

Public Abstract

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Title:Developing Agents of Change: A Case Study on Preservice Teacher Leaders' Conceptualizations of Social Justice Teacher Leadership

The purpose of this study was to investigate how a set of preservice teachers who have been identified as leaders in their teacher education programs conceptualize social justice teacher leadership. A collective, qualitative case study design using five preservice teachers as individual cases was used to address this study's purpose and a social justice teacher leadership conceptual framework was developed and used in data analysis. Two interviews were conducted with each case participant and resulting data were analyzed using the framework.

Research findings support potential theoretical expansions of critical pedagogy, transformative learning, and the nature of taking action as a social justice teacher leader. Findings further suggest scholarship and practice should consider how democratic learning environments and servant leadership are addressed in teacher and leadership education. Reflexive practice following the completion of this project encouraged the conceptualization of an Evolved Social Justice Teacher Leadership Model. This new model points to research opportunities extending from this study.

Results of this study deliver a call to action involving those who currently hold power for reform in teacher and leadership preparation and PK12 schooling contexts. School administrators must empower teachers as leaders in social justice through professional development and deliberately recruit teachers with capacities for social justice teacher leadership and from programs with such orientations. Preparation program administrators must reform their course curriculum to include the empowerment of future and inservice teacher leaders, with leadership programs holding unique responsibilities in such work. Further, future research should be longitudinal in nature, aim to develop the social justice teacher leadership framework and its new model, and investigate relationships between school administrators and social justice teacher leaders.