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English Learners and the Risks of Suicide

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Abstract

Contemporary literature regarding English learners (ELs) primarily focuses on issues related to language acquisition and other academics. A very important consideration that has commonly been overlooked is the relevance of the learner's socio-emotional needs over academic success. Research on adolescent suicide reveals a distinctive set of characteristics of suicidal ideation and behavior that has also emerged in the literature about the difficulties that ELs face. In this paper, the authors explore the connections between ELs' affective responses to their struggles and the characteristics of suicidal adolescents and young adults. Connecting the two enables teachers, school counselors, and other school personnel to make implications for recognizing language learners who may be at risk of suicide or other suicide-related issues. The authors maintain that it is imperative for public scholarship to include discussions on ELs, their struggles, and their susceptibility towards suicidal activity.

Introduction

In reviewing the research on adolescent and young adult suicide, a distinctive set of characteristics that describe suicidal ideation and behaviors coincides with literature about the experiences of English Learners (ELs). We found, however, no research that examines the relationship specifically between the characteristics of suicidal adolescents and ELs'

responses to these experiences. Existing research related to ELs in the affective dimension mainly supports the effects of discrimination and/or depression (Cristini, Scacchi, Perkins, Santinello, & Vieno, 2011; Huynh & Fuligni, 2010; Patel, Tabb, Strambler, & Eltareb, 2014; World Health Organization [WHO], 2014). Connecting the two areas of research may enable a proactive stance in making implications for recognizing language learners who may be at risk of suicide or other suicide-related behaviors such as eating disorders, self-cutting, depression, reckless driving, and sexual promiscuity, among others (Kann et al., 2014).

Elevated risk factors for suicide and other self-destructive behaviors include students who are “viewed as different from their peers” and students who are “often subject to exclusion, harassment and discrimination” (Society for the Prevention of Suicide [SPTS], 2015, Slide 9), two descriptions that align with the experiences that many ELs endure. At issue is students’ emotional health and safety, the impact of schooling, and the negative interactions that occur at school (Rishel, 2007). In order to educate diverse student populations, it is imperative that public scholarship include discussions on ELs and how the learning environment may influence their susceptibility towards suicidal activity, because globally, suicide is the second leading cause of death for people aged 15-29 (WHO, 2014, p. 22).

Especially important for educators and school personnel who experienced the death of a student by suicide, the gripping aftermath of reflecting on what could have or should have been done often weighs heavily in their minds and hearts. We can sigh at the disheartening and unnecessary loss of lives, yet we must also address the circumstances surrounding their ultimate decision to die. We have a choice to begin exploring the connections between the characteristics of ELs who experience the roughness of immersion, as well as schooling that fails to meet their needs, and the similarities to young people who die by suicide, or we can ignore it now and wait until statistics point it out for us in the years to come. The authors broach the urgency of this topic now in order to provide the awareness of possibilities of which most are unaware.

Background

Although in an ideal world all schools are concerned with both the academic and affective aspects of their learners, contemporary literature regarding ELs primarily focuses on the language acquisition and other academics (e.g., Haager, 2007; Meyer, 2000; Short, Fidelman, & Louguit, 2012), content-specific instruction (e.g., Chval & Chávez, 2011/2012; Gaskins, 2015; Li, 2012; Nutta, Bautista, & Butler, 2011; Thornton &

Crúz, 2013), as well as assessment (e.g., Hakuta, 20014; Lenski, Ehlers-Zalava, Daniel, & Sun-Irmingier, 2006). While resources available for teaching and learning are plentiful and varied for all content areas and grade levels, a very important consideration that has commonly been overlooked because of the current focus on the standardization of learning is the relationship of the learner's socio-emotional needs to academic success (Kayi-Aydar, 2015).

Struggles of ELs

It is important to note that the experiences and needs of ELs vary significantly. For example, some learners come to school as immigrants, while others are born in an English-speaking country (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007); some have been in English-speaking educational settings their whole life, or at least for several years, while others may have recently arrived from their home country. As with any group of adolescents, some ELs are outgoing and make friends quickly, while others are more introverted and struggle to make friends. Given the unique variables that each EL brings to the classroom, research reveals that there are many factors that may affect the learner's emotional and academic success because of the distinctive characteristics this population of students possesses.

First, ELs who are also immigrants are often uprooted against their will (e.g., parents deciding to relocate or fleeing due to war), leaving behind their friends and extended family, the language (and consequently the ability to communicate), familiar schooling expectations, environment, and culture, all of which create an environment where these children or youth feel safe and offer greater potential for academic success. This potentially stressful experience poses significant threat to the wellbeing of the individuals involved (Cristini et al., 2011).

Discrimination in their new environment may occur and may even be ongoing, especially for "refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants" (WHO, 2014, p. 36), contributing to "the continued experience of stressful life events such as loss of freedom, rejection, stigmatization and violence that may evoke suicidal behavior" (p. 36). When the familiarity of home is gone, ELs may find themselves vulnerable, learning a new language, navigating in a school whose expectations are not clear, and classmates who fail to welcome them. Not only is this completely foreign experience scary in and of itself, but relationships with parents, teachers, administrators, peers, and even the community, contribute to the potential breakdown in meeting the emotional needs of immigrant ELs. The struggles of ELs can be daunting, particularly in relation to the amount of time they have lived in the country.

Alienation

Some ELs quickly experience the effects of alienation as they attempt to survive cultural, familial, academic, and social pressures (Lee, Butler, & Tippins, 2007). Interactions with peers may lead them to associate their heritage culture with being different and the cause of not fitting in at school; consequently, some ELs reject their heritage culture in an effort to fit in with peers (Fillmore, 2000). Yet their peers may continue to view them as outsiders regardless of their effort. Furthermore, a school's lack of preparedness to help ELs adjust to their new environment can alienate them from teachers, administrators, and school itself (Curran, 2003; Fillmore, 2000).

Another important struggle that commonly surfaces for ELs is the pressure from parents to speak the heritage language at home. Caught between two worlds, ELs often find speaking the language of their homeland frustrating because of the alienation they experience at school. As a result, they regard their language as a hindrance to school success in the form of social acceptance (Fillmore, 2000). Having to choose between honoring the requests of their family and fitting in with peers becomes a cyclical pattern that draws ELs away from just being kids, which in itself adds pressures that many other students do not encounter.

Academic Expectations

In terms of academics, there are struggles that are common to many ELs. Those with prior schooling experiences in their home country are often surprised at the different pedagogical approaches used in their new schools. In many countries, education has moved from a traditional, teacher-centered approach to being more student-centered, where students are encouraged to ask questions, take leadership roles, and make decisions about their learning. In contrast, ELs may come from educational settings that use a traditional approach where the teachers are the authoritative imparters of knowledge, and the students are merely empty receptacles. School staff and teachers may be unaware of how to respond to this dichotomy in order to help the learner transition to this new learning environment (Delpit, 2006; Lee et al., 2007; Zhang & Peltarri, 2014).

Another academic difficulty is "cognitive load." Many assignments, activities, and even the content of some classes may not be culturally salient to the student, consequently making schooling extremely taxing on the EL (Meyer, 2000; Ortiz-Marrero & Sumaryono, 2010). One possible consequence of academic difficulty especially affects ELs who excelled in school in their home country. Where formerly the student was considered a high achiever, he or she may now be cast as someone with learning difficulties who needs extra services and may experience negative attitudes from teachers and classmates. In such cases the

learner may lose self-esteem (Chang, 2010; Rodriguez, Ringler, O'Neal, & Bunn, 2009). This is also magnified by aspects of alienation and a lack of acceptance by peers, as previously noted.

Language Difficulties

The most obvious cultural barrier is learning in a new language, which often leads to “language shock,” the anxiety that is felt when immersed in an unfamiliar tongue (Meyer, 2000). In the context of the classroom, this angst results from the sustained use of a new language without proper support. The worry related to language is further exacerbated by the intolerance of others towards non-native speakers of the language (see Hanish & Guerra, 2000; Olsen, 2000). It is believed that anxiety such as this can hinder academic success and prevent successful language acquisition by triggering the learner’s affective filter (see Krashen, 1982).

Curriculum Exclusion

With the craze of standardization in the curriculum, ELs are frequently an afterthought, at best, and completely excluded at worst (Cummins, 2000, 2001; Cummins et al., 2005). ELs are often viewed as a “problem” to be eradicated, regardless of the actual ability and skill set of the student. Rather than valuing ELs’ first language and cultural heritage—which could enrich the learning environment for everyone—schools often expect them to abandon their first language and culture and assimilate to the dominant culture of the school. This subtractive attitude toward ELs also creates communication barriers between the school and the EL’s family.

The environment described here is largely beyond the control of the learner, where ELs are required to learn a new language, negotiate interactions with peers, and strive to learn academic content in a milieu that is often completely unfamiliar and hostile. Helplessness ensues in such a situation where there is a sense of uncontrollable variables affecting success (Hsu, 2011).

Theoretical Underpinnings

The area of suicide as it relates to ELs is a topic that is unexplored. Before designing studies that address this topic, it is important to establish a theoretical understanding of the experiences of many ELs as related to their mental health. That is the scope of this conceptual article – to argue that the struggles of ELs and the systemic exclusion of what they bring to the educational experience, leads them to live a life that parallels other adolescents who are at risk of contemplating or completing suicide, or engaging in other risky behaviors.

We draw on Howard's (2006) work of minimal group theory, which describes how people "tend to draw distinctions between themselves as individuals and groups, even if the distinctions are essentially meaningless in a larger context" (p. 32). Members of a group decide who is part of them, thus creating "in-groups and out-groups" (ibid.). These discriminatory actions determine, at least to the group members, who is "superior" and who is not. Then to add biases based on "visible markers" (ibid.) such as a person's skin color, how they talk, or other identifying characteristics (i.e., eyes, hair, dress, etc.), relationships between groups experience a greater divide and resistance to change. Moreover, as Howard points out, differences in "race, gender, social class, religion, ability and sexual orientation," add more depth to the separateness of groups based on one's discriminating against what they consider "the other."

In the case of ELs, this separateness extends beyond the visible markers to include how they speak English (i.e., "different" from their peers), as well as cultural differences that become evident as the school day unfolds (i.e., the ELs unfamiliarity with schooling in the new location). These distinctions give those of the dominant culture even greater reason for othering ELs and keeping them in the "out-group." ELs find that, in many cases, as they experience "out-group" dynamics, they lack what is referred to as "dominant cultural capital" (Apple, 1995; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993; Bourdieu, 1986; Giroux, 1983), which denotes the knowledge, skills, values, or attitudes of the dominant group. Capital of this sort allows or disallows acceptance into the mainstream. A student's background and social class determines the degree of their cultural capital, where the "legitimizing of certain forms of knowledge, ways of speaking, and ways of relating to the world," (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993, p. 76) are found. Lower-class, working class, and other forms of cultural minorities may be judged harshly because they neither speak, act, walk, nor respond in the same manner as those of the dominant class (Bourdieu, 1986). Consequently, "poor, minority, English language learners must fight multiple uphill battles, allowing only those with extreme self-determination and resiliency the chance to get out of the social pyramid's lower levels" (McDaniel, Rios, Necochea, Stowell, & Kritzer, 2001, p. 31). This hegemonic framework results in learners being ostracized within the school environment. They may feel alienated, struggle with academic expectations, experience a loss of self-esteem, and may find the curriculum to exclude their lives and experiences, all of which mirrors the same characteristics and signs of those found in suicidal adolescents.

Suicide as a Reality

While our focus is on ELs in this exploration, suicide is common across genders, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, socioeconomic classes, and intelligence levels (SAVE, 2015). That said, it also does not exclude the propensity for certain populations to become more susceptible to suicide (AFSP, 2016; WHO, 2014). For those aged 10-24 in the US, during 2013 the Centers for Disease Control ([CDC], 2015) reported 4,600 suicides—or about 14 suicide deaths per day—doubling the rate from 1970-1990 (AFSP, 2016). Suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15-to-24-year-olds and the second leading cause of death among college students (American Association of Suicidology [AAS], 2013; CDC, 2015). In the United States each year, “approximately 157,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries” (CDC, 2015, para. 2). Self-inflicted injuries that are not reported or cases where no medical care was sought would increase this number. Equally, if not more, troubling, the suicide rate for children ages 5-14 years continues to rise after tripling between 1970 and 1990 (Granello & Granello, 2007). Currently, each year approximately 12,000 young people between the ages of 5 and 14 “are admitted to psychiatric hospitals for suicidal behavior” (ibid., p. 33).

Suicide and the EL’s Reality

Considering all of the variables that intersect in the EL’s life at home, school, and in the community, suicidal activity or risky behaviors are of concern for this population. Because this is a new area of research and in the exploratory phase, locating data to substantiate claims specifically about EL students is difficult. Due to the system of reporting suicide data, no statistics are available as to how many suicides are attempted or completed among EL students or young adults because death certificates and information gathered on deaths do not include the designation of EL status; this information may not be accessible for many years. There are, however, studies that are able to help us understand the connection—and thus the susceptibility towards—ELs and suicidal behavior. For example, Aseltine and DeMartino (2004) found that ELs had less knowledge about mental health (e.g., depression, suicide, self-harm), and also self-reported a higher number of suicide attempts than their peers. Interestingly, despite their lack of knowledge and higher number of suicide attempts, ELs in this study were more likely to seek help when facing mental health issues. Unfortunately, the authors did not elaborate on why there were such contradictory findings.

In order to give weight to our concerns and our theoretical position, and in comparing the struggles of ELs and the characteristics of adolescent suicidal behavior, we looked at suicide rates in the states (USA) where most EL students live and attend school. Although we are certainly not suggesting cause-and-effect relationship, the potential for a correlation appears to be very real, which would require rigorous studies to confirm. According to the CDC Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report (Tejada-Vera, 2014) the following ten states, all in the western part of the U.S., had the highest suicide rates for the entire population in 2014: Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Oklahoma, respectively (p. 1041). Of these ten states, we discovered that five also have the largest percentage of ELs enrolled in their schools: Nevada (19%), New Mexico (16.1%), Alaska (11.1%), Colorado (12%) and Oregon (11.3%) (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). High EL concentrated states that are not among the top suicide states—California (23.2%), with the highest EL concentration and Texas (14.9%), the 4th highest—will be discussed subsequently.

Since the highest suicide rates were prevalent in half of the states where most ELs reside and attend school, it would seem imperative that we look at the relationship between the two. Accessing suicide data from World Life Expectancy (2015), we explored the top four causes of death for those aged 15-25 in the states with the highest percentage of ELs (Table 1). Table 1 indicates that suicide is indeed a serious problem for not only the overall population in the states where ELs live and attend school, but specifically among their age group as well. It is clear that road traffic accidents and suicide are the leading causes of death for most young people in these states. Moreover, with poisoning as the third cause of death, one would have to also consider it in the “accidents” category of possible suicides. Overall, one can see that young people are dying by risky and/or self-intentional behaviors.

Turning our attention to California—with the highest EL population—and Texas with the 4th highest (NCES, 2015), neither are included with the highest overall population of suicide rate states; in fact, they are among the eleven states with the lowest suicide rates (Texas, 11th lowest; California, 9th lowest). However, as shown in Table 1, young people in California die by the same leading causes of death (road traffic accidents and suicide) as young people in states that have high suicide rates. During 2013, in California, a total of 1,735 teens and young adults died in road traffic accidents (684), suicide (595) and poisoning (456)—a combination which is suspect to suicidal activity (World Life Expectancy, 2015). While California as a whole is not considered a high suicide rate

state, the distinct population of young people die by suicide-related (road traffic accidents) and suicide at a high rate.

In Texas, a similar pattern occurs—a high EL population, yet not a top suicide state for the overall population, that also has a propensity towards youth suicide. The two leading causes of death for those aged 15-25 include road traffic accidents (774) and suicide (423) or 1,197 deaths. Texas is the only state where the 3rd leading cause of death is homicide (312) instead of death by poisoning (226), with a total of 1,423 deaths in 2013 due to risky behaviors (traffic accidents, poisoning, and suicide).

Given that California and Texas have the same two leading causes of death in young people as those states that have the highest percentage of suicides and/or self-destructive behavior, we believe further exploration and consideration of the mental health of ELs across the U.S. is imperative in order to understand the emotional needs of this population of learners. Overall, of the ten states ranked highest for suicides, seven states have suicide as the leading or second cause of death for young

Table 1
2013 Causes of Death for Ages 15-24
in States with Largest EL Populations

<i>States/EL populations (%)</i>	<i>Cause of Death #1</i>	<i>Cause of Death #2</i>	<i>Cause of Death #3</i>	<i>Cause of Death #4</i>
California (23.2)	Road traffic accidents	Suicide	Poisoning	Homicide
Nevada (19)	Road traffic accidents	Suicide	Poisoning	Homicide
New Mexico (16.1)	Road traffic accidents	Suicide	Poisoning	Homicide
Texas (14.9)	Road traffic accidents	Suicide	Homicide	Poisoning
Colorado (12)	Suicide	Road traffic accidents	Poisoning	Homicide
Alaska (11.1)	Suicide	Poisoning	Road traffic accidents	Other injuries

people. Traffic accidents account for the leading cause of death in four of the states, which serves to position these deaths as suspect to suicidal activity as denoted by suicide researchers and reporting agencies (AFSP, 2015a). These seven states are also where the largest populations of EL students live and attend school.

Adolescence, ELs, and Suicide Potential

Adolescence brings changes for many young people due to puberty, including erratic emotional fluctuations and rapidly changing growth patterns. Teens begin to question their beliefs, values, opinions, and attitudes towards themselves, their parents, schooling, and life (American Psychological Association, 2002; Steinberg, 2007; Tomé, de Matos, Simões, Camacho, & Diniz, 2012). As with any adolescent, ELs' feelings, perceptions of self, and degree of importance are critically influenced by how they are viewed by others, which can make them feel valued, needed, and appreciated. Fitting in becomes vital as the influence of the peer group may take priority over that of the family, thus shifting more attention to what peers think (Reitz, Zimmermann, Hutterman, Specht, & Neyer, 2014). Since school serves as a primary mechanism of social relationship-building, teens who are excluded (e.g., ELs) may find it difficult to make friends or secure peer groups and eventually suffer alienation and isolation instead.

“Discovering oneself” characterizes the feelings that many adolescents incur as they wrestle with who they were as children and who they are becoming as adults. Former modes of enjoyment (i.e., sports, music, art, clubs) may lose their appeal and they may withdraw from these activities. Alternatively, adolescents who want to retain their involvement may experience not being chosen for teams and other selection-specific activities, thereby forcing them to deal with issues related to self-esteem and rejection.

Many adolescents experience poor or failing grades, difficulty socializing, irregular eating patterns, insomnia, and often sleep during school hours, especially those exhibiting suicidal intent. They may experience humiliation, anxiety, or may become sullen, irritable, angry, or rebellious. A change in behavior, especially those which are sudden or drastic, such as aggression, recklessness, isolation, withdrawal from activities, or increased use of alcohol or drugs, among others (AFSP, 2015b) are signs worth noting. Other risk factors include environmental factors—the conditions under which a student who is suicidal may be operating—such as those that create “prolonged stress” (AAS, 2013). These may include being harassed or bullied, or having relationship problems.

They may talk frequently about physical problems, which are often directly related to their emotional state (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2017). Quite the opposite can occur as well, with the adolescent becoming lethargic, bored, and apathetic. They may neglect taking care of their physical appearance or give away possessions that they cherish. Adolescents may indicate distress through verbal communication, such as “I won’t be around much longer,” while some are more direct and state suicidal intent. Students may express that they “feel trapped” in a situation, are a “burden” to others, have no reason to live, or feel hopeless or helpless. Some display no obvious warning signs.

Family, school, and personal problems can seem insurmountable, particularly if a combination of each occurs at the same time, often causing their worries to interfere with school and prohibit a focus on academic concerns. When teens encounter difficult situations, people, and feelings, they may lack the decision-making abilities needed for resolution. They often respond with emotion rather than reason, or reject seeking advice and guidance from adults, reacting instead with impatience and immediacy (Elkind, 1998). Students struggling to overcome problems find themselves in a cycle of despair from which they have little competence to escape. They retreat from situations where they need to interact with others, and prohibit themselves from “caring” about those around them. As a temporary respite from the confusion and an escape route that softens the harsh realities of life, many adolescents turn to self-destructive behaviors. Depression often emerges, an overlooked, yet serious, manifestation of suicidal intent and is “the most common condition associated with suicide” (AFSP, 2016, para. 1).

Wading through the emotional, personal, and social challenges along with their peers, some adolescents sift through their ideations about death. As it challenges their will to live, some decide that suicide is the only answer. Although suicide may seem to be the only solution to such problems, according to Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE, 2015), “Most people who attempt or commit suicide don’t really want to die—they just want their pain and suffering to end” (para. 2).

For ELs, the problems of adolescence discussed here are very real as they attempt to negotiate the balance between cross-cultural expectations. Suicide emerges as a significant concern, particularly in how the characteristics of suicidal behavior are strikingly similar to the resultant feelings from problems imposed on these students. Like most adolescents, they have a great need to fit in; EL students can be alienated from their classmates because they are not accepted and are cast as “different.” The parameters of “normal” can prohibit much of their involvement and success as they suffer alienation in the microcosm of schooling.

Due to stresses that arise in a new country, educational system, and life, adolescent ELs may be increasingly prone to act upon stress levels through self-destructive behaviors. A lack of attention to their needs, experiences, and life situations may cause withdrawal, alienation, or frustration with themselves, schooling, and life.

Implications for Teachers and Other School Personnel

Although ELs face a number of challenges that may push the boundaries of their emotional wellbeing, there are a number of steps that schools and teachers can make to minimize the stress that learners may face that we have divided into three categories: environment, knowledge about ELs, and parental involvement.

Creating a Safe Environment

One of the first steps teachers and school administrators can do to develop a positive environment is to make “connections between the classroom environment and the students’ experiences” (Price & Nelson, 2014, p. 110). Teachers can create these connections by carefully choosing instructional methods that will help ELs achieve academic success, making the curriculum relevant to the learners, as well as implementing classroom management that is culturally responsive (Au, 2007; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995) to the EL. Furthermore, school personnel should establish routines, because they help students “predict what’s expected and to follow what is happening even when they don’t understand what is said” (Gay, 2002, p. 110). Routines can rescue ELs who are new to the U.S. and American schooling. Furthermore, they “create stability, reduce anxiety, and allow ELs to be more fully involved in the classroom” (ibid.).

The learning environment is further improved when teachers and other school personnel view ELs (and others) “as active agents and authorities on their own lives” (Ginwright & Cammarotta, 2002, as cited in White & Kral, 2014, p. 131). White and Kral recommend that schools create pedagogical spaces that would allow for youth to have their own voice, such as through storytelling, photovoice, and community engagement. When “emphasis is placed on mobilizing youth strengths, maximizing inclusion, and respecting differences” we are able to engage learners in a more effective discussion on mental health and suicide prevention (p. 132).

Gaining Knowledge About ELs

In addition to giving learners a voice as discussed in the previous section, school personnel must also learn about the students’ origins and the experiences they bring. Some ELs are refugees and may have had

horrific experiences before coming to the U.S. Some learners may have had inconsistent schooling, while others might have been at the top of their class. It is essential that teachers and administrators avoid making assumptions about their learners, but instead educate themselves about the learners' experiences, and then use that knowledge to help students become successful learners.

Additionally, school personnel should ensure that they understand the cultural backgrounds that ELs bring to the classroom and school. One common example is related to eye contact between student and teacher. It is expected that a student look at the educator directly in the eye when talking, which is commonly considered a sign of respect in U.S. classrooms. When students look away, the assumption often made is that the learner is uninterested or is deliberately being aloof. Another common assumption is that when an EL does not understand something in the school environment or classroom, the EL will ask questions. What school personnel must realize is that in many ELs' cultures, it is inappropriate to ask questions or suggest in any way that the teacher has not done her or his job. These examples illustrate a few of the many ways that potential miscommunication could come when making assumptions based on a lack of understanding. School personnel can enhance the learners' education by becoming familiar with these dynamics.

Involving Parents in the Learning Community

One of the biggest challenges schools face is improving ways to communicate with parents. An environment has been created in many schools that is almost hostile to parents, where interactions are commonly "unidirectional and fail to value and take advantage of the families' resources and culture" (Mathis, 2013, p. 2). Many parents of ELs work long hours and are unable to attend school functions. Furthermore, as Mathis argues, many parents of ELs and school personnel are unable to communicate with each other, and parents may be unfamiliar with how school functions in the U.S.

Teachers and parents must work together to make themselves more aware of and address the important issues and problems that ELs face; in so doing, they will create greater opportunities for dialogue and change to make the learning environment more welcoming not just for ELs, but for all learners. In taking such steps, the partnership in helping the EL student successfully adapt to the culture of the school becomes a win-win situation for all stakeholders. For example, it is important that parents and teachers encourage students to use both languages at home and at school, rather than placing the student in the position of choosing between one or the other. ELs should also be encouraged to blend their

familial and school cultures to the degree that they feel comfortable. As a priority, parents could support their child's involvement in school and community activities and clubs, which will help them adapt to their new life through social interaction outside the classroom environment (Beane & Lipka, 2000).

In spite of these measures, it still may be difficult for some ELs to acclimate to their new environment and we need to be cognizant of the potential for suicide. If one suspects a student is exhibiting signs of suicide or other self-destructive behaviors, it is imperative that the school personnel and parents work together to provide needed resources and support. Many ELs are unaccustomed to expressing their emotional feelings, and as a result may be unwilling to admit that they are unhappy or stressed (Leong & Chou, 1996). Situations such as these may become a barrier in recognizing these signs. ELs could benefit greatly from learning that it is acceptable and necessary to share with an adult when life becomes too difficult.

Final Thoughts

Educators, in being considered the "front line" for handling student concerns, specifically those of suicidal intent, often find themselves incompetent, unprepared, and unable to handle the depth of student emotional, social, and personal situations that arise (Davidson, 1999). While it is understandable and certainly agreeable that educators are not usually prepared for dealing with such crises, their education and preparation in these matters is necessary. At a minimum, "One of the most important things an individual can do is to identify the warning signs and recognize an adolescent at increased risk. School professionals should know these risk factors and how to respond" (King et al., 1999, p. 69). Understandably, their lack of suicide knowledge and awareness does little to help them intervene at crucial moments in some students' lives.

Parents, too, often lack the ability to recognize the depth and seriousness of adolescent troubles (Beane & Lipka, 2000; Elkind, 1998). It is important, in the least, that parents and teachers become familiar with the warning signs and characteristics of adolescent suicide, particularly to support school suicide prevention programs that may be in place (SPTS, 2015). Adults must avoid dismissing the struggles of teens as normal problems of adolescence, recognizing teen struggles as real and taking them seriously.

ELs who navigate the rough waters of immersion into a new culture can successfully achieve the same effects, with the same results, as other adolescents. The caveat, though, is that ELs are dealing with

a double load. While coping with the issues that any adolescent incurs, ELs have the additional burden of not only figuring out the social and familial dynamics of this stage, but the cultural ones as well. They cannot face these challenges on their own; they rely on the active support of those around them, and teachers and other school personnel must do their part, starting with gaining knowledge about ELs in order to avoid making assumptions, as well as creating a safe learning environment that minimizes the challenges they are likely to face. After all, it could be a matter of life and death—literally.

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The Leader-Investigator

Using Leadership Studies as a Model for Conscientization Through Adaptive Leadership, the Four Frames Approach, Giving Voice to Values, and the Competing Values Framework

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Abstract

The topic of conscientization has been much explored in academic literature in a variety of contexts. What is less present in the conscientization literature are models of leadership that can inform implementation of conscientization in a more structured manner. This paper explores how four leadership models are relevant to educational leaders interested in implementing conscientization: Adaptive Leadership, the Four Frames Approach, Giving Voice to Values, and the Competing Values Framework. If neoliberalism is to be combatted in education, then the language of neoliberals needs to be co-opted for the benefit of democratic education. By using Business Administration style models in the argument for conscientization, democratic educators have a common ground in which to present democratic ideas.

Introduction

If I only I did what I can do, I wouldn't do anything

—Jacques Derrida as cited in Giroux, 2013, para. 47

As neoliberalism, or serving the needs of the marketplace and corporations rather than those of the individual and democracy (Giroux, 2014), has grown in strength, many resisting it have turned to conscientization, which Freire (1968) defines as "...the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence" (p. 109), expand-

ing the individual's understanding of his or her own role in oppression. While leadership through conscientization can be a model of resistance, structural leadership models to conscientization are lacking. Much has been made of the need for conscientization and its use in social movements, but outside of Freire's original work, not a lot of research has been done on institutional leadership implementation models through conscientization. The field of Leadership Studies provides models for leaders to become leader-investigators in the establishment of a democratic formative culture. This paper considers conscientization in the context of Adaptive Leadership, the Four Frames Approach, Giving Voice to Values Curriculum, and the Competing Values Framework.

The need for conscientization, and its use in leading social and political movements, has been well documented for some time. To consider just a few, Montero (2007) has described conscientization as the "theoretical and practical pillar" for the psychology of liberation (p. 524). Dantley (1990) describes the need for conscientization in resisting the structural functionalism and positivism of the Effective Schools movement. Chimedza and Peters (2000) present the need for a new educational praxis through conscientization by correlating the experience of race and disability. Villeva (2008) has discussed the need for conscientization in the international disability and gay rights movements. More recently, Darder (2017) has argued for narratives a living praxis in educational life. Bingham (2016) has discussed Freire's approaches in the context of spectatorship. Hesk (2017) argues for Freire's vision for social justice in community development. The literature has depth in techniques for conscientization for the individual, as well as models for leading and structuring social and political movements, throughout a variety of fields. What is not present is a systematic model of conscientization for use in Leadership Studies, not as a movement, but as an individual in a position of authority leading followers from the perspective of Leadership Studies.

Applying Leadership Studies models to Freire's work is not simply an interesting real world endeavor, but it is practical and relevant to neoliberals. The models discussed in this paper are systematic approaches focused on stages and aspects that individual leaders can implement into professional leadership planning. Moreover, these are models often taught to Business students. The central focus of conscientization is to overcome how "Reality which becomes oppressive results in the contradistinction of men as oppressors and oppressed" (Freire, 1968, p. 51). Focusing on Master of Business Administration (MBA) style models allows the leader-investigator common ground to create situationality, the spaces people affect and are affected by, with the neoliberal to enter

into conscientization. Those who participate in conversations need to speak the same language.

Political action through critical theory is needed in the world to replace neoliberalism and create a democratic formative culture. Giroux (2013; 2014) has catalogued how neoliberalism represents corporate values, ideology and power and how it is deconstructing democratic institutions and their foundation of critical engagement, hope, and the resistance necessary for a democratic formative culture. The forces against neoliberalism cannot simply resist it; we must replace it. Stuart Hall (1988), through a Gramscian perspective in his discussion of the rise of Thatcherism, argued that any truly counter-hegemonic force needs to be formative, not just resisting or critical towards the status quo. Giroux (2013) has reminded us of Derrida's challenge to "think the impossible" (para. 47), and how Arendt (2002) reminds us that we are living in dark times. Giroux (2014) calls on educators to address social issues and resist education as a set of corporate strategies. A democratic formative culture will need a higher level of consciousness and humanization to be established which can be achieved through conscientization.

Freire and Conscientization

Paulo Freire (1968) contends that humanization is the true vocation of the individual. Dehumanization is the result of a hegemony of "an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed" (p. 44). The goal is not to replace one tyranny with another; rather, the goal of education is to restore humanity to both the oppressor and the oppressed. This is not taught by a revolutionary leader; it is "...the result of their [the oppressed's] own *conscientização* [*conscientization*]" (p. 67); in other words, "...the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence" (p. 109).

To Freire (1968), people need a critical understanding of their reality, decoding themselves as subjects, a generative theme in the "human-world relationship" (p. 106). This means investigating praxis, people's thinking about reality and their action upon reality. By becoming more active in the exploration of one's life themes, termed *thematics* by Freire, critical awareness of reality is deepened. In determining what those thematics are, people take possession of their reality. Subjects concern themselves with links between themes, which are posed as problems inside their historical-cultural context. People exist inside a situation (*situationality*), as Freire puts it, "...rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark" (p. 109). Through critical reflection upon the very condition of existence inside the context of a

situation, the individual can make their situation less dense and see it as an “objective-problematic situation” (p. 109). By obtaining this critical perspective, the human being can intervene in reality.

Freire (1968) calls those who lead people through conscientization investigators, and encourages these investigators to go out into the world, not to present some specific truth as missionaries, but to help lead others through the process of conscientization. For example, Socrates can be seen as an investigator in trying to establish a common world, which Arendt (1990) argues is built on the concepts of knowing oneself and that it is better to be out of step with the world and know oneself, than to be in step with the world and be estranged from oneself. As Arendt puts it, “living together with others begins with living together with oneself” (p. 87). This newfound discovery requires one to engage others in their own realizations. In her discussion of Marx, Arendt (2002) argues for a praxis based on active life. She contends that politics is “...the only activity that was [is] inherently philosophical” (p. 318). Action is incumbent once one knows what to do. Freire’s call toward self-actualization through conscientization is not simply to contemplate, but to affect change in the world through bringing others into a process leading to self-actualization.

Adaptive Leadership

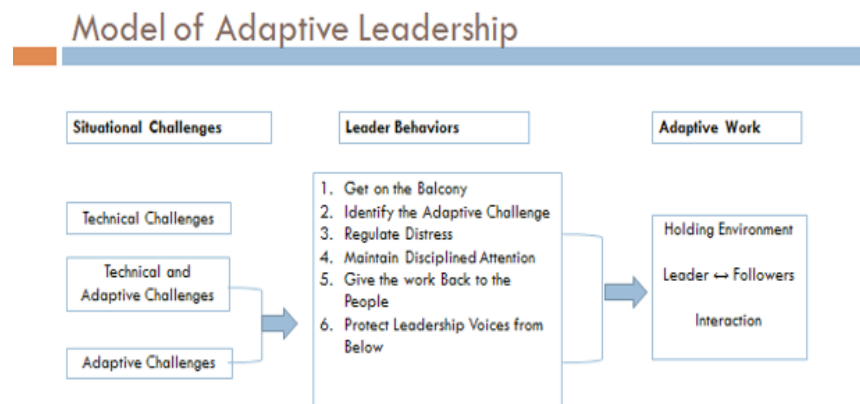
In the context of educational leadership, Adaptive Leadership presents a model to lead others to self-actualization through conscientization. Heifetz, et al. (2009) argue the goal of Adaptive Leadership is to encourage people to change and learn new ways of living so they may do well and grow. To Northouse (2015), adaptive leaders are concerned “...with how people change and adjust to new circumstances” (p. 257).

To begin with the model of Adaptive Leadership (Table 1), Heifetz, et al. (2009) describe two basic challenges: technical challenges and adaptive challenges. Technical challenges are those for which the solution is already known. Adaptive challenges, like the name implies, require some sort of adaptation. The manager of a computer lab knows to call IT to fix the computer that is broken; whether it is an old computer or a tablet that has just been purchased, the solution is a technical challenge because the solution is already known. Teaching a new faculty member to use the software on a desktop would also be a technical challenge, but implementing the use of tablets in classrooms in place of having a fixed computer lab would require adaptation on the part of the faculty, those training faculty, and the student population. New procedures would need to be developed and protected interests would need to be addressed,

making it an adaptive challenge. Conscientization is an adaptive challenge to how people have been looking at the world and their fossilized technical solutions to situational challenges. For example, it could be a technical solution to respond to someone's poverty with prejudice about his or her identity; this response would be a pre-existing solution based in situationality—the lived experience in which temporal-spatial conditions have taught an individual to believe that poverty results from another person's identity. The adaptive challenge of conscientization is the critical reflection about the context of the situation (objective-problematic situation)—the real conditions which lead to such a person's poverty—which results in replacing the technical solution of prejudice with the adaptive solution which is understanding material conditions. Hence, to produce adaptive changes, specific leader behaviours are necessary to attain the adaptive work that results in adaptive change (see Figure 1).

The first leader behavior is the get on the balcony. Heifetz, et al. (2009) use the analogy of standing on the balcony and watching ballroom dancers. One can see the big picture, who is dancing with whom and how they are dancing, in a way one would never see from the dance floor. If one is to use conscientization to humanize individuals in a resistance to neoliberalism, one needs to first see where neoliberal policies are taking effect, who is arguing for them and who is not, why the neoliberal approach has been embraced and how neoliberal policies are used. In addition, the investigator needs to look at each person's situationality and see how each person has been marked by neoliberalism and how each person is marking neo-liberalism as well. On a personal level,

Figure 1
Model of Adaptive Leadership (Northouse, 2015, p. 261)



getting on the balcony means engaging people's sensitivities. It takes building trust and vulnerability to engage others in seeing an objective-problematic situation. The leader-investigator must be vulnerable herself or himself, and develop the intimacy needed to help someone question their praxis.

The second behavior is to identify the adaptive challenge. This usually means sorting out the difference between the technical and adaptive parts. In conscientization, people are not clean slates; they have often had some kind of praxis in their lives, however limited. As a leader-investigator, this can be sorted out through first being vulnerable and sharing one's own experience about situationality, then getting to know the individual. Freire, as cited by Montero (2007), defined problematization as replacing notions of what has been taught as concrete reality, like neoliberalism's positivist definitions, with "...communication expressed by dialogue and contradicting what has been received, established, and instituted as an essential truth" (p. 524). The leader-investigator needs to know the constituent's beliefs about what is fixed in the world, and engage in praxis around these fixed items.

Heifetz, et al. (2009) describe four archetypes of adaptive change: the gap between espoused values and behavior, competing commitments, speaking the unspeakable, and work avoidance. Exploring situationality in these archetypes through critical reflection can make the situation less dense and allow the individual to see the objective-problematic situation. By doing this personally, it equips the individual to use this process within the organization and discover how neoliberalism is operating within these archetypes. For example, when one espouses racial equality and then finds oneself treating other races differently, one has not only been engaged in the objective-problematic situation personally, but has engaged it politically, looking for how neoliberal policies ignore racism. One can see where oppressive behavior is happening in an institution, and the process also brings to light the gap in values between what neoliberalism claims it values humanistically and what it does in reality.

As a leader-investigator, it is important to regulate distress, the third leader behavior. Heifetz, et al. (2009) mention that the leader must help others to recognize the need for change but not become overwhelmed by it. Humanization, as the true vocation of the individual as Freire (1968) puts it, is stressful work. Looking at one's preconceptions and challenging one's worldview critically is scary, and the leader-investigator must give credence to this reality. People will not change overnight. People will resist. People will react with fear. Listening is revolutionary action. Being non-judgmental and providing emotional security is the key. Neoliberalism seeks to make people fear for their security and not speak

out in fear of not being promoted or left in financial distress (Giroux, 2013). In the face of fear, the leader-investigator must be confident and that confidence is contagious.

Conscientization takes time so it is important to maintain disciplined attention, the fourth behavior. As the axiom goes, slow and steady wins the race. Rapid change can be very distressing, but moving too slow can lead to complacency. Northouse (2015) encourages us to nudge the “elephant in the room” (p.269), being careful about people avoiding change. Not taking a look at one’s own preconceptions is the easier, softer way. Neoliberalism has been patient in its incremental change, like the proverbial frog in boiling water, and so too must humanization be. Freire (1968) contends that when the masses are not ready, patience is necessary. Forcing conscientization isolates the leader-investigator from the constituent.

The fifth leader behavior is giving the work back to the people. Freire (1968) explicitly argues that conscientization is not about a revolutionary leader. Once people are engaged in their own praxis, and this is extending out politically as a result, the leader-investigator needs to allow the humanized individual to affect change against neoliberalism. Each individual has something different to contribute to a democratic formative culture. Leader-investigators need to learn ways to curtail their influence and shift problem solving back to the people involved, allowing them to lead. Martín Baró’s work on Freire, as cited by Montero (2007), calls for a psychological transformation by empowering people in the construction of social identities based on assertiveness, self-assurance, pride in their work, and critical capacity. Constituents need to be given the control to mobilize their own conscientization once the process is underway.

The sixth behavior is to protect leadership voice from below. Northouse (2015) argues that adaptive leaders must listen and be open to the ideas of those in the group who are on the fringe and marginalized. Martín Baró, as cited by Montero (2007), calls dialogue “...exhortation to hear the voice of those who have been ignored and left outside the benefits of social progress” (p. 524). This means engaging those inside and outside positions of authority which will inevitably challenge power structures. When those who have been humanized challenge neoliberalism, the leader-investigator needs to use his or her position of authority to help protect the individual in whatever way possible. Permanent staff can use their positions to give confidence to part-time staff. Neoliberalism does not play nice, and in seeking to establish a democratic formative culture, as Giroux (2013; 2014) has argued, those with power need to protect the less powerful.

By following these behaviors, the leader-investigator will have cre-

ated a holding environment. Heifetz, et al. (2009) analogize a holding environment as a parent near a child learning to swim. The child knows the parent is near, and so is able and willing to take risks and learn while the parent observes. Much the same way, the leader-investigator needs to draw near to constituents so they are confident they are protected, but not so near that they are constrained.

Four Frames

Bolman and Deal (2013) analyze organizations through four frames: structural, political, human resource, and symbolic. These frames are often connected to positions inside an organization; hence, its members tend to see the organization through one or two of them, but not all. When all four frames are considered, a greater concern is given for different members of an organization. Considering how conscientization can occur through all parts of an organization can better equip a leader-investigator to create organization change for humanization.

Structural Frame

Bolman and Deal (2013) consider the structural frame through Mintzberg's (1980) five structural configurations: simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisionalized form, and adhocracy. Among these five, adhocracy involves the greatest sharing of power and the most limited hierarchy, which would likely best set the stage for discussions between a leader-investigator and a constituent.

Additionally within the structural frame, humanization could be tracked. Consideration of how organizational members with different marginalizations can be considered to see if humanization efforts are improving the lives of members or if they are only benefiting the majority. Educational organizations can more easily track this information while private business may face political resistance to keeping data of this nature.

While quantitative tracking is important to an implementation process, the distribution of power amongst advocacy and inquiry workers is also imperative. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest utilizing the structural framework of an all-channel network, which resembles adhocracy (Mintzberg, 1980) and the web of inclusion. Helgesen and Strasser, (2007) describe: "Webs of inclusion are not hierarchical; they use open communication across levels, redistribute power in the organization to the edge, embrace the outside world, blur conception and execution, adapt and evolve the organization and empower and motivate average members" (para. 1). Bolman and Deal consider all-channel networks

efficient for long-term implementations that are amorphous in nature. The sharing of power and leadership in an all-channel network allows for everyone's values to be considered and employed.

Political Frame

The sharing of power is central for success within the political frame (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Foucault (1977) reminds us of the pervasiveness of power, which is not necessarily a negative, yet coercion and suspicion abound. Foucault argues power, while ubiquitous, can be used for any purpose, but that people tend to be suspicious of power and its potential for coercion. To Foucault, power is not an evil commodity, yet the central question remains: what does one do with one's power? Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that organizations are coalitions with enduring differences around scarce resources which put actors into conflict, leading to bargaining "...among competing stakeholders jockeying for their own interests" (p. 195).

The sharing of power by a leader-investigator can open the proverbial door to ask why power needs to be shared. In discussing situationality, the constituent engages in the objective-problematic situation, "...rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark" (Freire, 1968, p. 109). The leader-investigator can express personal experiences about his or her own conscientization, how oppression has worked in his or her life, and lead the constituent along in the objective-problematic situation.

Human Resource Frame

Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that theory-in-use workers follow a pattern of behaviour to protect themselves and avoid directly addressing core issues and problems, while advocacy and inquiry workers emphasize common goals, communicate openly, and combine advocacy with inquiry. While this is true for institutional behaviour, it also applies to conscientization. Theory-in-use constituents will seek to protect their psyches based on their own oppression. Advocacy and inquiry constituents will be more likely to engage conscientization earlier in an implementation process. However, as the general curve from early adoption to late adoption moves through the success of conscientization in an institution, like it would with any other implementation, an organizational culture changes towards humanization. Freire (1968) calls listening 'revolutionary action.' Being non-judgmental and providing emotional security is the key.

Symbolic Frame

Bolman and Deal (2013) argue symbolic framing is connected to

organizational identity. Bolman and Deal observe that organizations are theatres, or even cults, and socialization into an identity is critical in organizational change. Initiatives need to be aligned with symbolic elements such as myths, vision, heroes, stories, and fairy tales. An organization adopting a culture of conscientization requires its symbolism and identity to focus on humanization. When the organizational identity is based on combating oppression, a culture in which the objective-problematic situation can be addressed would become normalized.

Giving Voice to Values

It is important to note that ethical considerations are not always practical or efficient. This is not necessarily because agents want to ignore them, but being ethical is a learned skill. Gentile (2014) argues that learning ethics through philosophy requires not only an individual to comprehend complex philosophical ideas, but also a teacher to explain them. Giving Voice to Values (GVV) curriculum asks participants to respond to ethical questions, and then script what they will say in an ethically problematic situation. Thus, individuals become better equipped to act ethically. Agents not only know the right course of action based on their own self-exploration, but they have also practiced doing what they believe is right on a personal basis. Knowing ethics and exercising ethical behaviour are not the same.

The GVV does not explicitly state what is right, but instead emphasizes dialogue, which is followed by ethical action (Gentile, 2014). This gives it compatibility with conscientization in which a leader-investigator leads a constituent through the objective-problematic situation yet does not make decisions for the constituent.

The GVV is also incredibly versatile and has been used in classrooms and workplaces from East Asia to the Indian subcontinent to West Africa (Gentile, 2015). It has been used: "...in legal, engineering and medical education; in executive coaching; in sports leadership development; and in companies across a wide variety of industries and geographies" (Gentile, 2014). Since it does not require deep philosophical pre-knowledge on the part of instructors and students, it is a practical framework to address the skill of being ethical. Its vast scope has proven this to be true.

Arce and Gentile (2015) offer a warning when economic capital is at the fore. In their discussion of teaching ethics to economics students, they explain the risk that "the positivist economic approach leads to amorality in defining the parameters of managerial decisions outside the classroom or laboratory" (p. 536). Critical authors like Giroux (2013; 2014) and Ryan (2012) have observed the connection between positivism and

neoliberalism, and the dehumanizing effect it can have. These values will run into conflict with the humanization that democratic educators try to institute. Through the GVV curriculum, there will be an opportunity for neoliberals and democratic educators to discuss the importance of humanization. This conversation is conscientization.

Gentile (2015) offers the following questions for groups to work through to prepare to enact ethics (p. 38):

What is the values-based position that the protagonist wants to promote/achieve?

What is at stake or at risk for all affected parties? (This question is intended not as a prelude to a traditional stakeholder analysis but rather as a way to identify potential influence strategies. That is, if I am worried about the cost of refusing to help my roommate to cheat, perhaps you could help me see ways to say “no” to him or her diplomatically.)

What are the “reasons and rationalizations” (the pushback or objections) the protagonist is most likely to hear when they do try to voice and enact their values? These arguments are often predictable and vulnerable to response if we anticipate them and practice.

What is the best script and action plan for the protagonist? How can we respond to the objections identified here and/or reframe the challenge in a way that is most effective?

Competing Values Framework

The competing values framework, originally presented by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983), purports that each group in an organization has a different set of diverging values, but that it is necessary to consider all sets for organizational change to take root. The competing values framework creates a four-quadrant analysis of stakeholder values. The framework is dialogical, assuming that groups will differ in their values. For organizational change to occur, the competing values framework provides a system of reconciliation amongst stakeholders to work for congruent organizational goals that remain within each group’s value system. For example, when a couple is considering what type of car to purchase, one partner may value safety while the other may value fuel economy. Rather than bicker over whether safety or fuel economy is a superior value, selecting a vehicle that satisfies both is a solution that does not ask one partner to change his or her values.

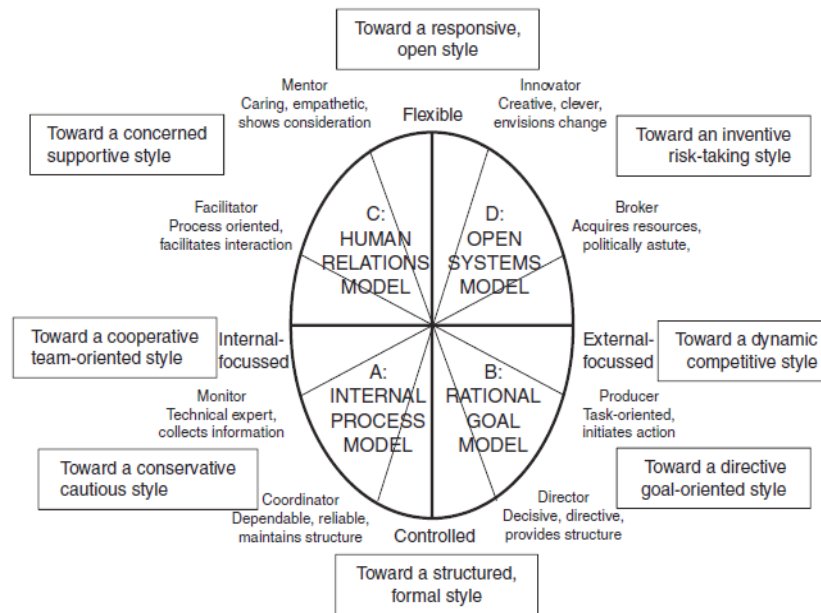
Rather than building consensus through homogeneous values, the competing values framework assumes an organization will necessarily be heterogeneous. If the various types of stakeholders are working toward the same goal but for different reasons, organizational change is

taking place. The competing values framework reveals approximately where the competition of values exists so that value-based conflicts can be resolved in order to implement change.

Tong and Avrey (2015) summarize the last decades of competing values framework research in Competing Values Framework of Leadership Roles (see Figure 2). Quadrant A presents a conservative and cautious style which maintains the status quo, preserving the reliability of work. Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, McGrath and St. Clair (2010) compare this quadrant to leadership models like Scientific Management, X-theory, machine bureaucracy and Mintzberg’s roles of disseminator and monitor. Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff and Thakor (2014) view this quadrant with a culture of hierarchy and an orientation of control.

Quadrant B is goal-oriented and more open to change. However, like Quadrant A, it is concerned with organizational structure. Tong and Avery (2015) consider planning and productivity to be the primary values in this arena. Comparable models include pioneer organization and Mintzberg’s roles of entrepreneur and resource allocator (Quinn

Figure 2
Competing Values Framework of Leadership Roles
(Tong & Avrey, 2015, p. 665)



et al., 2010). Cameron et al. (2014) consider this quadrant as having a culture of the market and an orientation of control.

Quadrant C facilitates human relations and, like Quadrant A, is concerned with internal cooperation. However, it directly contrasts with Quadrant B's competitive and task-based style. Tong and Avery (2015) cites values of participatory decision making and teamwork as important to this quadrant. Comparable models include professional bureaucracy, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Y-theory, and Mintzberg's roles of leader and disturbance handler (Quinn et al., 2010). Human relations has a 'clan' culture and an orientation towards collaboration (Cameron et al., 2014).

Quadrant D focuses on innovation and risk-taking, sharing a concern for dynamism and competition with Quadrant B. It also has similar values with Quadrant C such as a concern for openness and responsiveness. Yet, this conflicts with the caution of Quadrant A. The innovator values positive adaption to external problems and sponsoring visionary initiatives (Tong & Avery, 2015). Comparable models include adhocracy and Mintzberg's roles of spokesman, liaison, figurehead and negotiator (Quinn et al., 2010). Cameron et al. (2014) consider innovators as having a culture of adhocracy and an orientation toward creativity.

The primary tool in the competing values framework is lexical analysis. By considering key words in organizational documents like strategic plans and other grey literature, the preponderance of certain words in a group's strategic document reveal the stakeholders' values. For example, if words like 'expenditure' and 'manage' occur more frequently than words like 'democracy' and 'empower,' it implies that the strategic document is oriented towards a fiscal, planning, and goal setting framework rather than a human relations framework. Thus the lexical set used is critical for an organization's analysis depending on what the organization does and what is being analyzed.

The main limitations to a competing values framework is that it does not consult people directly, which can create issues with reliability and generalizability. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) did not argue the tool is empirical or even conclusive from its inception over thirty years ago. Nor does Quinn et al. (2010) or any of their successors (Venkatraman, 1997; Yang & Melitski, 2007; Tong & Avrey, 2015) argue this today. Rather, they admit that contradictions will arise because several realities can be true simultaneously; the tool is dialogical. The framework sorts competing values, but does not overcome contradictions in values.

The tool makes value choices explicit, but it does not empirically conclude what the values are. While lexis is organized in a quantitative manner, the results remain qualitative in nature, giving a picture of values, but not concluding what they are. Moreover, the competing

values framework does not claim scientific reproducibility. In fact, from its inception (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983), scholars have been clear that this is a qualitative, not a quantitative, framework. However, it creates a focal point from which a discussion of values can occur.

Much like Bolamn and Deal's (2013) Four Frames analysis allows an organization to be seen from several perspectives. When institutional literature is analyzed, stakeholders' relationship with the Human Relations Model (Quadrant C) becomes clearer. Quadrant C likely possess natural allies with the practice of conscientization as both are concerned with human development more than the other quadrants. Leader-investigators can see who their allies are. As well, the Rational Goal Model (Quadrant B) will likely have more subscribers to neoliberalism. Being able to plot the terrain of different groups is especially helpful in large organizations. Derrida's challenge to "think the impossible" needs tools, and the Competing Values Framework is one such tool.

Conclusion

While this is an article toward an academic audience, it is important to note that conscientization was pioneered by Freire (1968) in his literacy work with migrant workers in Chile during his exile from Brazil. Freire's literacy method focused on engendering political awareness rather than the survival needs that are often taught in literacy (Elias, 1975). This means the language educator is not limited to simply teaching a student how to shop at a store or some other survival skill but can also teach a student how to function as a political agent in society, creating a voice against oppression. The education of a tradesperson is not limited to laying brick or installing pipe but can also include functioning politically within the trade union movement. Educational leaders can look for where awareness of oppression is not being taught in curricula and is not being questioned by educators in order to engender a culture of questioning oppression. The GVV curriculum is especially designed to overcome the need for expertise in moral philosophy in order to ask questions applicable outside of scholarship.

Freire (1968) contends that "The conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership, but the result of their own conscientização [conscientization]" (p. 67). Adaptive Leadership suggests that once an adaptive change has been unleashed, it is no longer in the hands of the leader. Individuals aware of their own oppression will respond to it in the style of their choosing. While historically this has resulted in various violent revolutions, and without proposing a clarion call to Robespierre and the

French Revolution's Reign of Terror, it is also important to note that sometimes the most violent action is maintaining the status quo (Žižek, 2008). The question of how individuals ought to negotiate change with those disagreeing with them must be met through the lens of oppression. Those involved in harming others are criminals and ought to be dealt with as such, but that does not make all those who would disagree into criminals. This is a challenge that must be acknowledged in the process of conscientization, but this is also well beyond the scope of this paper. However, if leadership is based on a revolutionary leader, and not a democratic formative culture, it cannot be called conscientization.

Replacing neoliberalism will take the establishment of a democratic formative culture. Through conscientization, we can become leader-investigators that open the door to critical understanding of situationality. This door can more easily be opened when the discussion of values is through a framework known to constituents. Speaking neoliberal language is helpful in conscientization. The so-called common sense of positivism that neoliberalism espouses needs to be replaced by others seeing the objective-problematic situation. We are not resisting; we are doing the impossible. As Derrida declares, "If I only I did what I can do, I wouldn't do anything" (as cited in Giroux, 2013, para. 47).

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Bridging Funds of Knowledge in Learning to Teach

The Story of a Japanese Pre-service Teacher's Authentic Teaching Practicum Experience

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Abstract

The field of early childhood education and care has been in the forefront of setting the effort to increase diversity in its teaching force. Little is known about learning processes of teachers with diverse backgrounds in teacher education and what experiences and knowledge they bring to the field to educate and care for our youngest children. This qualitative case study tells stories of an Asian pre-service teacher during her process of becoming an early childhood educator through exploring her personal and cultural funds of knowledge based on her teaching practicum experiences. By listening carefully to her voice in her process of becoming a teacher, we hope that teacher educators and teacher preparation programs can gain new understandings to better support pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds in their processes of teacher development.

Introduction

Many research studies argue for a more diverse teaching force in the field of education in responding to a new demographic reality where students with racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse backgrounds are dramatically increasing (Capps et al., 2005; Couse & Recchia, 2016; Park, McHugh, Zong, & Batalova, 2015). Within the field of education, early childhood education and care (ECEC) has been in the forefront of setting the effort to increase diversity in its teaching force. Now nearly one fifth of the overall ECEC workforce are foreign-born,

often immigrants from various countries around the globe, and there is no doubt that their cultural and linguistic identities play a vital role in providing high quality early education and care (Park et al., 2015). Little is known about how they become teachers or caregivers in the field and what experiences and knowledge they bring to the field to educate and care for our youngest children (Adair, 2011; Cruickshank, 2004; Gupta, 2006; Hedges, 2012; Hwang, Baek, & Vrongistinos, 2005; Griess & Keat, 2014; Monzo & Rueda, 2003). Moreover, there is a dearth of research conducted on their teacher preparation processes to learn about who they are and what their experiences are like in learning to provide education and care (Adair, 2011; Pailliotet, 1997; Su, 1996).

In looking closely at teacher preparation programs for pre-service teachers with racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse backgrounds, scholars argue that their stories must be part of the curriculum of teacher education in order for it to become more “student-centered” (Goodwin, 1997; Rodrigues, 2013). Just as a teacher in the classroom can pick and choose what children can bring to the classroom from their lives, teacher educators can allow pre-service teachers to bring certain knowledge from their lived experiences into the university classroom. However, many teacher education programs pay little attention to the differences among pre-service teachers’ experiences, cultural backgrounds, and needs, and to how those differences can be utilized as valuable resources for learning in their teacher education courses (Gupta, 2006).

Recchia and Loizou’s (2002) study on early childhood pre-service teachers in their practicum course illuminates the need for space in teacher preparation programs to allow pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds to bring their personal histories and dispositions to their learning to become teachers. Garavuso (2016) also asserted that there needs to be a reimagination for teacher education in the field of early childhood education to meet the diverse needs of pre-service teachers because of the increasing diversity not only in children and families but also in the teacher population. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine more closely who pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds are and what their experiences are like in their preparation to teach and care for our youngest learners and to investigate their processes of reflecting on their current and past experiences to engage in more authentic teaching and learning.

Statement of Purpose

Studies on the experiences of pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds in teacher preparation programs are largely missing in

the field of teacher education (Pailliotet, 1997), and their success stories are even scarcer. Among the very few studies on pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds, Pailliotet (1997) discussed the experiences of an Asian pre-service teacher with a language minority background in her case study. She examined the cultural conflicts and hardships the pre-service teacher faced both in her teacher education program as well as her practicum site. In addition, Pailliotet highlighted that though the pre-service teacher's actual teaching practice was strong, the program failed to recognize her strengths in terms of her flexibility that came with her cultural and linguistic wealth and caring practice that enabled her to connect with her students with diverse needs.

In another case study, Gupta (2006) investigated a way to incorporate pre-service teachers' childhood and personal experiences and their beliefs in the child development theory course. Conducted in an urban setting, many of her pre-service teachers had diverse backgrounds in terms of their race, ethnicity, languages, and immigration status. In this study, the author stated that by providing a formal context in the course where the pre-service teachers were encouraged to interrogate child development theories in conjunction with their own experiences and beliefs enabled a reflective and inquiry based teacher education pedagogy.

The two aforementioned studies uncovered these missing pieces about the experiences of pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds in their teacher preparation processes. This is an area that can provide important insight to the field of teacher education; however, it is deeply under-researched. More studies are needed examining the "real" experiences of pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds within the field, especially in their practicum settings and to better support their processes of learning to become teachers.

In our qualitative case study, we focus on a Japanese pre-service teacher and her success stories during her process of becoming an early childhood educator through exploring her personal funds of knowledge and teaching experiences while engaging in a teacher education program practicum course. Though we are aware that her story cannot possibly represent the whole, we aim to contribute to the existing literature by adding an unheard voice. We hope that listening carefully to her voice in her process of becoming a teacher will shed light on teacher educators and teacher preparation programs to gain new understandings to better support pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds in their processes of teacher development.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Building on Vygotsky's sociocultural view, this study is based on the belief that unique and rich lived experiences of an individual enrich one's processes of learning. The theoretical framework of funds of knowledge, bodies of knowledge and skills that are historically and culturally accumulated and developed for functioning of households and individuals (Moll et al., 1992), is employed in order to explore knowledges that come from the lived experiences of a pre-service teacher with a racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse background. Traditionally, the concept of funds of knowledge has focused on studying children with diverse backgrounds and their experiences in and out of school (Dermans-Sparks, 1993-1994; Moll et al., 1992; Riojas-Cortez, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). However, it has also been acknowledged that funds of knowledge of teachers with diverse backgrounds are closely intertwined with and shape their teaching and learning, considering that teaching is not simply about a particular set of teaching methods or procedures but a complex endeavor involving the whole person across his/her sociocultural contexts (Adair, 2011; Gupta, 2006; Jackson, 2006; Olsen, 2008; Sexton, 2008).

Some studies applied the framework of funds of knowledge to uncover 'in-service' teachers' funds of knowledge as resources for their instruction for children's learning (Adair, 2011; Jackson, 2006). Building on the existing studies, our study focuses on the funds of knowledge of a 'pre-service' teacher. Goodwin (2010) stated, "Prospective [pre-service] teachers' experiences and autobiographies become the foundation upon which teaching practice is built" (p. 23). It is important to create an environment in teacher education programs where their diverse experiences are acknowledged and they are encouraged to draw on their lived experiences and funds of knowledge so that their learning becomes more meaningful and authentic. However, little has been studied on how this framework can be productive for understanding the preparations of pre-service teachers with diverse backgrounds in early childhood teacher education. Therefore, our study attempts to tell a story of a pre-service teacher with a diverse background in her teacher preparation program and how she was able to excavate her funds of knowledge in learning to become an early childhood teacher and caregiver.

In addition to sociocultural perspectives and funds of knowledge, it also makes sense to frame our study using Dewey's (1998/1933) reflective thinking when examining stories of a pre-service teacher. Dewey stated that *reflective thinking* is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds

that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9). When considering the pre-service teacher’s sociocultural context and funds of knowledge, what enables authentic teaching and learning is reflective thinking in the examination of one’s own funds of knowledge as well as other knowledges presented in teacher education courses (Lee & Shin, 2009). In our study, the pre-service teacher will narrate her experiences from the practicum site and her reflections through her essay writing as well as reflective journals from the teacher education course. Taken together, we hope to illuminate possibilities of learning about pre-service teachers with a diverse background and their experiences to better understand their processes of becoming authentic early childhood teachers and caregivers within this framework.

Research Context

We chose to do a qualitative single case study (Merriam, 1998) of the experience of a Japanese pre-service teacher, Miyuki (second author), and about her stories based on her student teaching practicum experience at a preschool in a large urban area. At the time of her practicum, she was enrolled as a second year student in the teacher education graduate program. The practicum course was a semester-long weekly seminar and field practicum combined course. Her course instructor/university supervisor (first author) communicated with Miyuki about her experiences within the seminar discussions and in the field by visiting to conduct observations as well as through weekly reflective journal entries.

The data were collected during and after the semester. The data sources are the course instructor/university supervisor’s (first author) field/seminar notes, Miyuki’s reflective weekly journal entries during the semester, and her essays that were written once the semester ended. The study was conducted with permission from Miyuki, and she was assured that it did not affect her course grade. The data were analyzed by the first author inductively and also by using the aforementioned theoretical and conceptual framework. In addition, the first author member-checked (Phillion & Wang, 2011) with the second author while writing together throughout the process.

In narrating Miyuki’s stories, we highlight the importance of bringing her own funds of knowledge to her practicum classroom as she connected the knowledge with the children who also brought their various cultural and familial backgrounds. This classroom experience helped Miyuki to understand that she has valuable assets to bring to the classroom for both children’s learning as well as her own learning to become a teacher. By telling the stories of herself--perspectives from a pre-service teacher who

is from a different country, and different ways in which she was able to cooperate with her cooperating teacher under the guidance of her university supervisor in the course work to bridge her funds of knowledge—we hope to shed light on what is possible in the field of early childhood teacher education.

Miyuki's Stories

Miyuki often asked the children in her practicum site during free playtime and small group activity, “Do you know where I am from?” and “Do you know anything about Japan?” Some of them answered, “Kind of China?” and some others answered, “My mom loves Japanese foods, it’s very healthy.” On another occasion, when Miyuki was looking at the world map and reading a book with her students, she shared with them that she was from a country called Japan (Field notes). Through these short but frequent exchanges about her background with her students, her cooperating teacher also became aware of students’ interest in Miyuki’s background. The cooperating teacher mentioned that the children were saying things like, “Miyuki is from a different country” and “she speaks a different language” (Field notes) and suggested that Miyuki do a lesson on her Japanese culture to broaden students’ perspectives on diversity. And this is it how all began. Miyuki’s stories that we present in this study are anchored in her planned and successfully implemented series of lessons on her experiences of the Japanese culture and how she shared her funds of knowledge with her preschool students throughout her student teaching practicum.

Beginning with Personal and Cultural Funds of Knowledge

Miyuki shared in her journal, reflecting on her previous student teaching practicum experiences, that it was difficult for her to build relationships with the cooperating teachers and also with the children because of differences in terms of her culture and language. She wrote, “Being a pre-service teacher in the classroom where the first [dominant] language was different from my own with the classroom teachers who have different cultural background, was a huge challenge and I had many ups and downs” (Journal). However, this practicum was different that, though at first it was never easy, teaching a lesson on her own culture during the first few weeks into her practicum helped to “break the ice” between herself and the children as well as her cooperating teacher. Miyuki wrote the following in her essay:

I began my first lesson on Japanese culture with the book, *Yoko* by Rosemary Wells that talks about diversity through food. This book tells

children to be accepting and respecting of others who are different, to be proud of one's own background, and to be interested in others' backgrounds. Before reading the story, I showed the world map and let the children find the United States as well as Japan. Then, I discussed that I speak a different language; I eat different kinds of foods, and celebrate different holidays while showing pictures of what I usually eat for breakfast in Japan, and asked what was different from what they eat for breakfast. I also talked about different holidays Japanese people celebrate by showing pictures of my family and myself [sic] during the holidays. During our discussion after the read-aloud, the children began to comment and ask questions, "Your country looks very different," "Do you have any family in here?" "Do you have friends in here?" "All of them are in Japan? Do you miss them?" "Do you like New York city?" It was amazing to see how they were able to recognize the distance and differences between the two countries and ask personal questions concerning my emotional well-being. I responded that I liked the city but still missed my friends and family in Japan. Then one student said, "But, now you have friends in here, like us!" I never imagined that sharing my personal background and experiences would ignite such intimate connections with the students. It was such a wonderful moment to see and feel the impact of my lesson on them. Telling my story with the Yoko book helped the children better internalize the message in the book, but also was a powerful experience for me when learning to become a teacher. This introductory lesson also helped me break the ice between my cooperating teacher and myself. As a pre-service teacher from a different country, it was difficult for me to figure out how to close the distance, and how and when I could introduce myself in the midst of the busy classroom schedule.

After this lesson, my cooperating teacher told me that my lesson was a great experience not only for the children but also for her. She also shared her experience traveling to Japan and through such conversation we were able to establish a positive common ground. Though it is not an easy task, I learned that it was important for pre-service teachers to introduce ourselves and to build a rapport with our cooperating teachers by bringing our cultural background and sharing our experiences to learn about each other so that our time in learning to teach under their supervision could become more productive and meaningful.

Miyuki shared in her journal and also during our seminar discussion how excited she was to finally be able to start connecting with the children and the cooperating teacher and mentioned that opening herself to them helped her build close relationships with them. I responded to her by reaffirming her brilliance in creating the literacy lesson that was developmentally, culturally, and emotionally relevant to the children in her classroom as well as being meaningful to her personally (Seminar notes). Teaching young children involves honoring young children's funds of knowledge, their interests, and needs (Dermans-Sparks, 1993-1994;

Moll et al., 1992; Riojas-Cortez, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Learning to teach also works in a similar way. In her process of learning to teach, Miyuki successfully found a way to teach and reach the children with diverse interests and needs by bringing and sharing her own personal and cultural funds of knowledge that are interwoven with the interests, curiosity, and emotions of the young children in her classroom.

Searching for and Connecting with Children's Funds of Knowledge

After her very first and successful read-aloud lesson, Miyuki was asked by her cooperating teacher to be in charge of the daily read-aloud, and Miyuki was eager to make the most out of the opportunity. She reflected in her journal,

[Student teaching is] still challenging but this daily read aloud makes my weekend routine of picture book hunting more enjoyable. I'm now spending two hours to find a book for my read aloud every weekend, and when the children clapped their hands after my read aloud, I feel the luxury of being a teacher. (Journal)

This was Miyuki's final practicum course in her teacher education program and she was determined to make the most of it, enjoying the process of developing her teaching skills. She went above and beyond her responsibilities of a pre-service teacher to find the perfect picture books to read to the children and this arduous search rewarded her with deeper connections with them and true satisfaction of becoming a teacher. And this time, Miyuki engaged the children through discussing and bringing real folk arts from her homeland in addition to the picture book. In her essay, she shared how she searched for and connected with the children's funds of knowledge through folk arts:

Since my first read-aloud lesson, story time became one of my routine works in the classroom. I also developed a habit to go to the public library every weekend and spend several hours to find appropriate books I could use for my lessons for story time. The theme for the month was farmers' market so I searched for books that were aligned to the theme but also a bit more creative. I did not want to simply read about farm produce but wanted to broaden their understanding of a farmers market. After searching through the library aisles I picked out the book called *Market Day* by Lois Ehlert. In the book, the author uses folk arts she collected from all over the world to represent a farmers' market. I thought this book would be an interesting book to read and discuss not only for the children to expand their learning of a farmers market to folk arts but also as an opportunity for me to introduce them to some Japanese folk art. I wanted to share more about my cultural background using Japanese folk arts.

I explained to the children that folk arts are hand-made arts by local people and each folk art has a meaning in that country or culture, such as a Japanese daruma tumbling doll, which has a meaning of challenge and resilience. It is made of paper and weighted on the bottom so it always stands up even when being pushed. I showed a daruma doll and demonstrated how it stands up. The children gathered around me and asked, “Can I touch? Can I touch?” I also asked them to talk to their parents or grandparents if they had any folk arts in their homes, and if they did, I would like them to share their stories along with the folk arts. One boy said, “I have something from China and it’s very old and it’s from my grand grand grand...ma and grand grand grand...pa.” They were excited to ask their families and find folk arts at their home.

After this lesson, one of the students brought a Matryoshka doll and shared the doll during “show and tell” in the classroom. She said the Matryoshka doll was from a different culture, Russia, because her grandmother was Russian, and the doll was folk art as “Miyuki said.” Some student said he had folk arts at his house, but it was very expensive so he could not bring them to the classroom. He stated, “But I’m sure it’s folk arts. My mom told me it’s folk arts from France” and he added that his ancestor is French. Reflecting on this lesson I learned the discussion around the book not only exposed the students to my own cultural background but also provided them with an opportunity to explore their own family culture and share it with each other to build a learning community.

This remarkable learning opportunity that Miyuki created also fostered a learning community among the children. After Miyuki shared her daruma doll from Japan and told a story about the doll, she asked the children that she would like to hear their stories and their families’ stories. Honoring and showing her genuine interests in the children’s funds of knowledge motivated them to search for the folk arts that originated from their own familial cultures and traditions. She reflected in her journal that week,

I’ve been able to incorporate my cultural background in my [practicum] placement. I really feel this experience is meaningful for me. I feel more bonding with the students than before and I believe this is because that they have started to know me and trust me. (Journal)

Sharing her own funds of knowledge enabled her lesson to become authentic both for her and the children but also created meaningful relationships and trust between them. Miyuki also shared in her journal that later during the week she was told her cooperating teacher extended the lesson to a “show and tell” activity in which the children learned to honor other cultures and traditions and also to value their own as they shared the folk arts from the origin of the country of their own families.

Funds of Knowledge as a Resource for Authentic Inquiry

As Miyuki was concluding her practicum experience, she had a chance to share some pictures of her nephew who lives in Japan and the experiences of other Japanese preschoolers with the children in her practicum classroom. She was surprised by the brilliant minds of the young children and how they built on the discussion on comparing the differences between Japanese preschool culture and American preschool culture to an inquiry into gender issues in preschools. Miyuki explained in her essay:

In my last whole class lesson in my time there in the classroom, I had a chance to show several pictures of my nephew and Japanese preschoolers going to school by a school bus and by walking, and asked the children what were the same and/or different in connection to the unit of study for the month, transportation in New York City. One of the students raised his hand and said, "Same. Because [Raymond] come to school by bus and I walk to school." To expand their understanding of making comparisons, I also showed a picture of Japanese preschoolers having lunch and making murals in the classroom. A student responded that they looked the same and then another boy pointed out, "Why they are all wearing the same clothes? They are all wearing the same clothes, and boys are wearing blue and girls are wearing pink." The students started to share their own ideas about the relationships between colors and gender. I was amazed to see their authentic inquiry occurring from the pictures of Japanese preschoolers and my stories, and it developed a new way to enter into a new conversation.

By sharing my own stories and pictures of my nephew and other Japanese preschoolers, the students were able to make comparisons, ask questions, and learn about different cultures and people who are different from them in a meaningful context. It was a valuable lesson not only for the students but also for me as a pre-service teacher who was trying to learn to become a teacher. It was a powerful moment for me to realize that my own cultural background could become a unique resource for children's learning.

This last lesson Miyuki taught in her practicum site provided an invaluable lesson for herself about the capability of young children's pursuit of inquiry, ignited by her sharing of her own funds of resources. Miyuki reflected in her journal that she used to view herself from a deficit perspective because of her English language abilities. However, in this practicum placement, she was accepted and was respected by the children and her cooperating teacher despite her differences. Miyuki was reinforced and reaffirmed the use of her rich funds of knowledge in her practicum site through the course seminar discussions and the on-going communication with her course instructor/field supervisor via the field visits and reflective journal feedback. Miyuki stated,

During my [previous] student teaching [practical], I always felt my language barrier [was in the way]. Now in my [current] placement, I feel the importance and meaning of what I can bring into the classroom, and this is really meaningful for me. (Journal)

Such positive and authentic practicum experience fortified her to look at herself as a developing teacher from a strength-based perspective and to build her teaching skills on her funds of knowledge as well as the funds of knowledge of the children and the community.

Epilogue

Like the rings that ripple around a rock thrown in a pond, rings of successful dialog that begin in the classroom can ripple outward in ever-larger circles into homes and out into the community.

—Cowhey, 2006, p. 98

With the above quote selected by her, Miyuki reflected in her essay about her last day at her practicum site:

On my last day of practicum in this classroom, some parents talked to me about how I played a role as a catalyst and made a strong influence on their children. One mother told me that her son talked about how he was surprised to hear that Japanese preschoolers did not have snack time in preschool, and she was also curious to know the reason. Another mother told me that her daughter wanted to do a “play date” with me so that she could know more about Japan and see some pictures. She also thanked me for being in the classroom. Another mother told me she wanted to know about the Japanese dessert I made in the classroom because her daughter told her how it was different from their dessert, and even though she did not want to taste it, she told the procedure of making the dessert in detail to her mother. This made me feel that one small step, as a pre-service teacher, made by my funds of knowledge led to a significant step not only to open and broaden the students’ perspectives of different countries but also of their own families. As a pre-service teacher from a different country, I sometimes felt incompetent and thought I was not contributing very much to the children’s learning. However, this classroom experience made me feel that I have valuable assets such as my funds of knowledge and my lived experiences that I could bring to the classroom to enhance not only children’s learning but also my own learning to become a teacher.

For Miyuki, one of the biggest gains from this successful practicum experience is the confidence in her own developing identity as a teacher who has a lot to offer to the children and the classroom community. She seemed to realize that when her teaching practice becomes authentic to her by finding creative and meaningful ways to connect with

the children, they also benefit from this kind of teaching and it could enhance their learning in ways that broadens their perspectives and extends their horizon.

Discussion

While emphasizing how to teach children with diverse backgrounds, there is less attention in teacher education on how to support pre-service teachers who have ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse backgrounds in their *learning to teach*. Miyuki's story sheds light on what is possible to create such an environment where funds of knowledge of both the pre-service teacher and the children are utilized as resources for meaningful learning. The experience for learning to teach became authentic for Miyuki because she was able to connect with the children by sharing her unique experiences and building close relationships. Furthermore, with support and encouragement from her cooperating teacher and university supervisor, Miyuki was able to engage in the reflective process through seminar discussions and her weekly journals. Throughout this active, continuous, and thoughtful process of learning to teach, Miyuki was able to gain confidence in bringing her funds of knowledge to create a shared space where the children were also excavating and exploring their own funds of knowledge within and beyond the classroom curriculum.

Educating diverse children must begin within teacher education where pre-service teachers are navigating and exploring varied ways of teaching and learning. As told in Miyuki's stories, one way to approach teacher education for diverse learners is for teacher educators to be mindful of creating a "learning to teach" environment that is open for their pre-service teachers to bring their own funds of knowledge, utilize them as valuable and official resources for their teaching and learning, and engage in critical reflections on their unique processes of learning to teach. We must understand and acknowledge that our lived experiences greatly shape and often enrich the ways in which we teach and learn.

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Seeking Civic Virtue

Two Views of the Philosophy and History of Federalism in U.S. Education

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Abstract

The controversy centering around the role of the national government in education poses a philosophical question that this paper seeks to answer: Is it just to leave the function of education to individual states? Using a classical philosophical approach drawing on the ideas from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, I will attempt to investigate this question further. I use Aristotle because his ideas indirectly influenced the American founding. It is possible to see elements of Aristotle throughout the federalist papers, many of which were written by James Madison—the architect of the Constitution. I will then counter this approach with the ideas of philosopher Amy Gutmann, using her democratic approach to education in society. While Aristotle and republicanism are an essential part of the American legal system, democracy is also a basic building block to the body politic, and both offer ways to tackle this philosophical question about control of education. After exploring this philosophical question, I will then investigate the history of federalism in education by looking at historical trends of federal involvement in education, and what the traditional role of states has been since the founding of the United States.

Introduction

The Tenth Amendment to the *United States Constitution* states, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor pro-

hibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” This leaves the power to create schools and a system for education in the hands of individual states, rather than the central federal government. The historical and philosophical term used to describe a government that shares power between a central and regional governments is called federalism. Today, all fifty states provide public schooling to their young people. This leaves fifty approaches to education within the borders of one nation. Some might argue that this system should be streamlined by the federal government to ensure equality for every student in every state of the same nation. Conversely, many believe that the central government should stay out of education. President Ronald Reagan campaigned for the abolition of the Department of Education during his run for president (Clabaugh, 2004). In fact, a bill was recently introduced in the House of Representatives that would abolish the Department of Education effective December 31, 2018 (Kamenetz, 2017). Despite the desire by some to abolish the federal Department of Education, there are many tasks and responsibilities for which this federal agency is responsible. Some of these tasks include funding for special education, ensuring civil rights for students, providing funding to those with low income, technology grants, food guidelines, school lunch programs, and suggested academic standards for states to implement. The controversy centering around the role of the federal government in education poses a philosophical question that this paper seeks to answer: Is it just to leave the function of education to individual states? Using a classical philosophical approach drawing on the ideas from Aristotle’s (2009) *Nicomachean Ethics* (Ethics), I will attempt to investigate this question further. I use Aristotle because his ideas indirectly influenced the American founding. It is possible to see elements of Aristotle throughout the *Federalist Papers*, many of which were written by James Madison—the architect of the Constitution. I will then counter this approach with the ideas of philosopher Amy Gutmann, using her democratic approach to education in society. While Aristotle and republicanism are an essential part of the American legal system, democracy is also a basic building block to the body politic, and both offer ways to tackle this philosophical question about control of education. After exploring this philosophical question, I will then investigate the history of federalism in education by looking at historical trends of federal involvement in education, and what the traditional role of states has been since the founding of the United States.

Classical Approach

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (2009) contends that every person is in search of what is called the good life, also translated as hap-

pinness. In Greek, this is called *eudaimonia*. The good life, called *telos* in Greek, is an end to what people seek in life. *Telos* is not to be confused with desire or wants but is a mean or average of a collection of virtues that one can possess. When individuals find a perfect balance in their lives they reach this 'mean.' To understand the importance of attaining virtue, it is first necessary to understand the way in which individuals learn to be virtuous. To Aristotle, this takes place within a community. The community is the place where people engage in friendship, which to Aristotle is a form of justice. Justice is synonymous to living a virtuous life. As members of a community, or polis, it is incumbent upon people to be virtuous and make their community a place where virtue can thrive. According to Aristotle (1948), the polis was formed around families, who then create villages, and villages together form a polis. This is important because he believed that community was needed in order to have a good life. It is from this community that members derive their virtue.

What is virtue? Aristotle uses the term *arete* to describe virtue, which Taylor (2006) translates as excellence. This type of virtue is two-fold for Aristotle, one type is excellence of intellect and the other is excellence of character (Taylor, 2006). In Book Two, Chapter One of *Ethics*, Aristotle (2009) wrote that virtue of intellect is learned from teaching, and that virtue of character is learned from habit. These virtues are not natural to people and must be learned; however, it is not possible to learn them just from desire to do so. Hence, one must live in a community, and learn these virtues over time. Aristotle explains this by writing:

We acquire the virtues by having previously exercised them, as also in the case of the skills. For what one has to learn to do we learn by doing, e.g. people become builders by building, and lyre-players by playing the lyre; and so too we become just by performing just acts and temperate by temperate acts and courageous by courageous acts. (Warne, 2006, p. 2)

Virtues, however, are not learned like playing the lyre; rather they are inculcated over time by exposure within a community, and by habitual practice.

Citizenship is at the heart of much of Aristotle's work, and the role of the citizen in *Politics* is someone who literally rules and helps make laws, which is a role reserved for a certain class of person. Yet, in the United States, all citizens rule by virtue of voting. While these ideas are quite different, it is important to understand that the framers of American Constitutionalism intended for sovereignty to be placed with the people; which were white male landowners, but has evolved over time to make all people citizens. One common place to find the conception

of democracy in the United States is in *Federalist Ten*, in which James Madison explains that a republic is where “the scheme of representation takes place” (Madison, 1985, p.1). This type of representation stands in stark contrast to direct or pure democracy, which the founders tried to avoid and is evident in institutions like the Electoral College, the United States Senate, and the small number of congressional representatives which dilute the power of the people and are largely undemocratic (Wolin, 1960). Wolin (1960) argued that Madison was influenced by the idea that ambition and interest of those that wish to serve as representatives could influence them to be more virtuous, which is an idea espoused by Machiavelli. Despite the disparate republican form of government found in the United States, it does carry elements of democracy, albeit representative. Aristotle wrote in the *Politics*: “the excellence of being a good citizen must belong to all citizens indifferently, because that is a condition necessary for the state being the best state” (Barker, 1948, p. 117). This recognition that virtue or excellence is necessary for each citizen and person is of great importance, as it recognizes that all people are diverse and yet they all must still adhere to the doctrine of the mean that is proposed in search of a virtuous life. Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean is balance between extreme emotions, actions, and feelings of the human condition. It is similar to the ego within Freud’s psychoanalysis between the id and superego. When citizens of a polis come together and live virtuously, while ruling justly, the good life is attainable. Citizens acting virtuously together will make the good life achievable for all.

Within the context of education, the United States is made up of a collection of villages, townships, counties, and other local government entities. Local school boards have traditionally controlled the schooling/education systems for localities, and each school board has power and control to make independent decisions as to what they feel is best for the children in their community. Individual communities have different needs, and every citizen of each community can vote for their school board members which represent the polis of each village. Schooling and education from the perspective of virtue ethics posited by Aristotle would best be served by the local community. It is within the local community that people learn from one another and witness virtue with the hope of obtaining this as their telos toward the goal of eudaimonia. Situated within a community, individuals find friendship, and within relationships between friends, virtue is found. Aristotle wrote,

Between friends, there is no need for justice, but people who are just, still need the quality of friendship; and indeed friendliness is considered to be justice in the fullest sense. It is not only a necessary thing but a splendid one. (Aristotle, 2009, p. 35)

To Aristotle, justice and friendship are both essential parts of living the good life and are intertwined. Standards for education that were created and suggested by the federal government or even state governments have recently become rigid statements that describe specific pieces of information that students and teachers are responsible for memorizing or learning (Ravitch, 2010). This type of curriculum, or goal for learning, runs counter to the beliefs of Aristotle. To Aristotle, interacting with others in the community and creating friendships with other citizens is a step toward reaching a good life, and that “the just in the fullest sense is regarded as constituting an element of friendship” (Barker, 1948, p. 215).

While it is true that Aristotle does not provide specific direction for ways in which to live the good life, he does list the specific virtues needed to reach this end; however, he rejects the notion that these virtues can be taught outright. To Aristotle, there is no reason for young people to study ethics specifically, as they do not have the life experience to understand how ethics work to create the good life (Warne, 2006). Aristotle also rejects the notion that living a virtuous life is something with which people are born. He is clear on multiple occasions through his writing that virtue is a practical product that is acquired through habitual practice (Warne, 2006, p. 38). This type of habitual practice fits well within the federal system of the United States. If the family unit is where the polis begins, and the city is the political construct for which people live and learn to become citizens, then the inculcation of virtue and the happy life are best suited to take place at the local level. Thus, education in an Aristotelian view must take place in the community, as there is no difference between public and private life.

Democratic Perspective

Philosopher Amy Gutmann, (1987) looks at this philosophical question differently. She argues that the aim of education should coincide with broader democratic aims of the United States. To Gutmann, the term democratic has a dualistic meaning. In a democracy, one must first be ruled before they can rule (Gutmann, 1987). From the time children are born into the world, they are ruled over by their parents or some figure of authority. This remains the case until they reach adulthood, which is when they are granted the voting rights of a citizen. This makes education of paramount importance in the development of future citizens, and a focus should be placed on giving these students a voice in the democracy in which they are situated. Like Aristotle, Gutmann recognized that education is political, as the principles of the polis should be represented within an individual’s upbringing. However, she views national identity

as a concept that must be reckoned with in a democratic society, which gives a role to the central government in education.

Gutmann evaluates the issue of educational control from different perspectives. One perspective is the idea of a “national agenda” (Gutmann, 1987, p. 4). She criticizes the notion that there are not common ideas with which people in the United States can find consensus, and notes that disagreement is a necessary norm in a democracy. These disagreements happen often and can be over large and small issues, which leads her to question the proper role of government in education. This becomes problematic, as it is difficult to define the proper role of government. Should the government be responsible for teaching morality to children? If so, at what level?

Traditional debates about who should have the power to control education come from many perspectives, including conservative theory, liberal theory, social reproduction theory, and the Frankfurt School’s critical theory (Gutmann, 1987). Conservative theory tends to always side with the parents’ right to control their child’s education and what they learn, generally placing the power over education within a locality, or even schooling within the home. Liberal theory seeks to create “individual autonomy” in children and provide equitable education to all students, often leading to a central government providing policy that directs all schools to provide equitable services to all students within the body politic (Gutmann, 1987, p. 8). Structuralists and those who adhere to social reproduction theory view education as a mechanism controlled by a dominant upper class that is used as a way to reproduce economic class systems and hegemonic dominance. Similar to structuralism, Critical Theory analyzes legitimate knowledge in order to reveal their misinterpretations and how it works in the interest of dominant cultures. Gutmann (1987) claims that none of these theories work to actually answer the question as to who should control the government, and this is because they are not political theories that deal with the reality of decision making within a polis. This is why a democratic theory is needed in order to answer the question over control. A democratic approach calls for the body politic to deliberate and discuss these issues in an attempt to reach a consensus for the nation and society, and this is where the “virtue” (Gutmann, 1987, p. 11) of democracy is found, in the legitimacy of all voices within the political realm. Gutmann summarizes this by writing,

A democratic theory of education provides principles that, in the face of our social disagreements, help us judge (a) who should have authority to make decisions about education, and (b) what the moral boundaries of that authority are. (Gutmann, 1987, p.11)

This theory and understanding have a dynamism because of different opinions and voices of change within the polis.

Gutmann (1987) argues about the necessity of a divide that exists between the professional and the democratic within the field of education. This is significant because teachers must have a certain level of professional autonomy in their classroom, which takes power away from a central authority—this works to prevent an individual teacher’s professional drive from ossification. On the other hand, the public must have a say in what they see as important for their children to learn as future citizens and members of the public. This indicated the importance of having some sort of standard for teachers that comes from a central authority. This could presumably in the form of curriculum or teacher standards or even recommendations for education programs of future teachers and administrators.

This division of spheres also exists within the idea of the private and public. Although Aristotle did not recognize a difference between the private and public, Gutmann does. She points out that conservatives believe their children are the sole responsibility of parents and that they have a “natural right” (Gutmann, 1987, p. 116) to control the education of their children. This begs the question as to whether parents should be able to send their children to private schools that teach things that might be counter to the values held by the polis. If this is the case, then a breakdown in national identity and a common democratic goal could be possible. Children are not only the responsibility of parents, but also of the body politic in which they reside. This means that there is a requirement for the national government to implement some sort of goals and ideals that are necessary for all students to obtain in pursuit of individual citizenship in a democratic society. However, a national identity can also be challenged in public schools, as they are controlled locally and by their respective states. This issue can be mitigated through federal law or by states volunteering to integrate national standards, as was attempted in the Common Core Standards movement.

The United States is not a nation-state and does not have a homogenous culture. However, when each state goes about implementing their educational goals, disparity can exist in areas that go against the national dedication to equality. Civil Rights, funding equality, and disability services have been an area that the Federal government has inserted itself in the foray of educational policy. Equality under the law is a fundamental principle of the American Democracy and can be found in both the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution’s* 14th Amendment. Trying to find a balance between how much of a role

the federal government plays, and how much local control schools and states ought to have is not easily answered. Gutmann writes,

Determining the optimal balance between local control and centralized authority over education becomes an issue of enormous complexity. The two simplest solutions are unacceptable. At one extreme, delegating to local school boards full control over public schooling would reduce the United States to a collection of democratic city-states, totally neglecting our collective interest in a common education. At the other extreme, centralizing all control at the national level would eliminate any effective democratic control over schools, leaving bureaucrats, administrators, and teachers in de facto control. (1987, pp. 72-73)

This conundrum is the same conundrum that the American founders had whilst crafting the Constitution. Federalism allows localities to control schooling, but it is possible for these local schools to drift from a common national democratic goal. Nevertheless, local communities know local culture, values, and morals and can thus be more connected to a greater sense of democracy.

One sphere of education that is largely ignored by Gutmann is that of the economic sphere. The economic aim and job preparation of schools could also be a part of the national democratic ideal, made evident in the modern educational reform movement in which academic content standards require narrow specific skills (Ravitch, 2010). These standards are promoted as a way to prepare students for college or careers, and they are similar in all 50 states. As well, this was largely important in the period following World War One when the Smith-Hughes Act was passed, which gave federal monies to support vocational schools that were aimed at giving students job skills (Conlan, 1981).

A particular time that exemplifies the complications of allowing local governments to make their own decisions with regard to education was in the American South after the historic *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (Brown (1), n.d.) court ruling. This ruling ordered integration in schools throughout the United States. Had it been left up to the state or local school boards, it is obvious that racial integration would not have taken place; thus the federal government became involved in the situation. The federal government adds an additional layer to ensure that students are treated equally under the law, aiding, therefore, in the perpetuation a national democratic identity. Not only was school integration highly controversial at the time, it is still a perpetual problem in the United States (Hannah-Jones, 2014). If common democratic ideals are not conveyed to future self-rulers in the United States, then basic rights that are secured by the U.S. legal system are at risk. It should be noted that common ideas and ideas about community, in general, are

not just limited to geographical place. A sense of community can also be found in virtual spaces or as part of a social/racial/religious group. Yet, Guttman (1987) considers national ideals as an important part of the democratic project. Schools do not necessarily have to be formed around specific place or neighborhood for this to work, and perhaps a new conception of community is necessary.

History of Federalism in Education

After the 1957 launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, the United States federal government became much more involved in K-12 education policy. This culminated with the watershed legislation called the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or ESEA. This section of this paper will explore the historical trend of federal involvement in K-12 education and the role that the states have played in the history of public education.

Early Days of the Republic

At the same time that the Constitutional Convention was taking place in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787, the Continental Congress approved a piece of legislation called the Northwest Ordinance. This legal document became the governing document for the Northwest Territory of the United States, which included Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota. Many of the provisions that were included in the Northwest Ordinance were also in the United States Constitution; however, some of the provisions stand out as powers we don't usually associate with the federal government. One such provision was the inclusion of a statement calling for schools in the Northwest Territory, which reads, "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged" (Swan, 1965, p. 1). Another important piece of legislation passed by the Continental Congress was the Land Ordinance of 1785. This piece of legislation also called for land to be reserved in townships, and surveyors were to divide sections of this land for the purpose of building schools (Swan, 1965).

During the Constitutional Convention debates, James Madison actually proposed the creation of a national university, but this proposal was left out of the final draft of the Constitution. Over two decades later, Madison, the father of the Constitution, brought the issue up again to the Congress, but the Congress believed such an act would be unconstitutional (Madsen, 1962). However, neither primary nor secondary education was discussed in the Constitutional Convention.

Why was the Congress so apprehensive about using the federal gov-

ernment to create schools? The *Constitution* does not mention education, and the Tenth Amendment of the Bill of Rights, says that anything not explicitly addressed in the *Constitution* is left to the individual states. Carl L. Bankston (2010) argues that the founders would never have even considered placing local schools under the care of the federal government and that local schools were central to each community and also run by the input of each local community. Onuf (1987) argues that the founders were completely in touch with the mainstream ideas of education when they approved the Northwest Ordinance. It was common thought among those who were in power at the time that an educated citizenry was of paramount importance. However, education and the conception of republican motherhood still was the primary responsibility of parents, the church, and the community; thus, keeping education at a local level was the norm for the time. Another reason that schooling was viewed as important was the threat that came from the western lands. When white American settlers moved westward, they would often settle in remote areas with little contact from the more civilized coastal cities. This made education even more important in the Northwest, as it provided a way for Americans to be in touch with the ideas that made the American republic (Onuf, 1987). A federal system, such as the one in the United States, shares power between states and the national government. Federalism can be thought of as a Venn-diagram, both the central government and state governments have specific functions to perform, but there is an area where they share power. States also delegate power to local governments, which include townships, villages, cities, counties, and school boards, but in the American Republic, states reign supreme over local governments. However, state constitutions included provisions that called for education of the citizenry, which was believed to be necessary by the American Founders in order to have a republican citizenry (Onuf, 1987).

Growth of Public Education in States

Public education has developed distinctively in each state and region in the United States. With the assumption that wealthy people could afford to pay for their own education, Pennsylvania was the first state to require public education for the poor in 1790, with New York following suit shortly thereafter in 1805. Thomas Jefferson proposed an idea for a public school system in Virginia that would allow for all white males to be educated and continue their education based on merit (Mercer, 1993). The system that was proposed by Jefferson was considered radical as public schools sanctioned by the states were not in existence at the time he proposed this in 1779 (Mercer, 1993). Jefferson had hoped to use

this system to replace the aristocracies that had existed in European dominions with natural aristocracies that would form out of ability. A natural aristocracy (meritocracy) allows for those who prove themselves in schooling to advance upward in school, and also in positions of power, according to their intellectual ability. One key difference with the vision of Jefferson and that of the schools already in existence was that public schools would not be connected to a religious ideology and instead served the purpose of preparation for future citizens in the American republic. Jefferson believed that breaking the “Tyranny” (Mercer, 1993, p.23) of the influence by different Christian denominations was crucial in the development of education in a free society for people to have open minds. Massachusetts was the first state both to have a tuition-free high school in 1820 and compulsory education in 1852 (Mercer, 1993).

The movement toward public education is often referred to as the common school movement, which spread to most states during the 1800’s (Cremin, 1980). This movement was led by Horace Mann, the first superintendent of public schools in the state of Massachusetts, who believed that public schools for all children would provide equalization for all future citizens in the United States (Cremin, 1980). Gutek (1997) argues that in many ways Mann was influenced by the founding generation and that he carried on the Jeffersonian vision of schools that were not dominated by sectarian influence. Mann believed that social conditions played a large role in the shaping of individuals, and that all children, including those on the frontier and in the inner-city, should have an adequate education. Mann’s conception for the common school came with a worldview that embodied republican ideals, and Mann thought that this worldview was best for all (Gutek, 1997). Mann believed that the function of society depended on a “literate, diligent, productive, and responsible” (Gutek, 1997, p.207) citizenry. In order for these necessary components to come to fruition, Mann called for public schools that were “socially integrative” and “publically supported and governed” (Gutek, 1997, p. 208.) During the time of Mann’s activity, almost every state adopted some sort of public school system. Yet, these schools operated under a governing structure of local control, which is still visible in schools with local school boards today.

The 20th century brought with it new challenges as more and more children began to attend school. After World War One, urban populations swelled, and vocational education and secondary education became normal parts of the American landscape. By 1930, every state had some sort of compulsory education law, leading to increased control of schools by cities, states, and eventually more control from the federal government (Gutek, 1997).

Federal Involvement in Education

The founders saw to it that a great deal of land was set aside for the use of schools and education in the Northwest Territory (Jenkins-Jefferson & Hill, 2011), and this continued for institutions of higher learning with land grants in the nineteenth century. In 1865 after the Civil War, the Federal Department of Education was created, yet this was not a cabinet level position and had the purpose of assessing the national needs for education in the wake of the war (Kaufman, 1972). On February 23, 1917, while the United States was overseas fighting in World War One, the Smith-Hughes Act was passed. This federal legislation directly involved the United States government in the realm of secondary school curriculum and appropriated funding for vocational education (Kaufman, 1972). The United States had seen a huge shift in technology, and skilled jobs were becoming more in demand; thus, this legislation sought to provide the necessary training of men when they returned from war. Additionally this legislation provided funding to states to provide agricultural and home-economics programs (Kaufman, 1972).

The federal role of government picked up steam in the second part of the twentieth century, and much of this was through a few key pieces of legislation, including in chronological order: The National Defense Education Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Jenkins-Jefferson & Hill, 2011). These laws drastically changed the role of the federal government in education and culminated with the creation of the Department of Education as a cabinet-level position in 1980. Also, The Federal court system made several key rulings based on the “Equal Protection Clause” of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. This included supreme court cases *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (I) and *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (2), which quickened the process of integrating public schools (Board (2), n.d.).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was a piece of landmark legislation passed during the presidential administration of Lyndon Johnson. This law decidedly changed the role of the federal government in the world of K-12 education (Conlan, 1981). ESEA doubled the amount of Federal expenditures for K-12 education, worked to change the relationship between states and the central government in the education arena, called for equal treatment of students no matter where students reside, and also attempted to improve reading and math competency for children situated in poverty. Johnson appointed John W. Gardner to form the Gardner Commission, which sought to

find innovative ways to improve education in the United States and eventually became part of Johnson's broader War on Poverty (Thomas & Brady, 2005). ESEA was passed with the intention of bridging a clear gap between children in poverty and those from privilege.

Title I of ESEA is the provision of the bill that directly addressed poverty and is still referenced every day in the world of K-12 education. Johnson came from rural South Texas where poverty was prevalent, and his first job after graduating from Southwest Texas State Teachers College was teaching in a one-room school house. In 1965, Johnson signed the ESEA in the very one-room school house where he began his career (Conlan 1981). Conlan (1981) argued that the ESEA not only changed the way the role of the federal government is viewed in K-12 education policy, but also moved the locus of control from the Congress or legislative branch of the government to that of the executive, found in the office of the President. The election of 1964 created a perfect alignment of political power to give the Johnson Administration the congressional votes needed to make this change.

ESEA Today

ESEA is still the law of the United States over 50 years after it was signed into law. However, the law has required periodic re-authorization. This has led to significant changes of the law in certain instances, the most famous being NCLB. NCLB is actually a version of re-authorization of ESEA, and in many ways had the same purpose of focusing on math and reading skills with students in low-income communities. However, NCLB takes the idea of accountability to another level by requiring what is called adequate yearly progress. This progress measured the reading and math skills of every student in the Nation based on standardized tests chosen by each state. NCLB set a goal of 100% proficiency in reading and math by 2014. This goal, of course, was not attained. Under the administration of President Obama, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan implemented a block grant plan that challenged schools to implement student growth measurements and gave money to individual states based on the willingness to comply to a set of accountability measures and perceived educational innovations. This resulted in nationwide changes in the way teachers are evaluated, and placed even more emphasis on test results.

In 2016, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law. This was the latest reauthorization of ESEA, and it returned some federal power over education back to states but maintained some federal authority (Sharp, 2016). One of the main changes brought about by the Every Student Succeeds Act, is that it allows states to use stan-

standardized testing data in any way they see fit. Prior to this, data had to be recorded and sent to the federal government and governmental guidelines were used to evaluate state performance—which could ultimately lead to funding differences.

Conclusion

Virtue is the key to the happy life, according to Aristotle. From an Aristotelian perspective, there is no separation between the world of the private and the public. Virtue is no different at home than it is in the public square. Virtue is learned and takes place by habitual practice and cannot be directly inculcated into a person through direct instruction. If this is the case, then local control of education that takes place amongst members within a polis, is the best way to transmit this virtue to ensure a happy life as each community can demonstrate principles of friendship to their young.

The problem with leaving complete control of education to local communities or even individual states is that a nation the size of the United States will likely not share common ideals and political consensus for citizenship throughout its broad territorial expanse (Gutmann, 1987). This is also a problem when considering communities that defy geography and find existence on the internet or in other spheres. Federalism seems to bridge the gap in many ways to ensure that there is a balance between the national, state, and local governments, or in other words, for all living in the United States. The balance between these three is not easy to find. When local school boards or states enable inequalities to occur within their school systems, the federal government has stepped in to ensure part of the American national ideal of equality is maintained. In addition to the balance that comes from shared federal and state powers, professional teachers must also have some autonomy to ensure that every child learns and understands concepts with which some might not agree. This autonomy prevents ossification of the profession, and balances out assumed ownership of children by some (Gutmann, 1987). The great difficulty in the sphere of education policy is finding a common democratic voice to agree with the ideals, goals, and objectives of education in the United States.

Since the 1980s, a growing trend in the field of K-12 education has been the growth of school choice, voucher programs, and charter schools. Every state has its own policy regarding these issues, but during the presidential campaign of 2016, President Trump campaigned that his administration would provide 20 billion dollars in federal aid to allow students to choose a school of their choice (Sullivan & Brown, 2016).

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has dedicated her professional career to the cause of school choice (Strauss, 2016). DeVos has also called for the Department of Education to be abolished and said, “It would be fine with me to have myself worked out of a job” (Camera, 2017). Local control is a popular term used by many when arguing in favor of more state and locally controlled education. This seems to be the trend as this debate has become revived with the ascension of Trump to the presidency and the solid congressional control by the Republican Party. One area where the issue of school choice has become divided along partisan lines is centered around profit (Barnum, 2017). In most states, charter schools and private schools are required to be non-profit, but in some states, there has been a proliferation of for-profit schools, with many being fully online virtual charter schools. Political scientist Jeffrey Henig argues that this is the center of the partisan divide, and with the election of Trump and the selection of DeVos as Education Secretary, the issue has become front and center, breathing new life into the camp of those that support for-profit schooling (Barnum, 2017). This can and will be the large issue that is debated in the Trump era, begging the question: Can market-based economics be applied to schooling? The Trump administration has proposed giving vouchers paid for partly by the federal government to individual families, and these individuals can elect to send their children to schools that are for-profit.

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Book Review
Student Mobility:
Creating an Environment for Social and Academic Success
by Jane Stavem

Reviewed by David L. Goss
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Jane Stavem defines student mobility as “...movement in or out of a given school during the course of a school year” (p. 11) for reasons beyond grade placement or advancement. Stavem spends the first few chapters reviewing student mobility and its impact on public schools in the United States. She spends the middle chapters discussing what she refers to as the “ins and outs” of different points of consideration for schools, teachers, and administrators when working with mobile students. Another chapter draws on the experiences of four administrators who work in districts ranging from rural to urban. She provides a list of essential questions based on each chapter, scenarios for group discussions, and a “Mobility Action Plan Framework” to wrap up her book.

Stavem is the associate superintendent of instruction for the Lincoln Public Schools system in Nebraska. This is a district that, in 2015, had nearly 40,000 students. She’s currently serving as an Advisory Board Member for Lied Center for the Performing Arts, Board of Directors for the Junior of Achievement of Lincoln, and Member Board of Directors for Educare of Lincoln. Previously, she was the Superintendent of Schools for Blaire Community Schools, a rural district in Nebraska. She also served as a principal and Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Columbus Public Schools in Nebraska.

Stavem (2014) suggests that “the problem [of student mobility] has not been on our educational radar...[because] the epidemic has been growing silently but steadily and it is only beginning to reach the critical mass required to capture the attention of national policy makers” (p. 63).

I recently taught in a school in Austin ISD that had a 24% mobility rate with 656 students. This meant 160 students did not start or stay in the same school over the course of one year. The issue of student mobility has definitely reached “critical mass” in many high needs schools in the Austin area.

However expanding, pervasive, and critical this issue may be, it seems that it is avoided by many because of the seemingly untouchable nature of the issue. Stavem (2014) articulates the purpose of her book when she states, “Knowing we have little control over the endless revolving door for students who come and go from school to school...we have to begin focusing on the things we can control. What can be controlled are the processes schools use to manage student mobility over time, to provide consistency and quality of services to students and families... schools can support the movement with solid systems that are followed with fidelity.” (p. 2).

Many educators may circumvent this critical issue because of its roots in students’ home lives. However, Stavem (2014) gives the reader hope that the effects of student mobility can be minimized and quality of education for all can be improved through systematic conversations, strategies, and practices.

The primary focus of her book is providing district and campus administrators, as well as classroom teachers, with a toolbox of systems, processes, and strategies that minimize the deleterious impact of high student mobility, both for the mobile student and the teachers of mobile students. This book does fall short in providing statistical information or data on the topic of student mobility. However, it does contain a bevy of points to consider, practices to implement, systems to promote, and strategies to perfect for those affected by student mobility. This is a practical-application book best read by practicing educators looking for guidance with this increasingly problematic issue.

Stavem recognizes that high student mobility takes its toll on a student’s social, emotional, and academic performance. She also emphasizes the counterproductive nature of our public school culture of high-stakes testing and “high accountability” and no flexibility granted for issues outside of the control of schools or districts (e.g., student mobility). Regardless, she still provides several avenues of improvement. Topics include issues with student mobility as they relate to enrollment, academic placement, student placement, classroom connections, family connections, unique needs of mobile students, community connections, and exit transitions.

The strength of this book is in its practical application. A group of concerned educators could use this book as a guiding document to create

a comprehensive plan to decrease the negative impact of student mobility in their classrooms and schools. Appendix A: Questions by Chapter provides great discussion points to start dialogue focusing on student mobility. For example, Question 14, “Are staff members culturally proficient when a variety of cultures are represented in the community?” This type of question will inevitably open the door for discussions of cultural proficiency and potential learning required for existing staff. There are 10 or more questions for each of the 12 chapters in the book. These would be great discussion prompts for stakeholders interested in the impact student mobility has on students, classrooms, and communities. Appendix C: Mobility Action Plan Framework could also be a powerful tool for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for tackling student mobility.

This book is not for someone interested in the etiology of student mobility. This book is not for those interested in further investigating the data, causes, or correlating variables surrounding student mobility. This book is arguably designed for school practitioners interested in a practical field guide to improve issues caused by high student mobility.

Administrators would do well to use this as a step-by-step guide to help lead faculty and staff toward establishing stronger and more effective practices in accepting and relinquishing students outside of normal circumstances. Stavem (2014) leaves no stone unturned toward this end. However, another book might be more suitable for those of us who wish to dig a little deeper into the data, statistics, or causes of student mobility and peripheral issues. I do admire Stavem for bringing the issue to the forefront by providing this ground-zero manual.

Reviewed Book

Stavem, J. (2014). *Student mobility: Creating an environment for social and academic success*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

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