarship on leadership for social justice has emerged with a few implicit and explicit suggestions for administrator preparation (Dantley, 2002; Gewirtz, 1998; Grogan, 2002a, b; Larson and Murtadha, 2002; MacKinnon, 2000; Marshall, 2004; Maynes and Sarbit, 2000; Scheurich, 1998; Scheurich and Skrla, 2003; Theoharis, 2004a, b, c; Touchton and Acker-Hocevar, 2001; Vibert and Portelli, 2000). To date, however, the literature does not offer a complete review of this literature and how it can inform administrator preparation for social justice. This article promises to address this gap.

As such, the purpose of this article is to propose one possible framework for conceptualizing the preparation of leaders for social justice. To this end, three central questions guided this conceptualization:

**RQ1.** What are the common themes in the literature and research on preparing leaders for social justice?

**RQ2.** How can this framework serve as a guide for developing a course, set of courses, or an entire program toward preparing leaders to lead socially just schools?

**RQ3.** How can this literature and conceptualization inform future scholarship in administrator preparation?

**Methods**

To address the research questions, we reviewed the growing body of leadership for social justice literature. This review included all articles from the special issue devoted to social justice from *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 40 No. 1, 2004, two special issues devoted to social justice from the *Journal of School Leadership*, Vol. 12 No. 2 and Vol. 12 No. 3, 2002, and articles related to social justice and equity and leadership from keyword searches conducted on Education Full Text and ERIC. In all, we reviewed 72 related articles and book chapters. Of these, 11 offered explicit suggestions for the preparing school leaders for social justice. We analyzed each of these articles and noted explicit recommendations for preparing school leaders. We then categorized these recommendations into our proposed framework.

In the articles, recommendations related to race and ethnicity received the greatest attention, with some recommendations related to social class. Other suggestions for preparation were generic across areas of difference (i.e. understanding oppression and stereotyping). We noted that none of the recommendations for preparation specifically addressed anything related to educating students with disabilities. Hence, we conducted an entirely separate search on leadership and special education and leadership and disabilities to extract recommendations for leadership preparation. Though these articles made suggestions for preparing school leaders to be successful with student learning differences (Barnett and Monda-Amaya, 1998; Crockett, 2002; Hirth and Valesky, 1990; Poetter et al., 2001; Sirotkin and Kimball, 1994), they did not offer ideas for examining the intersection of disability with other areas of difference.
This held true as well for sexual orientation. Though several articles included sexual orientation in their list of –isms, none of the social justice articles offered recommendations for preparation related to sexual orientation. Hence, we also conducted an entirely separate search on sexual orientation and leadership. We located six articles that addressed this directly and none of them specifically offered recommendations for administrator preparation (Blount, 2003; Capper, 1999; Fraynd and Capper, 2003; Koshoreck, 2003; Lugg, 2003a, b).

We entered the suggestions for administrator preparation from all the articles in the appropriate place on the framework we developed, moving back and forth between the literature and making changes in the framework as informed by this literature. To be sure, not all recommendations fit neatly into the dimensions depicted in the framework. We discuss this further in the framework section. We then used the constant comparative method of data analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to compare and contrast the suggestions within each domain of the framework to identify common themes across the articles.

Categorizing leadership preparation
Some traditional ways of categorizing the preparation of school leaders includes the dispositions, knowledge, and skills that school leaders need to know (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996), or awareness, understanding, and capability (NPBEA Standards for Advanced Programs in Educational Leadership, 2002, cited in Hafner (2004)). The literature that includes suggestions for preparing social justice leaders, at times, addresses different dimensions. For example, Young and Laible (2000) identified three possible approaches that individuals who teach anti-racist education can take:

1. the personal approach;
2. the institutional approach; and
3. the multiple fonts approach.

They suggest that with the personal approach, “... individuals seek to develop an antiracist consciousness through discussion and personal contact with diverse groups” (Young and Laible, 2000, p. 391). With the institutional approach, “... individuals understand the institutionalization of White racism ... and once understanding is developed, to work against it” (Young and Laible, 2000, p. 392). They explain that a multiple fonts approach “... encourages individuals to both see White racism as systemic and to explore the personal dimensions of White racism” (Young and Laible, 2000, p. 392).

Importantly, Young and Laible (2000) illustrate how addressing one categorical area (e.g. knowledge) may inform another categorical area (e.g. consciousness). For example, using their approach, students learn about racial identity development, then write critical papers on their own identity development. In so doing, students gain knowledge about an area (white or racial identity development) and then, engage in critical reflection that raises their consciousness (writing a paper about their own identity development).

Mirroring some of the traditional ways of categorizing leadership preparation, Brown (2004, p. 88) agrees that developing leaders for social justice requires a “fundamental rethinking of content, delivery, and assessment”. Though Brown (2004) proposed a transformative framework for preparing leaders for social justice, her work
centered primarily on delivery methods in leadership programs that could inform leader preparation (e.g. life histories, controversial readings, diversity panels, educational plunges, etc.). Brown further distinguishes between delivery methods that promote “knowledge acquisition at the formal cognitive level” such as “clinical experiences, internships, cohort groups, case studies, and problem-based learning” (Brown, 2004, p. 81) and methods that promote “skill and attitude development” such as “cultural autobiographies, life histories, prejudice reduction workshops, and cross-cultural interviews” (Brown, 2004, p. 81) to name a few. These traditional and contemporary categorizations of leadership preparation informed our framework.

One possible framework

To prepare leaders for social justice, educational leadership programs must attend to critical consciousness, knowledge, and practical skills focused on social justice with their students. These three domains are positioned on the horizontal dimension of our framework (see Table I). To achieve these ends, requires curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment oriented toward social justice – the vertical dimension of the framework. These six domains of the framework yield nine different aspects critical to the preparation of social justice leaders. However, for prospective leaders to fully engage with the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, professors must intentionally create a classroom and program environment and conditions where students experience a sense of emotional safety that will help them take risks toward social justice ends. That is, students can fully engage in a social justice oriented program only when conditions are such that they are able to take intellectual and emotional risks toward social justice (Young and Laible, 2000). Hence, that concept is placed in the left hand corner of the framework. Table I shows a linear view of the framework and the remainder of this article describes the framework.

Horizontal dimension

The horizontal dimension of the framework depicts what school leaders must believe, know, and do to lead socially just schools that we refer to as critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills. We define these in the context of preparing social justice leaders next.

Critical consciousness. The first component on the horizontal dimension addresses what we call critical consciousness or what the literature at times refers to as dispositions (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; English, 2004; Hafner, 2004; Jackson and Kelley, 2002). While the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards defines dispositions as what “the administrator believes in, values, and is committed to” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996, p. 10) Hafner (2004, p. 7) articulates that dispositions are “nebulously defined throughout the literature. Some refer to dispositions as belief systems while others substitute the term values for disposition”. Rather than dispositions, we prefer the terms critical consciousness

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<th>Emotional safety for risk taking</th>
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We argue that school leaders need to embody a social justice consciousness within their belief systems or values. This includes needing to possess a deep understanding of power relations and social construction including white privilege, heterosexism, poverty, misogyny, and ethnocentrism.

**Knowledge.** The second aspect we refer to as the knowledge of leadership preparation. The ISLLC standards define knowledge to mean what “the administrator has knowledge and understanding of” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996, p. 10). At its core knowledge refers to what a leader “knows” (Donmoyer et al., 1995; English, 2004; Glasman et al., 2002; Hafner, 2004; Jackson and Kelley, 2002; Murphy and Vriesenga, 2004). School leaders for social justice need to know about evidence-based practices that can create an equitable school. For example, this knowledge would include understanding the positive and equitable effects of de-tracking and eliminating pull-out programs. It would include developing specific knowledge base around language acquisition, disability, and current research on reading and mathematics curriculum and instruction.

**Skills.** Specific skills that school leaders need to do comprise the third aspect of the horizontal dimension. The ISLLC standards use the term “performances” instead of skills to mean the “processes” and “activities” that the administrator can “facilitate” and “engage” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996, p. 11). Literature on preparation proposes that skills refer to what the leader actually can do (Hafner, 2004; Jackson and Kelley, 2002; Murphy, 2002). For the purpose of this article and framework, we will use the term skills. This framework spans across and combines epistemologies, and we recognize that skills has behaviorist and structural-functionalist connotations, which does not seem to naturally fit with the rest of the framework. In saying that, we believe that there are specific skills that leaders require to enact justice. These skills allow them to put their knowledge and consciousness into practice. For example, they need to be able to establish a service delivery team to work toward eliminating pull out programs, use data to lead conversations about equity and school improvement, and hire and supervise staff to carry out these socially just ideas.

**Vertical dimension**
Along the vertical dimension we identified three components of a preparation program that are necessary to intentionally consider if students are to learn about critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills related to social justice. These three components include curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. We discuss these next.

**Curriculum.** The first aspect on the vertical dimension we refer to as the curriculum of preparation programs. When we say curriculum, we mean the specific content areas of a leader preparation program that can influence the consciousness, deepen the knowledge, and build skills of future leaders to carry out their work. For example, this would include content on professional development, restructuring service delivery models, the negative outcomes of special education, and stages of language acquisition.

**Pedagogy.** The second aspect of the vertical dimension refers to how content is delivered in a preparation program or pedagogy. In preK-12 education, this is referred to as pedagogy, while the adult education literature refers to this dimension as andragogy or the delivery of instruction to adults. For the purpose of this framework we will use the term pedagogy. Culley and Portuges (1985, p. 2 cited in Young and
Laible, 2000, p. 394, emphasis in the original) argue that “... changing what we teach, means changing how we teach”. Examples of pedagogy include books, articles, web sites, videos, debates, case studies, reflective journals, community action projects, and other instructional strategies used in the preparation of educational leaders. Based on our framework, we discuss pedagogy associated with raising leader consciousness, pedagogy that deepens leader knowledge, and pedagogy that builds leadership skills.

Assessment. The third aspect refers to assessment practices, or how the consciousness, knowledge, and skills of future leaders are assessed. These assessments can be at the course level, program level, or can take place in the field with practicing leaders.

Framework intersections
The following sections describe the intersecting horizontal and vertical dimensions of the framework. We discuss the intersections of curriculum first.

Curriculum
Curriculum on critical consciousness. We define this dimension as curriculum or content that raises student consciousness about power, privilege, and associated issues, for example, white racism, heterosexism, and the ways that schools are typically structured to perpetuate power inequities. Parker and Shapiro (1992) made it clear that it is important to address a “broad perspective” on issues of difference beyond race, class, and gender. They also regarded foundational studies in history, philosophy, and sociology of education as they relate to areas of difference as important. Brown (2004, p. 93) believes that the curriculum needs to include an accurate history of schooling in the USA, including the “systematic nature of inequities reproduced daily”. Rapp (2002, p. 233) argues that preparation programs have an obligation to instill in leaders a need to resist injustice and must “provide opportunities for administration students to leave the comforts and confines of professional codes and state mandates for the riskier waters of high moral callings”. All these examples from the literature point to ways that curriculum can be used to develop a critical consciousness within future leaders for social justice.

Curriculum about knowledge. We define this domain to include curriculum focused on specific knowledge about related theories, subject areas such as special education law, and knowledge about evidenced-based practices such as reallocating resources, second language acquisition, reading and math curriculums. Admittedly, learning about particular knowledge may also result in consciousness raising about power and privilege though that is not the particular focus of this domain, per se. The curriculum related to knowledge was the most developed aspect of all the studies examined.

Some scholars advocate infusing issues and equity and difference within existing courses. For example, Brown (2004, p. 88) suggests that “... an integration of social justice and equity issues throughout a range of courses is recommended”. Parker and Shapiro (1992) offer examples of typical educational leadership courses and how social justice might be infused within them, such as law and foundations with a focus on difference, school finance as it relates to equity, law and policy related to difference, and related issues with curriculum, instruction, and evaluation. Young and Laible (2000, p. 403) offer additional courses where anti-racism could be addressed, but caution it “will require more than tacking on activities”. Young and Laible (2000, p. 401)
also argue that more than one professor needs to address social justice issues, and at least one course in a program should totally focus on racism and antiracism. At the same time, they also believe that “anti-racist and/or anti-oppression teaching approaches and content be integrated into all coursework in educational administration programs”. According to Young and Laible (2000, p. 402), “… this process [needs to] be nurtured during the entire time students are in the program” through advising, student participation in department activities, and developing community between faculty and students and among students. This comprehensive approach models to students the fact that unlearning racism is “a life long learning process” (Young and Laible, 2000, p. 403).

Some scholars whose empirical research focus on a particular area of difference, not surprisingly, then make suggestions for leadership preparation focused on that particular area of difference. For example, Lyman and Villani (2002), who study poverty and leadership, argue that future leaders need to understand the complexity of poverty, its causes, effects, and how it intersects with other social justice issues. Similarly, some of Parker and Shapiro’s (1992) suggested content areas focus specifically on race, and argue for knowledge directly related to difference, such as the history and sociology of various racial/language groups and their interactions with the school system, aspects of diversity for urban educators, and new research on minority school achievement. Solomon’s (2002) empirical work on anti-racism in leadership preparation, also argues that school leaders need to understand how racism works as a system of oppression, that anti-racism moves beyond multiculturalism. He also believes school leaders need to learn how their own racial identity development impacts their leadership practice.

At the same time, some scholars, though their research centers on a particular area of difference, make broader generalizations and connections to other areas of difference. For example, Parker and Shapiro (1992) suggest that leaders should learn about Stage Theory and how students and faculty may resist new knowledge. They also suggest new leaders should be prepared to learn how to be change agents for difference.

Other scholars, whose research did not focus on a particular area of difference, made suggestions about specific knowledge they felt necessary for administrators based upon their research on leaders successful at transforming school to benefit marginalized students. Riester et al. (2002) found that principals needed a base of knowledge in literacy and how to teach literacy. Theoharis (2004) argued that principals required detailed knowledge of special education and language acquisition in order to lead schools to become inclusive environments where students receiving special education and ELL services reach high levels of achievement. More specifically, Sirotnik and Kimball (1994, p. 622) propose the administrators understand federal and state special education law and regulations; definitions and characteristics of disabilities; “service delivery models; appropriate teaching strategies; financial, legal, and ethical implications of special education programs; and enough history (success and failure) of special education programming in schools.”

Curriculum about skills. We define this domain as content that pertains to how to actually implement evidenced-based practices or putting particular knowledge into practice to work toward erasing inequities in schools. For example, prospective principals could learn about the particular knowledge of problems with pull-out programs, but in this domain, they would actually learn how to engage their school staff in a process to dismantle such programs.
Many authors offered specific skills that school principals must be taught though nearly all were couched in what school leaders should be able to do, and not in what university faculty should prepare principals to be able to do. Solomon (2002) believes that school leaders should know how to do the following, all related to anti-racist work:

- how to create an anti-racist environment for students, teachers, parents, and communities;
- how to implement a whole-school anti-racism program that includes teachers who are resistant; how to hire a diverse teaching staff; how not to be afraid of controversy and encourage a range of voices to be heard; and
- how to build alliances with other equity-conscious groups and agencies.

Parker and Shapiro (1992) argue that principals should be taught how to be advocates for those less powerful, and how to articulate problems with standardized measures of traditional achievement and discipline measures which work against students of color, while Skrla et al. (2004) suggest that future leaders need skills in conducting equity audits. In agreeing with Parker and Shapiro, Rapp (2002) proposes that principals require the skills to rebel, resist, and challenge injustice. Rapp likens the skills administrators need to social activists such as Martin Luther King Jr, Mother Jones, Chief Seattle, Father James Guadalupe Carney, and Helen Keller.

McKenzie and Scheurich (2004, p. 609) propose that principals need the skills to facilitate their staffs “to get to know their students and their students’ families and community on a personal level” and to “dignify the culture of their students”. They also argue that principals need to be able to hire new teachers who are committed and take responsibility for to all students learning. In building upon McKenzie and Scheurich idea of facilitation, Shields et al. (2002) believe that leaders need the skills to lead dialogue that engages staffs about issues of race and ethnicity, forces people to reexamine their own perceptions/beliefs, and creates action.

Riester et al. (2002) and Theoharis (2004) argue that principals need the skills to empower staff through setting up collaborative and shared decision making structures that allow staff time and space to team and craft their practice. They also believe that principals require skills in using, working with, and facilitating the use of school data.

**Pedagogy**

*Pedagogy related to critical consciousness.* This domain describes information about teaching methods for raising student consciousness about power inequities. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) identified several ways to raise student consciousness about power inequities, such as having students take neighborhood walks to conduct survey/interviews for a local school principal in a low income neighborhood, book study groups using books principals could use for teacher study groups in their own schools, equity audits in their own schools (McKenzie and Scheurich, 2004), or conducting equity audits using a sample school or analyze equity audit data in class (Skrla et al., 2004). Brown (2004) offers eight teaching strategies to raise student consciousness including:

1. cultural autobiographies;
2. life histories by interviewing someone older than 65 and who attended school in the USA;
(3) prejudice reduction workshops;
(4) reflective analysis journals that professors respond to and ask critical questions and students analyze;
(5) rational discourse using critical incidents, controversial readings, structured group activities;
(6) cross cultural interviews;
(7) educational plunges; and
(8) diversity panels.

Pedagogy related to knowledge. This domain describes teaching strategies to help students learn about evidenced-based practices or related subjects and theories. Examples include multi-media web sites that describe particular practices, or particular readings and activities designed to engage students with these readings. Parker and Shapiro (1992) suggested policy action research studies, or use of informal or peer learning.

Pedagogy related to skills. This domain describes teaching strategies to help students learn the skills that are necessary to lead socially just schools. These strategies might include internships, or role playing verbal responses to critical questions from parents or community members, about, for example, reducing pull out programs. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) identified five different kinds of teaching strategies that would help prospective school principals learn the skills needed for leading equitable schools. These strategies include:

(1) role playing the interview process using an equity interview protocol;
(2) model honoring divergent views in class and making this an explicit aspect of the class, encouraging equal participation, and regularly collecting student feedback to honor student perspectives;
(3) pair students with another teacher in the same school and observe each other’s teaching;
(4) have students visit classrooms and schools where teachers are being successful; and
(5) students shadow a master teacher in their own school and keep a reflective journal.

Brown (2004) suggests students write activist plans for their school or community that include obstacles, a time line, and supports for their efforts.

Assessment
Hafner (2004) empirically measured how the dispositions of students in a leadership program about social justice changed as a result of taking a course on leadership and social justice. Hafner defined dispositions to encompass three aspects: awareness, attitudes, and action. The nine students preparing for school leadership positions reported that the course “opened my eyes”, that they were made aware of issues such as deficit thinking, and that they learned new ideas for action. Brown (2004, 2005) also examined the assessment of leadership dispositions. We could not locate any literature that assessed leadership knowledge and skills related to social justice.
Implications and conclusion

Based on our proposed framework, we offer several implications for leadership preparation and future research. First, faculty in leadership preparation programs can use this framework as one way to conduct an assessment of their programs. Current preparation programs aimed toward social justice tend to focus on critical consciousness with primary emphasis on white racism and white privilege, with significantly less attention paid to consciousness about the social construction of disability, homophobia and heterosexism, and language diversity in children. Relatedly, these programs find it difficult to prepare leaders to acquire the actual skills needed to make equity-based changes in schools. As such, across the first level of intersections in the framework (curriculum related to critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills) possible questions for assessing programs include: In our program, to what extent are we addressing critical consciousness? To what extent are we addressing knowledge related to social justice? Do we have a stand alone course? To what extent is this knowledge integrated throughout all the courses? To what extent do our courses and field experiences teach prospective school leaders actually how to take action and engage in skills to make equity oriented changes?

Along this first level of intersections, faculty can ask similar questions of themselves about their own courses. For example, to what extent is my course addressing critical consciousness, knowledge about equity issues, and skill development? Where are my strengths and areas for improvement in each of these areas? What areas of difference do I address and which areas of difference do I need to further develop in my teaching capacity?

Along the second level of intersections (pedagogy related to critical consciousness, knowledge acquisition, and skills), we found that though many articles make suggestions for leadership preparation at the end of the piece, a few contemporary scholars are addressing teaching strategies for preparing leaders for social justice as the primary focus of their scholarship (Brown, 2004; Hafner, 2004). Our analyses suggests that the pedagogical strategies outlined in these articles and the other articles that offer suggestions for preparation tend to focus on consciousness raising with little attention given to innovative teaching strategies that address knowledge and skills that prospective leaders for social justice need. Again, educators in preparation programs can use the framework to guide an assessment of the teaching strategies being used in their programs. Are the instructional methods that faculty are using aimed more toward consciousness, knowledge, or skill development? Where are our strengths and weaknesses in this regard? To what extent are the program’s pedagogy “in-house” that is, activities that take place in the classroom (e.g. case studies, debates, videos, diversity panels), as compared to teaching strategies where students are required to engage in their communities and schools (e.g. equity audits, spending time in low income or diverse communities visiting neighborhood homes, working in a food pantry). As to the latter, faculty must skillfully implement these teaching strategies in ways that do not reinforce stereotypes. What pedagogy seem to be most effective and efficient for achieving student learning goals and what data do we have to show this?

In terms of assessment, questions to evaluate preparation programs toward social justice can include: How are we measuring the critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills of prospective leaders in our program prior to entering the program, at the end of the program, and while serving as school leaders? What data do we have to show that
graduates of our program are raising student achievement in their schools and leading their schools in other socially just ways? What data do we have to show that a particular course in the program or set of courses has increased the consciousness, knowledge, and skills of students toward socially just ends?

Questions related to the extent that a course, learning experience, or program provide a sense of emotional safety to enable students to take emotional and intellectual risks toward social justice ends must also be asked. For example, to what extent do I try to create a classroom environment that allows the full expression of multiple perspectives? What course activities best facilitate students’ critical self-reflection to examine their own biases, stereotypes, and deficit thinking? To what extent do all students, regardless of individual differences, feel fully affirmed and engaged in the program? To what extent am I using teaching strategies that help students feel comfortable asking questions about their own biases or misunderstandings about difference? To what extent are students able to critically examine their own practices and to critically examine their own schools for ways that undermine social justice?

From our proposed framework and analysis, we also offer several suggestions for future research on preparing leaders for social justice. First, journal editors should require, to the maximum extent possible, all published articles to offer implications for leadership preparation. We were surprised in our review that many of the articles offered high quality empirical studies or cogent analyses of the literature, with no suggestions for leadership preparation.

Second, scholars working in the area of preparing leaders for social justice must model expectations we have of practitioners, in our research, publishing, and teaching. We should thoughtfully consider and include all aspects of difference, with particular attention to sexual orientation/gender identity, disability, and language differences, in our writing, research, and teaching, and if we leave out an aspect of difference, we need to explicitly outline the reasons for doing so. The critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills required to lead around issues of sexual orientation/gender identity, disability, and language differences overlaps with the more typically included areas of difference (e.g. race, ethnicity, and poverty) in how we wrestle with, understand, and lead around concepts of privilege, social construction, and a general valuing versus a deficit thinking about diversity. However, across all these areas of difference there are specific aspects of critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills that need to be addressed. For example the skills in creating systems that do not inhibit participation in academic, social, or extra curricular activities regardless of income are distinct from the skills necessary to create, implement, and support an inclusive service delivery for students receiving special education or ELL services. We expect school practitioners to engage all learners of difference and we should expect no less of ourselves.

Finally, the research on assessing leadership preparation programs, their content, delivery, and outcomes, is virtually non-existent. Preparation programs aimed toward social justice are languishing in hypocrisy when faculty expect equity-oriented leaders to maintain high standards of accountability, supported by federal legislation, when these programs themselves engage in no systematic, empirical studies or equity audits of their own. Assessing leadership preparation should be the first priority in future research on preparing leaders for social justice. We know that effective K-12 teaching aimed at meeting the needs of all learners uses authentic assessment as an integral part
of the teaching and learning cycle, with the understanding that it is impossible to know if we are reaching all children without the understanding of how we are going to measure our work. Likewise, preparation programs need to be redesigned with the holistic sense of the end in mind – what assessments will help us to know if our students are social justice leaders?

As professors in leadership preparation programs across the country wrestle with ways to integrate social justice into their programs, our proposed framework offers one way to think about this process. While Table I offers a template for examining each aspect of the framework in the program, Figure 1 offers another visual representation of the framework that shows the relationship between the framework dimensions. We believe all seven aspects of the framework must be attended to if preparation programs are to realize the full potential of leadership for social justice in their graduates. The two primary dimensions of the framework, that is the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment that preparation programs engage with in order to develop the critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills of future leaders for social justice synergetically inform each other. For example, the consciousness, knowledge, and skills that school leaders need to lead socially just schools must align with the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in preparation programs and vice versa. At the same time, this leadership development for social justice can only take place if professors intentionally create an atmosphere of emotional safety for social justice risk taking in their programs and in the courses and other learning experiences in those programs.

Given the increasing scholarship on social justice in educational leadership, it will be tempting for scholars in leadership preparation to quickly claim their program is grounded in social justice. Considering all aspects of this framework can provide a deeper grounding of what it means to prepare social justice leaders. To be thorough about implementing all aspects of the framework in a preparation program will require a hypersensitive assessment of our preparation practices and to do so will appear daunting at best. However, students who are struggling in our schools deserve no less.
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Further reading


