

# A Measure of the Quality of Educational Leadership Programs for Social Justice: Integrating LGBTIQ Identities Into Principal Preparation

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate how aspiring principals in the United States are prepared for social justice leadership, by focusing particular attention on equitable leadership for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) persons as a measure of the preparation program's commitment to social justice. **Research Method:** The research design involved a cross-sectional survey instrument completed by 218 full-time faculty teaching in 53 different University Council for Educational Administration university principal preparation programs. We performed descriptive analysis of Likert-type scale responses with cross-tabulation of selected survey questions and constant comparative analysis of open-ended questions. The descriptive analysis provides a one-moment-in-time snapshot of the perceptions of particular education leadership faculty. As such, the data are illustrative of certain patterns evident across the

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national sample rather than definitive of these programs. **Findings:** Findings indicate that LGBTIQ identities and themes are only marginally integrated into U.S. principal preparation programs, inclusive of those identified as social justice programs. Social justice programs that do address LGBTIQ identities frequently depend on one faculty member or course to do so, rather than being integrated throughout the program. **Implications for Research and Practice:** Strategies are clearly needed for integrating LGBTIQ equitable leadership into U.S. principal preparation. More fundamentally, the study challenges the manner in which social justice discourses are constructed. It suggests that the quality of social justice preparation is appropriately measured, in part, and enhanced by the form of communal engagement with identities and experiences marginal within the social justice discourse itself.

### Keywords

principal preparation, leadership for social justice, LGBTIQ, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender, public pedagogy

Public schools remain contested sites of social struggle. To engage this struggle in a manner that benefits all learners, scholars have advocated for social justice leadership (Furman, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Hernandez & McKenzie, 2010; Marshall & Oliva, 2010; Theoharis, 2007), which, in turn, has generated additional research and theorizing on preparing school leaders to practice this social justice work (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009; Karpinski & Lugg, 2006; Pounder, Reitzug & Young, 2002). The literature on the preparation of social justice leaders joins the ground setting scholarship on school leader preparation (Lumby, Crow, & Pashiardis, 2008; Young, Crow, Murphy, & Ogawa, 2009). In this general educational leader preparation literature, recent research has evaluated the efficacy of leadership preparation programs. To date, this leadership preparation program evaluation literature has not explicitly addressed the preparation of principals for social justice. Informed by this context, the purpose of this study was to investigate how aspiring principals in the United States are prepared for social justice leadership by focusing particular attention on equitable leadership for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer/questioning (LGBTIQ) persons as a measure of the preparation program's commitment to social justice.

One of the perspectives that structured our formulation of this research problem is that because social justice is defined by its concerns with margins (Furman, 2012), a principal preparation program's social justice commitment

might be measured by the extent to which the program addresses identities that are minimally represented within the social justice research literature in the field of educational leadership. As detailed in the literature review discussed in the next section, we found that the LGBTIQ experience is nearly absent from the literature on leadership preparation and, at best, peripheral within the social justice leadership preparation literature. Furthermore, no empirical data exist prior to this study on how principal preparation programs across the United States educate aspiring school leaders to respond to the unique, documented issues and circumstances encountered by LGBTIQ students, staff, and families. In a type of poststructural analytical move, rather than focus on individual identities, we seek to find meaning across differences (Miller, 2005; St. Pierre, 2000). Thus, our investigation begins by fracturing the center of the social justice discourse that typically focuses on questions of race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. As such, in this study we distinguish between principal preparation programs that actively advance a more complicated articulation of social justice across multiple expressions of difference from those that rely on the typical canonical themes evident within the social justice discourse (e.g., social class, and race/ethnicity).

In addition to sexual and gender identity, as we discuss later in the article, the literature on leadership preparation for social justice also often ignores (dis)ability and religious/belief identities as well. Thus, sexual and gender identity is just one peripheral identity category that can serve as a measure for a leadership preparation program's espoused commitment to social justice with the actual practice of the program. This study does not attempt to position particular identities such as LGBTIQ, (dis)ability, or belief as central to social justice leadership but rather attempts to understand such leadership as integrative of multiple identities. We do not position differences as a hierarchy but seek equity across all manifestations of difference, and recognize that persons embody multiple intersecting identities across race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, ability, belief, language, culture, sexuality, gender identity, and more (Lugg, 2003b). At the same time, we assert that the peripheral positioning of particular marginalized and historically underserved populations within educational leadership research and practice focused on social justice, such as LGBTIQ persons, means something and significantly compromises social justice investments.

The study's primary research question investigates what the integration of leadership dispositions, knowledge, and skills related to equity for LGBTIQ persons into principal preparation programs reveals about the social justice commitment of the program. The primary data collection method was an online survey administered to all full-time faculty associated with university-based principal preparation programs at University Council for Educational

Administration (UCEA) member institutions and results are presented here through descriptive analysis. UCEA is a consortium of 95 higher education institutions committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of schools and children (UCEA, 2013). Representing approximately 17% of all university leadership preparation programs in the country (M. D. Young, personal communication, September 13, 2013), these institutions offer a master's or doctoral program in educational leadership/administration, and leadership preparation anchors their research, teaching, and service.

The survey addresses both social justice as a whole and LGBTIQ topics specifically, allowing comparison of the two. Following from the absence of empirical data illuminating how LGBTIQ topics are incorporated into principal preparation at the national level, this study represents an agenda-setting investigation that seeks as a first step to document what professors report is happening in their programs. As a self-reported survey, the data likely present the most optimal portrait of the program possible while establishing a necessary baseline description to inform further and more specific investigations. The project has generated the first comprehensive national data set that compares programs oriented toward social justice and those that are not, described how principal preparation programs at higher education research institutions prepare school administrators for LGBTIQ equitable leadership, and demonstrated a need for further study.

## Literature Review

To situate this study and to identify gaps in the related literature that this present study addresses, we reviewed two literature strands: (a) social justice in the leadership preparation literature and (b) LGBTIQ identity in education and educational leadership, excluding teacher leadership literature in both strands. Our focus is primarily on principal and administrator leadership. Within each strand, we discuss the current research and limitations and gaps in this research.

### *Social Justice in the Educational Leadership Preparation Literature*

The literature on educational leadership preparation can be categorized into two domains: the preparation of educational leaders in general (e.g., the preparation of principals, superintendents), in which we searched for the extent to which social justice and sexual/gender identity are addressed in this literature, and literature specifically focused on preparing leaders for social

justice. The second domain includes literature that addresses the integration of specific identities into educational leadership preparation.

*Educational leadership preparation in general.* The general educational leadership preparation literature captures nearly all the literature on leadership preparation with several recent and extensive handbooks (Lumby et al., 2008; Tillman & Scheurich, 2013; Young et al., 2009), books (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007; Hoyle & Torres, 2010), and an entire research journal (*Journal of Research on Leadership Education*). Within this literature, scholars have identified 12 different research strands: program design, curriculum, pedagogy, program evaluation, faculty, context, theory design, clinical experiences, students, student assessment, professional development, and mentoring, coaching, and induction (Kottkamp & Rusch, 2009). Some of these research strands have received more research attention than others. For example, research on faculty in educational leadership has benefited from a study and follow-up study every decade on the topic (Hackman & McCarthy, 2011). Program evaluation is another strand that has received increased attention in recent years (see special issue of *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 47, Issue 1, 2011). We argue that preparing leaders for social justice and concomitantly integrating LGBTIQ identity in leadership preparation is relevant across all 12 of the identified research strands, and discuss this further later in the article.

In the general literature on educational leadership preparation, social justice and equity are not central and sexual identity is hardly addressed at all. For example, in Hoyle and Torres's (2010) practical book on preparing educational leaders, social justice and equity are mentioned related to the need to prepare leaders for changing demographics. When discussing curriculum suggestions based on ISLCC standards, the authors related one of the standards to social justice and several social justice readings are suggested. But equity and social justice are not central throughout their six steps for preparing educational leaders (e.g., in admissions, hiring of faculty, curriculum, etc.), and sexual identity is not mentioned at all. Related, attention to social justice, equity, and LGBTIQ identities is similarly lacking in the latest and most comprehensive handbook on preparing educational leaders (Young et al., 2009). LGBTIQ identity is mentioned in only 4 of the 15 chapters of the handbook either as included in a list of diversity or mentioned because of the lack of attention to LGBTIQ identity in leader preparation.

*Leadership preparation focused on social justice.* The second domain of research specifically focused on educational leadership preparation for social justice encompasses seven different categories: (a) general essays on leadership

preparation for social justice (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Jean-Marie et al., 2009; Johnson & Uline, 2005; Karpinski & Lugg, 2006; Pounder et al., 2002; Scheurich & Laible, 1995; Stevenson & Doolittle, 2003); (b) articles that propose frameworks for leadership preparation for social justice (Capper, Theoharis, & Sebastian, 2006; Furman, 2012; McKenzie et al., 2008); (c) research on related programs in the social sciences that focus on social justice and their implications for educational leadership programs (McKinney & Capper, 2010; Rodriguez, Chambers, Gonzalez, & Scheurich, 2010); (d) research that focuses on the efforts of particular university programs in preparing leaders for social justice, profiling the programs and discussing the strengths and areas for growth of the programs (Hernandez & McKenzie, 2010; McClellan & Dominguez, 2006); (e) evaluations of particular leadership preparation programs oriented toward social justice that are internal and autoethnographic (Gerstl-Pepin, Killeen, & Hasazi, 2006; McClellan & Dominguez, 2006), are external (Hoff, Yoder, & Hoff, 2006), or include practitioner perspectives of the effectiveness of their leadership preparation (McHatton, Boyer, Shaunessy, Terry, & Farmer, 2010); (f) articles that address curriculum or pedagogical frameworks for preparing leaders for social justice (Brown, 2004); and (g) research that addresses the lack of, or proposals for, integrating a specific identity into leadership preparation such as gender (Rusch, 2004; Young, Mountford, & Skrla, 2006), ability (Crockett, 2002; McHatton et al., 2010; Sirotnik & Kimball, 1994), social class (Lyman & Villani, 2002), or race (Boske, 2010; Evans, 2007; Gooden & Dantler, 2012; Hawley & James, 2010; G. R. López, 2003; Murtadha & Watts, 2005; Parker & Shapiro, 1992; Tillman, 2004; Young & Laible, 2000).

Across these strands of research on leadership preparation for social justice, we found that in one article, LGBTIQ identity was addressed in a list of identities (e.g., race, ability, social class, language, sexual orientation) and addressed via a paragraph of its importance as a social issue along with race and other social issues (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005). Yet, in nearly all the articles on leadership for social justice, and in research on one aspect of identity such as race, gender, or social class, sexual identity is not mentioned at all.

Within the field, an entire issue of the *Journal of Educational Administration* (2006, Vol. 44, Issue 3), and two issues of the *Journal of Research on Leadership Education* (June 2009, Vol. 4, Issue 1; May 2010, Vol. 5, Issue 3) were devoted to preparing leaders for social justice. None of the educational leadership programs profiled across the three special issues specifically addressed LGBTIQ identities. Within these special issues, LGBTIQ identities was infrequently included in the list of identities addressed in the article and in most articles was not listed at all, even though nearly all authors of the

articles are recognized for their work on social justice–related topics. For example, Blackmore (2009)—an expert on gender and feminist perspectives of educational leadership—suggests, “Understanding of, sensitivity to, and a capacity for two way learning about issues of class, gender, race, culture and religion become the cornerstone of leadership for social justice” (p. 6)—with no mention of sexual identity as part of the social justice cornerstone. One exception occurred in the lead article of one special issue, by Jean-Marie et al. (2009). These authors include sexual orientation throughout the article when listing identities and also review work by Young and López (2005) that draws on queer theory, critical race theory, and feminist poststructural theories. In the second special issue (2010), sexual orientation is usually included when marginalized identities are mentioned, but otherwise, sexual orientation, if mentioned at all, is peripheral in the articles.

In the development of a framework for preparing leaders for social justice, Capper, Theoharis, and Sebastian (2006) reviewed 72 articles related to leadership for social justice. They learned that in this literature, race/ethnicity received the most attention, with social class receiving the second-most attention. The authors found that suggestions for leadership preparation for social justice were generic across identities (e.g., addressing stereotyping and oppression). No studies suggested leadership preparation implications for students with disabilities or related to sexual identity. To sum up, across these research streams on preparing leaders for social justice, only 1 article has proposed ways to integrate LGBTIQ identities into leadership preparation curriculum (Capper et al., 2006). However, no studies have addressed how and to what extent LGBTIQ identities are integrated into principal preparation programs.

### *LGBTIQ Identities in Education and Educational Leadership*

Two of the most significant empirical studies for understanding LGBTIQ youths’ current experience in PK-12 schools are GLSEN’s 2011 *National School Climate Survey* (Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen, & Palmer, 2012) and Robinson and Espelage’s (2011, 2012) analysis of educational inequities related to LGBTQ identification among middle school and secondary school students. The GLSEN report is the most recent iteration of a biennial project that surveys LGBT youth across the United States age 13 or older who attended a PK-12 school in the current academic year, identifying participants through community-based organizations serving LGBT youth and through recruitment for a web-based survey. The GLSEN report indicates that a significant number of LGBT youth experience a hostile environment at school and that these experiences are related to increased absenteeism, lower

academic achievement, and lesser educational aspirations (Kosciw et al., 2012). Specifically, respondents indicate that they have experienced the following at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation: verbal harassment (81.9%), physical harassment (38.3%), and physical assault (18.3%). Respondents also report the following experiences at school in the past year because of their gender expression: verbal harassment (63.9%), physical harassment (27.1%), and physical assault (12.4%). The majority of LGBT students who experienced harassment or assault at school (60.4%) did not report the incident to school officials based on the belief that no positive action would be taken. Over one third of the students who did report such harassment or assault to school staff indicate that no action was taken.

This hostile context is not unknown to school principals, with only one third of secondary school principals surveyed reporting that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth feel very safe at their school and one quarter of those principals reporting that transgender youth feel very safe at their school (GLSEN & Harris Interactive, 2008). In comparison, three quarters of these principals report that students identifying as a member of a racial or ethnic minority feel very safe at the school. The documented and patterned effects of negative environments on LGBTIQ youth are varied and troubling. Himmelstein and Brückner (2010), for example, found that queer youth “suffer disproportionate educational and criminal-justice punishments that are not explained by greater engagement in illegal or transgressive behaviors” (p. 49). In major U.S. urban centers, up to half of homeless youth may identify as LGBT (Wardenski, 2005). LGBTIQ youth of color often encounter twinned dynamics of homophobia and racism (Holmes & Cahill, 2003).

Robinson and Espelage (2011) analyzed data from the 2008-2009 Dane County Youth Assessment, administered to 13,213 middle and secondary school students across 30 schools in Dane County, Wisconsin. Findings indicate that LGBTQ youth were more likely than their heterosexual peers to have considered suicide in the past 30 days, to have attempted suicide in the preceding year, to have been victims of cyber-bullying, to have experienced victimization, to have lower levels of school-belongingness, and to have greater unexcused absences from school. Although documenting the elevated risk experienced by a disproportionate number of LGBTQ youth in comparison to heterosexual-identified youth, the study provides an equally compelling though lesser emphasized insight with the finding that “the majority of LGBTQ-identified youth are not at risk” (p. 325). Viewed through Sedgwick’s (1990) concern with heterosexuality as a compulsory and dominant mode of social organization and through Warner’s (1993) critique of heteronormativity (understood as the assumption that humanity and heterosexuality are synonymous), these twinned findings of disproportionate elevated risk among LGBTQ youth



and well-being among the majority of LGBTQ youth argue for strategies that identify and reconfigure the environmental conditions that marginalize LGBTQ youth. In other words, the risk factors experienced by a significant number of LGBTQ youth are not intrinsic to their sexual identity and gender expression but rather are a function of a negative climate and interpersonal experiences such as those documented by Kosciw et al. (2012). Furthermore, the documentation of extensive resiliency and self-advocacy among many LGBTIQ youth cautions against victimization narratives that obscure their individual and collective agency (Holmes & Cahill, 2003; Talburt, 2004). Within this context, principals have a unique opportunity and responsibility to lead school communities in developing inclusive school climates that mitigate the documented risks and suffering endured by many LGBTQ youth within and beyond the school campus (Koschoreck, 2003; Lugg, 2003a).

LGBTIQ-inclusive school environments and supportive educators are factors known to facilitate educational success for LGBTIQ youth in PK-12 schools (Murdock & Bolch, 2005; Russell, Seif, & Truong, 2001). Sustainable inclusive environments are most efficaciously and responsibly constructed through systematic school improvement planning, in contrast to leaving their emergence to chance or fragmented interventions. Koschoreck and Slattery (2010) present an integrated model for interrupting heteronormativity in schools and advancing LGBTIQ inclusion that addresses four domains at the systems level: supportive student organizations, policy, curriculum, and professional development. The educational research base provides evidence that positive intervention in each of these domains is constitutive of constructing an LGBTIQ-inclusive environment that advances youths' academic and personal well-being. Evidence-based strategies in these domains are reviewed here, though for a more comprehensive discussion that is informed by queer theory see O'Malley (2013). LGBTIQ youth attending schools with a Gay–Straight Alliance (GSA), an example of a student-supportive organization, report lower rates of suicidality, threats and injury at school, dating violence, and anxiety-induced school absence and a general decrease in victimizing experiences (Goodenow, Szalacha, & Westheimer, 2006). In addition, GSAs positively influence LGBTIQ youths' academic performance, belonging to a school community, and sense of physical safety at school (Lee, 2002) and provide an educative opportunity for the larger school community to reflect on assumptions about LGBTIQ persons (Macgillivray, 2005).

Protective school policies, intended to provide a minimally safe environment, are indicated to proscribe homo- and transphobic slurs and actions and be constructed within an educative rather than punitive framework (Goodman, 2005). Inclusive policies oriented toward an equitable environment are also warranted, and might focus on concerns such as the rights of same-sex students

to attend a school dance together, transgendered students' access to athletic teams, intersex and transgendered students' convenient and nonmarginalized access to gender free bathrooms, or LGBTIQ students' rights to equal self-expression in the classroom (O'Malley, 2013). Curriculum initiatives are indicated that incorporate direct representation of LGBTIQ persons' experience, history, and cultural knowledge in teaching and learning experiences (Loutzenheiser & MacIntosh, 2004; Mayo, 2007; Sears, 1993) as well as in curriculum resources such as textbooks, curriculum guides, and school library collections (Letts & Sears, 1999; Sanelli & Perreault, 2001). Curriculum initiatives in this area are complex in that strategies are also needed for educator preparation (Counternormativity Discourse Group, 2005) and educator preparation texts (Macgillivray & Jennings, 2008). An absence of LGBTIQ persons and topics from the PK-12 curriculum is of particular import for principal preparation, in that such absence is observed to enable neglect of LGBTIQ youth by school administrators (Anderson, 1997). Finally, professional development on sexual diversity is associated with an improved school climate for LGBTIQ youth as well as staff and families (Szalacha, 2003). O'Malley (2013) takes up notions of intersectionality (Kumashiro, 2002; Lugg, 2008) in arguing that the most viable strategy for achieving meaningful professional development in relation to gender and sexual diversity is to integrate these within campus- and district-level comprehensive plans in order to build capacity for culturally proficient education (Gay, 2000; Guerra & Nelson, 2009).

In sum, our review of the literature reveals the gap between the educational experiences of LGBTIQ youth and the critical role of the principal in that work and the lack of attention to LGBTIQ youth, staff, and families in the literature on leadership preparation. Most notable in our review is the near absence of acknowledging LGBTIQ identity in the social justice leadership preparation literature. Our study addresses this gap, with implications for principal preparation programs.

## **Conceptual Framework: Educational Leadership for Social Justice as a Communitarian Public Pedagogy**

This study is grounded in a conceptual framework of educational leadership for social justice that equates PK-12 school leadership with both critique and activism for equity (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Furman, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; McKenzie et al., 2008). It is inclusive of distinct gender expressions and sexual identities (Beachum & McCray, 2010). The critique inherent in such leadership practice is a careful and intensive intellectual labor

that takes educational inequity as its analytical priority, addressing ways that educational policy and practice reveal, mask, and structure inequity. This critique problematizes deficit perspectives that assign responsibility for patterned educational inequity to students and their communities (Guerra & Nelson, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999). Instead, educational inequity is understood to more frequently result from “systemic organizational practices and policies . . . endemic to schools and administrator practice” (Marshall & Oliva, 2010, p. 7). The various arrangements that constitute school systems are themselves productive, calling for a form of scholar-practitioner leadership that interrogates them for opportunities to create equitable school communities. Though interrelationships across health care, employment, housing, and other sectors as well as certain modes of cultural production also structure inequity, in this study, we frame school leaders as actors who participate in the reconfiguration of inequitable educational systems (Anyon, 2005). The persistent nature of inequity and the various investments that sustain it point to the necessity of imbuing such critique with a language of possibility. This language of possibility can be reflected in Greene’s (1995) notion of the social imagination as “the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society, on the streets where we live, in our schools” (p. 5). Educational leadership for social justice is, in part, an act of imagination.

Including but extending beyond critique, equitable leadership also involves “intentional action to make radical, fundamental changes in societal structures, including schools” (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005, p. 203; Furman, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; McKenzie et al., 2008). Theoharis (2007) identifies leadership for social justice with advocacy that enacts resistance “against historic marginalization of particular populations” (p. 248). Such action is facilitated by a reflective consciousness grounded in the principles of social justice as well as a corresponding knowledge and skills base (McKenzie et al., 2008). Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005) forward Giroux’s (1997) notion of the public intellectual to frame social justice school leaders as both cultural critics and activists who “work to change institutional structures and culture” (p. 202). Anyon (2005) and Marshall and Oliva (2010) call for social movements centered in education and oriented toward economic and educational change through leveraging cultural and political capital. As such, in this study, we pair critique of principal preparation programs, especially those who claim to be social justice focused, with practical suggestions for action that can be taken in these programs to ameliorate the social justice contradictions we identified in these programs.

In addition to critique and activism, our conceptual framework also draws from the literature on public pedagogy that provides the necessary conceptual focus to shift our field away from notions of the social justice leader as a

solitary or uniquely heroic figure advocating for particular marginalized groups more so than others within schools (Brady, 2006; Burdick, Sandlin, & O'Malley, 2014; Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011; Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010). Instead, we apply feminist conceptions of public pedagogy to social justice leadership (Brady, 2006; Dentith, O'Malley, & Brady, 2014). In so doing, we recast the social justice leader as individuals and collectives who lead by collaboratively facilitating alliances across differences in multiple educational spaces within and beyond the school as part of a larger movement toward social justice ends.

Public pedagogy is a theoretical construct with a complex history in educational research, carrying multiple meanings and layered within distinct conceptual trajectories. In general, public pedagogy refers to education and learning that occurs beyond formal schooling. A review of 420 scholarly publications addressing public pedagogy categorized this research base according to five categories: citizenship, popular culture and everyday life, informal institutions and public spaces, dominant cultural discourses, and public intellectualism and social activism (Sandlin et al., 2011). The figure of the public intellectual occupies a prominent position in articulations of public pedagogy, with one strand of scholarship identifying public intellectuals as "academics or other individuals in positions of cultural or economic power, with the capacity to translate social issues for a public audience and the public good" (Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 354). While this line of thinking (Giroux, 1997; Giroux, 2004; Jenlink, 2005; Said, 1994) resonates with Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy's (2005) expression of the school leader as public intellectual, we argue for a communitarian and grassroots understanding of public intellectualism grounded in feminist theorizing as more suitable for informing educational leadership for social justice and the preparation of such leaders (Brady, 2006; O'Malley & Roseboro, 2010; Sandlin et al., 2011).

Brady (2006) defines public pedagogy as "a critical public engagement that challenges existing social practices and hegemonic forms of discrimination" (p. 58). Working within a feminist politics of ethics, Dentith and Brady (1998, 1999) explore public pedagogy as a grassroots and communal phenomenon situated within and beyond institutional structures that foster movement from social inequality to informed activism. This activism pursues concrete advances in neighborhoods, health and social services, education, and other forms of basic human rights. Public intellectualism in this feminist conceptualization is less an individualistic or a hierarchical enterprise and more a matter of a collective "range of activist individuals and community groups that are providing a democratic vision to challenge inequality in both public and private institutions and everyday practices" (Brady, 2006, p. 58). This intellectualism "is an activism embedded in collective action, not only

situated in institutionalized structures, but in multiple spaces, including grassroots organizations, neighborhood projects, art collectives, and town meetings—spaces that provide a site for compassion, outrage, humor, and action” (p. 58). As such, it focuses on the complicated strategy of organizing primarily by alliances across difference rather than by identity. This feminist perspective on public intellectualism provides the needed framework to prioritize educational leadership for social justice as an inherently communitarian project (Dentith et al., 2014).

Informed by feminist public pedagogy and recognizing that individual contributions to achieving equity are of great consequence, leadership capable of the critique and activism called for by Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005) requires conceptualizing leaders-in-relation. Such leadership requires collective agency and intentional coalitions that build capacity among communities of difference, deliberatively organized as communities of difference. At its core, social justice is “social” not only in the ends of equitable opportunity and resources across the society but also in the means of agency through which equity is achieved. Imagining leadership practice or preparation as the work of individuals in isolation, although likely congruent with many school administrators’ experience in late modernity, inscribes problematic limitations into the leadership for social justice project at its inception. In short, leadership that provides a democratic vision for schools and communities (Brady, 2006) is a public pedagogy and intellectualism facilitated by reimagining leadership preparation and practice as communal engagement.

Also problematic is conceptualizing leadership for social justice based on an identity politics that not only presumes cohesive unity for particular identities (e.g., race, social class) but also allows the leader to prioritize some identities and differences over others, engaging in leading along a hierarchy of oppression. Such leadership practices perpetuate marginalization and fail to recognize that an individual represents multiple identities. Thus, informed by public pedagogy while investigating preparation for equitable educational leadership for LGBTIQ persons, this research study does not prioritize sexual and gender identity differences over other forms of difference. Rather, it is contextualized within notions of intersectionality that pursue equity across all manifestations of difference (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Lugg, 2003b). The research is organized more around shared dissent from marginalization than by identity (Butler, 1990). In sum, the primary tenets of this study’s conceptual framework highlight leadership for social justice as a communitarian project in spaces within and outside of formal schooling integrating critique and activism as a form of public intellectualism. Such a project is communitarian in the manner in which it is engaged and in its orientation to alliances across difference, refusing to center any particular identity in fixed ways.

## Method

The study relied on a survey design (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Specifically, we constructed a web-based survey that we administered via an e-mailed hyperlink to all persons on UCEA's member list that includes 2,955 faculty, graduate students, and practitioners. At the time of this study, 82 universities were members of UCEA. Screening criteria selected full-time faculty of any rank who teach a minimum of one course per calendar year in their UCEA institution's principal preparation program. Thus, the sample excluded part-time faculty and educational leadership faculty who do not teach a course specifically in the principal preparation program. In addition, a significant number of persons on the UCEA faculty list self-reported as graduate students or faculty in other programs such as educational psychology or instructional technology, and were excluded from the sample. In total, 294 persons began the survey, 229 persons passed the initial screen for inclusion in the sample, and 218 faculty continued past the screen. The sample included respondents representing institutions in all U.S. Census Divisions with the greatest representation from the east north central part of the United States (24.0% from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin) and the west south central part of the United States (20.8% from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas). When asked their university affiliation (which was clearly stated as optional), 97 faculty or 44.3% of the respondents answered the question. Of these, at least 1 faculty member from 53 different universities responded to the survey, indicating participation in the survey from a minimum of 64.6% of UCEA institutions.

The demographics of the 188 respondents who indicated their gender included 54.3% female, 45.7% male, 0% transgender, 0.5% intersexual, and 0.5% other. For respondents who indicated their sexuality (177), 4.5% identified as lesbian, 4.5% as gay, 2.8% bisexual, 84.2% heterosexual, 2.8% queer, 0.6% asexual, and 2% other, and 2% checked multiple categories. In terms of race/ethnicity, of the 187 participants who responded to this question, 0.02% identified as American Indian Pacific Islander, 2% Asian, 10% African American, 10% Latino, 72% White, and 3% other, and 3% indicated multiple racial categories.

To address the research questions, we developed a cross-sectional survey instrument comprising 33 items and administered online via SurveyMonkey (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). We developed the survey questions from a thorough review of the literature related to educational leadership research on social justice leadership preparation and LGBTIQ issues in PK-12 schools, and guided by the conceptual framework. The survey design investigated the research questions through a Likert-type scale and open-ended responses. The survey consisted of six categories: (a) Preliminary, which

included consent, screening questions, and definitions; (b) Social Justice Context of the Program, which included the priorities of the principal preparation program and safe school practices taught in the program; (c) Respondent's Inclusion of LGBTIQ Themes in courses as well as strategies and resources used to integrate the topic in courses; (d) Program Effectiveness regarding LGBTIQ Topics; (e) Institutional Climate, including gender options on student and faculty records, LGBTIQ research agendas, "out" LGBTIQ faculty, and use of LGBTIQ scholarship; and (f) Respondent Demographics, including the influence of LGBTIQ inclusion on employment.

We piloted the survey over a period of 3 months with 15 professors of educational leadership from across the nation. These pilot faculty were inclusive of persons identifying as LGBTIQ and heterosexual, faculty who are and are not conducting research on LGBTIQ topics, faculty engaged in social justice research and those who were not, and racial and gender diversity. Specifically, we e-mailed the survey link to these professors requesting that they complete the survey. Based on what was convenient for the professor, we asked them to provide feedback about the survey either via e-mail back to the authors or via a phone interview with one of the authors. We interviewed 9 professors about the survey and 6 provided feedback via e-mail. In their survey review, professors responded to five questions: (a) How long did it take you to complete the survey? (b) Which questions if any were confusing and what would make the question more clear? (c) Which questions could be deleted? (d) Are there any questions that should be added? (e) Are there any other suggestions to make the survey stronger? We analyzed all the professor responses to these questions and revised the survey accordingly. We also analyzed the anonymous survey responses of the pilot professors and used these data to inform additional revisions to the survey.

We analyzed the data in four steps. We noted the descriptive data (e.g., frequencies and percentages across Likert-type scale responses) for each question. We then cross-tabulated responses to survey questions most relevant to our research questions. In the third step in the data analysis, we conducted a constant comparative analysis of all the open-ended responses to seek patterns of convergence and dissimilarity in professors' perspectives (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). As a final step, we then compared many of the open-ended responses back to specific Likert-type scale questions related to those responses as a better way to understand and analyze the participants' responses.

## **Findings and Discussion**

Addressing LGBTIQ identity in principal preparation is situated in the nested contexts of the state in which the principal preparation program resides, the

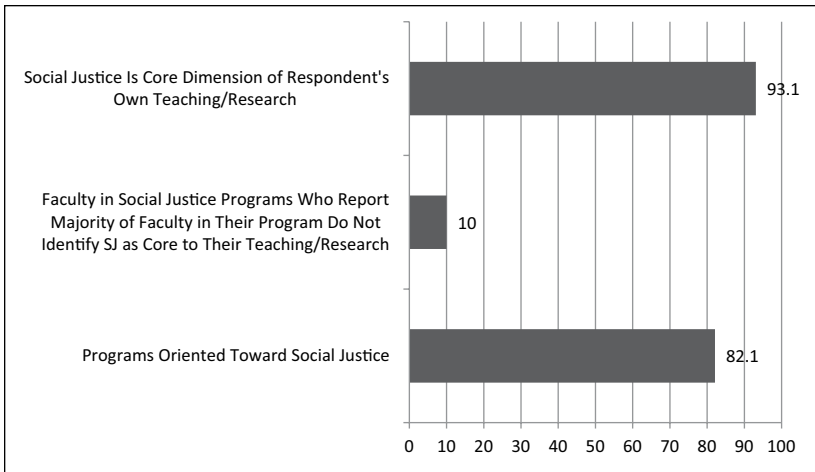
community, the university, the department, the principal program within the department, courses within the program, and individual faculty. The integration of LGBTIQ identities into principal preparation influences and is influenced by these layers of context. In our findings, we first describe to what extent the principal programs represented by the respondents were oriented toward social justice. We then juxtapose this determination against to what extent these social justice identified programs addressed race, culture, language, social class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and religion/belief in the preparation of principals. We follow this with reporting the findings across the contexts of the principal preparation program, the individual faculty, the university, and the community.

### *Identities Within Social Justice Programs and Non-Social Justice Programs*

The survey instrument investigated respondents' perceptions of LGBTIQ equity at two levels: the principal preparation program and the individual professor-respondent. For both levels (program and individual practice), the survey asked whether social justice is identified as a core dimension of principal preparation education, thus allowing disaggregation of survey data by degree of association with social justice. Social justice-based practice was identified in this analysis by combining "strongly agree" and "agree" responses, with 82.1% of respondents indicating social justice is a core dimension of their program and 93.1% indicating social justice is a core dimension of their individual teaching/research practice (see Figure 1). This response suggests either that social justice identification is nearly universal among UCEA-affiliated professors or that only social justice-identified professors responded to this survey highlighting LGBTIQ equity. One out of 10 respondents indicating that their program is social justice based also indicated that the majority of their program faculty do not identify social justice as a core dimension of their individual teaching/research. This raises a distinct question about how professors understand what constitutes a social justice program, if not the practice of the faculty.

Similarly, Lyman and Villani (2002) found more than a decade ago that the faculty person who completed their survey on the inclusion of poverty/social class in leadership preparation rated colleagues lower than himself/herself in regard to the topic. They reported, "68.5% of the respondents rate understanding poverty to be either "extremely" or "greatly important" to effective leadership of schools, yet they only perceive 37.3% of their faculty members to have similar views" (p. 261). Lyman and Villani speculated that perhaps department chairs have rated themselves higher because they had an overall

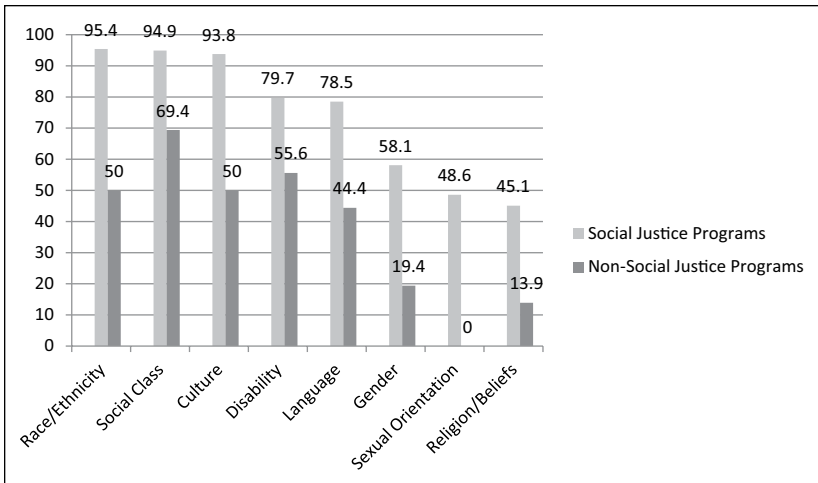




**Figure 1.** Percentage of social justice programs and faculty in those programs.

view of the department compared to faculty who may be focused on their own particular courses. If chairs passed the survey off to a faculty person in the department to complete, then that faculty person likely had a stronger interest in the topic area compared to other department faculty. Lyman and Villani also speculated that the gap in the findings could be the result of a lack of understanding and discussion within the department on the topic. Following from Lyman and Villani's interpretation and the response patterns in our own data set, it appears likely that responses to our survey skew heavily toward those who already identify themselves with social justice work and away from those who do not.

The educational research literature on leadership for social justice focuses significantly on the effects of circulations of power and privilege within and across a multiplicity of identity formations and also increasingly calls for leadership preparation programs to address various identities such as race, social class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Lugg, 2003b; 2008). Following from this literature base, the survey sought to understand the level of emphasis that principal preparation programs give to a range of identity characteristics often associated with social justice research and practice. We were particularly interested in the degrees of emphasis given by the programs identified with social justice. Respondents reported that identity characteristics most commonly emphasized at the "high" or "moderate" levels in the programs identified with social justice are race/ethnicity (95.4%), socioeconomic status (94.9%), and culture



**Figure 2.** Percentage of identity emphasis in social justice versus non-social justice programs.

(93.8%). Emphasis is also given frequently to dis/ability (79.7%) and language (78.5%). High or moderate emphasis is given least frequently to sexual orientation (48.6%) and religion/belief (45.1%), both of which are the only characteristics out of eight reported with less than 50% high/moderate emphasis in social justice programs (see Figure 2).

Responses for gender identity (58.2%) are anomalous. The terminology list at the beginning of the survey defined gender identity as “how we identify ourselves in terms of our gender. Identities may be male, female, androgynous, transgender, and others.” Given that the educational research literature documents that transgender experience consistently receives less attention than sexual orientation, the greater emphasis given to gender identity (13 percentage points) is likely explained by participants’ consideration of gender across a female/male binary without attention to transgender or intersex identities. This interpretation suggests a need to explore more carefully professors’ inclusion of transgender and intersex experience in subsequent research.

In contrast to the participants who considered their program to be social justice oriented, 16.5% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that social justice is a core dimension of their institution’s principal preparation program. Programs identified in this way as not having a social justice orientation, as would be predicted, do not emphasize diversity and difference in their programs to similar degrees as social justice programs. Participants in

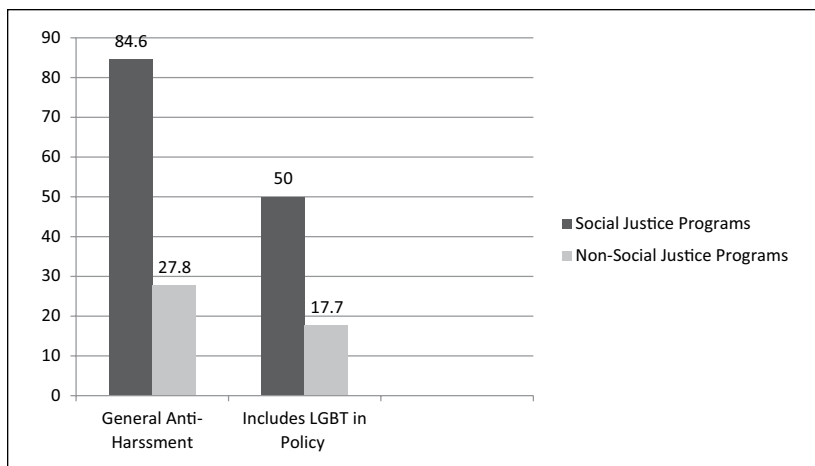
the UCEA programs not oriented toward social justice report their program's high or moderate emphasis for items on the identity characteristics scale as follows: socioeconomic status (69.4%), dis/ability (55.6%), race (50.0%), culture (50.0%), language (44.4%), gender identity (19.4%), religion (13.9%), and sexual orientation (0%). These findings highlight that half of the non-social justice programs are reported to place minimal to no emphasis on marginalized identities at all, excepting socioeconomic status. For us, this raises the question of the criteria and process for becoming a UCEA member institution (see Figure 2).

In Lyman and Villani's (2002) study, the emphasis that the program placed on understanding issues of poverty was relatively low, with 20% having a strong or very strong emphasis on understanding poverty in performance expectations/competencies for graduates and 35% with a moderate emphasis (p. 262). Of these, "only 11.6% of . . . faculty would rate understanding poverty to be extremely important to effective school leadership" (p. 273). This shift in principal preparation program focus over the past decade to currently 94.9% of social justice programs addressing social class suggests that future progress is possible in terms of integrating other identities that we have documented as currently marginal to leadership preparation, such as sexual orientation (48% high/moderate emphasis in social justice programs, 0% in non-social justice programs).

### ***Principal Preparation Program Level***

Following from the research literature's documentation of rates and effects of bullying and harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity (Kosciw et al., 2012; Robinson & Espelage, 2011, 2012), we sought to understand the relative attention given to these specific issues for the development of antiharassment policies and for preparing principals to stop teasing, harassment, and bullying. Importantly, research suggests that public school antiharassment policies and practices that do not specifically address LGBTIQ identity are not as effective in preventing harassment for these students (Robinson & Espelage, 2011, 2012). Thus we sought information about how these UCEA institutions prepare principals on these aspects for all students and for LGBTIQ students specifically.

Whereas 84.6% of social justice programs' respondents report the program effective in preparing principals to develop antiharassment policies in general (compared to 27.8% of non-social justice programs), only 50% are effective with ensuring these policies specifically include LGBTIQ students (compared to 17.2% of non-social justice programs; see Figure 3). One faculty person explained how state policy influenced the extent to which

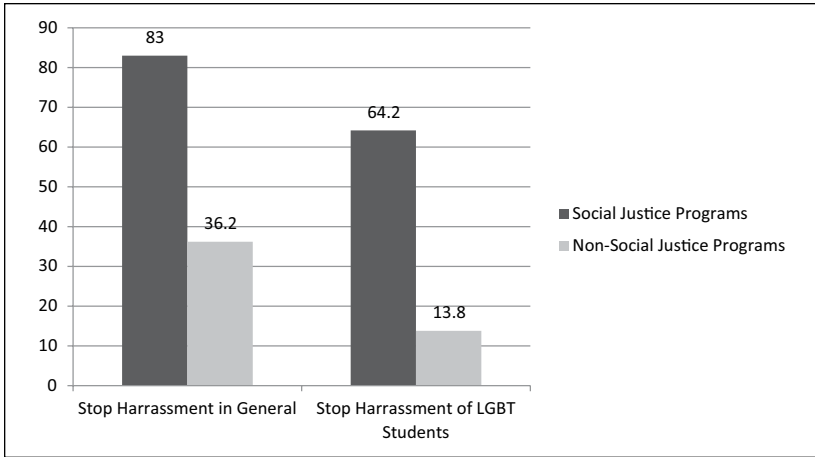


**Figure 3.** Percentage of programs effectively preparing principals to develop antiharassment policies.

harassment and bullying were addressed in the curriculum: “State mandate requiring anti-bullying programs for K-12 schools has resulted in curriculum and program changes in the preparation program to address any kind of bullying.” This faculty member did not report to what extent the state antibullying policy specifically included LGBTIQ students (as of mid-2013, 15 states had such laws; GLSEN, 2013).

Similarly, whereas 83% of social justice program respondents are confident in the program preparing principals to stop teasing, harassment, and bullying in general (compared to 36.2% of non-social justice programs), only 64.2% consider themselves effective in protecting LGBTIQ students specifically (compared to 13.8% of non-social justice programs; see Figure 4). As one faculty person admitted in the survey, “I am sure we have a long way to go on this. I think it would be an area for professional development for all of us.” These statistics are alarming and disappointing, especially considering the social justice identity of the majority of these programs.

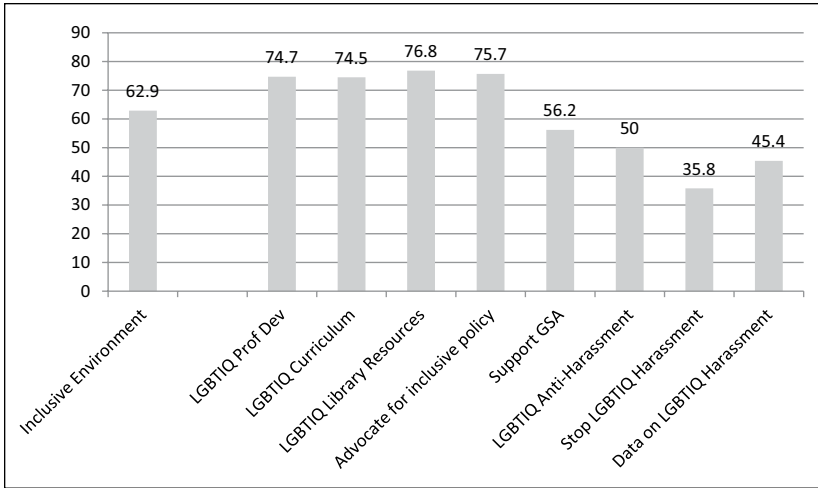
Beyond antiharassment policies and practices, we then measured perceptions of how effectively principal preparation programs prepare candidates for LGBTIQ equitable leadership based on nine areas identified in educational leadership research as constitutive of creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBTIQ students (Koschoreck & Slattery, 2010; Lee, 2002; Loutzenheiser & MacIntosh, 2004; Lugg, 2003a; Mayo, 2007; Murdock & Bolch, 2005; O’Malley, 2013; Szalacha, 2003). The survey also measured



**Figure 4.** Percentage of programs effectively preparing principals to stop teasing, harassment, and bullying.

perception of the program's overall efficacy in preparing leaders to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBTIQ persons.

Interestingly, social justice programs reported markedly greater effectiveness at preparing aspiring principals to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBTIQ persons (62.9% highly effective or effective, compared to 19.2% of non-social justice programs) than at all but one of the nine areas that are understood to be constitutive of creating that environment (see Figure 5). For example, one out of five respondents reporting their social justice program to be effective at preparing leaders to create an inclusive environment also reported it was minimally or not effective at preparing principals to provide professional development in order to increase the number of LGBTIQ supportive faculty and staff (74.7%); to include information about LGBTIQ history, events, and/or persons in the PK-12 curriculum (74.5%); to include information about LGBTIQ history, events, and/or persons in library and media resources (76.8%); and to advocate at community, state, or national levels for inclusion of sexual orientation and/or gender expression within protected categories in policies affecting PK-12 schools (75.7%). At least half of the social justice programs were minimally or not effective at preparing principals to develop LGBTIQ-inclusive antiharassment policies (50.0%) and to support GSAs or similar student organizations (56.2%). A little more than one third of these social justice programs are reported to be minimally or not effective at preparing principals to stop



**Figure 5.** Percentage of social justice programs reported as *highly or moderately effective* at preparing principals for creating an LGBTIQ inclusive environment (column 1), contrasted with the percentage of these same programs reported as *minimally or not effective* at preparing principals for specific practices that research indicates are constitutive of creating an LGBTIQ-inclusive environment (columns 2-9).

Note. LGBTIQ = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning.

bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity (35.8%), and related, almost half of the social justice programs (45.4%) are minimally or not effective at preparing principals to develop reporting systems to track LGBTIQ specific bullying or harassment. This documented incongruence between social justice programs’ perceived success at educating principal candidates with the skills to create an inclusive climate for LGBTIQ persons and recognized limitations in developing skills for specific strategies that are known components of creating such an environment points to the necessity of educating the educational leadership professoriate with specific research-based recommendations. It further highlights the possibilities inherent within conceptualizations of leadership for social justice as a communitarian public pedagogy.

This pedagogy recognizes social justice not only as teleological but also an ongoing project of collective intellectual and advocacy engagement that takes up the assumptions, limitations, and possibilities of our leadership preparation work (Brady, 2006; Dentith et al., 2014). Singular, independent, and individualistic approaches to principal preparation are insufficient.

### *Individual Professor Level*

The survey also sought to gain an initial understanding of how individual educational leadership professors might be incorporating LGBTIQ topics into instruction. Respondents were asked to select all principal preparation courses they have taught in the prior academic year (Fall, Spring, and Summer terms) from a general list of 24 course themes (including “other,” with a request to specify the course title). For each course, they were then asked to indicate the extent to which LGBTIQ topics were addressed in that course. Nearly one of out of every four professors did not address LGBTIQ topics in any of their principal preparation courses in the preceding academic year. Conversely, only 25.8% of all respondents indicated that they addressed LGBTIQ topics “substantively” in at least one course in the preceding year. This is particularly informative for mapping the current relevance of LGBTIQ topics and identities for social justice educators within the field of educational leadership, given that 93.1% of respondents identified their teaching/research practice with social justice.

Courses in social justice–focused programs in which professors most commonly included LGBTIQ topics, as determined by combining responses that indicate such issues were addressed in “substantive ways” or “moderate ways” within the past year, include those in contemporary issues, ethics, school law, and social foundations. Of these four courses, social foundations is the only one in which the modal selection was “moderate” inclusion. Courses in which professors indicated the least incorporation of LGBTIQ issues are continuous school improvement, program evaluation, and strategic planning, as well as school finance and facilities/environment. These responses point to the possibility that issues affecting LGBTIQ persons in PK-12 schools may not be perceived by professors as significant to school improvement or resource allocation processes. This is a question of understanding what forces drive school improvement processes, and how LGBTIQ persons are positioned in relation to systemic and structural change in schools.

For social justice–oriented faculty, resources most commonly used to support instruction addressing LGBTIQ topics include academic readings on topics of philosophical/historical analysis (47.1%), empirical studies (44.2%), case studies (42.4%), and current events (39.0%). Least engaged resources include LGBTIQ guest speakers (2.3% to 4.1%) and arts or visual culture (2.9%). The low use of LGBTIQ youth as speakers in principal preparation courses is somewhat surprising and disappointing, given that over the second author’s 25-year experience of doing so principal candidates universally evaluate that experience as the most powerful, meaningful, and impactful of all their preparation courses. The youth describe their experiences in school

and offer suggestions to the future principals on how to make their schools more inclusive and welcoming for LGBTIQ individuals. Furthermore, recent research affirms,

Views toward gay and lesbian issues are related—in some instances, strongly so—to personal experience with individuals who are gay or lesbian . . . , and that knowing someone who is gay or lesbian fosters more accepting attitudes on many of the issues surrounding gay and lesbian relations today. (Morales, 2009, p. 1)

One out of five respondents indicated engaging the instructors' or graduate students' personal experiences related to LGBTIQ topics. Among social justice faculty reporting that their individual teaching integrates LGBTIQ identity in "substantive" ways, several commented on what drives that inclusion in the preparation curriculum. For example, one participant explained, "We spend a lot of time on law and policy issues as they relate to this marginalized group." Another referenced state legislation regarding antibullying initiatives.

In general, our data regarding LGBTIQ topics mirror Hawley and James's (2010) finding that issues related to students of color in leadership preparation are frequently limited to particular courses rather than integrated across the program's curriculum. A distinction evident in our data is that the actual courses in which LGBTIQ topics are taken up is determined more often by the individual professor teaching the course than by any articulated curricular priority associated with the course, and we take up this point more specifically in the section below discussing individual contributions versus systemic change in preparation programs.

### *Institutional Context*

We also sought to understand the institutional climate at the professor's university for LGBTIQ persons. This scale measured selected climate factors that might illuminate degrees of LGBTIQ equity at the higher education institution itself to gain an initial insight into the context within which the principal preparation program is embedded. For response options requesting gender demographic information, one institution was reported to specify "transgender" on student applications and to specify "transgender" and "intersex" on faculty records forms. Another institution was reported to specify "transgender" as an option on student applications and faculty records forms. Approximately one third of respondents indicated they do not know what gender options their institutions specify on student applications and faculty records, and all others indicate "male" and "female" as the only stated options.



Whereas the majority of respondents (71.7%) report that a research agenda involving LGBTIQ issues would not negatively influence tenure and promotion decisions at the program and university levels, 11.9% of responses distributed across six distinct U.S. Census Divisions report the opposite. Approximately one third (34.9%) report that no tenure line professors involved in their principal preparation program have conducted research involving LGBTIQ issues and about half (47.9%) report that there are no “out” LGBTIQ persons among the program’s tenured and tenure-earning faculty. Of the LGBTIQ identifying respondents, 50% report that they have left a PK-12 position based in part on perceived exclusion of LGBTIQ persons. In contrast, 15.5% of all respondents say they have been inclined to accept a higher education faculty position based in part on perceived inclusion of LGBTIQ persons.

At the level of the university, one respondent noted the university context that influenced the work of the department:

U. is currently in a huge battle to get the University to allow gay married couples to [in]sure their mate; currently, it costs \$1,100 a month for a professor to cover his or her partner under health insurance. Being a Catholic-Jesuit university, the leaders have ironically cited Church restrictions when refusing to [in]sure legal partners of gay and Lesbian faculty. Big issue.

This example shows that though a principal preparation program may aspire to address LGBTIQ identity in inclusive ways, university policies can create a less than welcoming environment to do so. What we do not know in this case is to what extent this university issue was addressed in the principal preparation program with discussions about the implications of providing or not providing domestic partner benefits in school districts.

Reflections on the department level context are particularly evident in qualitative data from the open-ended question seeking additional information. Though a department culture may be supportive of LGBTIQ individuals, LGBTIQ identity may not be addressed in the principal preparation program. One professor explained,

This [LGBTIQ] is very visible at my institution. There are signs everywhere that say “this is a queer-friendly workplace,” and many faculty and staff are “out,” so much so that no one comments about it. It has been a norm for years. In terms of curriculum, not so much unless questions come up. I have not seen as many principal candidates saying they are LGBTIQ in any form, though some will address it as EdD or PhD candidates.

This respondent’s comment also points to the relationship between how the lack of attention to LGBTIQ identity in the curriculum can contribute to a

preparation environment where students who are LGBTIQ identified do not feel safe to be “out” about their identity. Another faculty person described a similar situation where the department as a whole was supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ identity, but the principal preparation program in particular was not. The faculty person explained,

The overall department has a greater focus on LGBTIQ issues, but since so much of principal preparation is done by clinical and since so much of it is shifting toward antitheoretical “best practices” there is less and less emphasis on issues of social justice in the program. Those who had emphasized it either do not teach at that level any more [teach at PhD] and/or left/did not get tenure.

### *Community Context*

The community context may influence how and to what extent principal preparation programs address LGBTIQ identity. Several respondents described a conservative ideology in the community, also reflected in the perspectives of students enrolled in the principal preparation program, that they believed hindered the department from addressing LGBTIQ issues. One professor explained, “We have a rather conservative student body. I do know that when I have referred to people whose orientation or identity is not heterosexual, at least a couple students have been shocked and/or expressed ‘moral opposition.’” Another professor referred to the community:

Until 2 years ago, our program (located in one of the most diverse urban areas in the country) did not include any coursework specifically related to diversity issues of any kind. A dominant religious ideology in the area inhibits discussions, policies, and action related to LGBTIQ issues at all levels.

This last comment is particularly troubling in that this particular department was located in a public institution whose mission includes preparing principals for public schools. Our conceptual lens shaped by a communitarian public pedagogy highlights this conflict as an opportunity to deliberately engage the work of constructing imperfect alliances across differences that are oriented toward safety and equity for LGBTIQ youth in schools (Brady, 2006; Sandlin et al., 2011). This is not a naive recommendation as much as an informed strategy that approaches conflict as fertile ground for social transformation, largely by directly taking up implications of a commitment to inequity in any form. Representing a converse instance, another participant noted,

While the responses regarding the principal prep program do not indicate much understanding or advocacy for LGBTIQ, it should be noted that among the

seven school districts surrounding my university, there are strong advocacy programs supported by the school boards.

What is unclear about this comment is whether faculty in the preparation program assume that because the area schools are proactive toward LGBTIQ identity, then the program does not have to be.

### *Distinguishing Individual Agency From Systems-Level Change*

As previously noted, the data disappointingly suggest that addressing LGBTIQ identity in principal preparation is often confined to individual faculty rather than integrated throughout the program even in programs that are grounded in social justice. This point is particularly illuminated in the open-response question asking for additional comments on how the principal preparation program addresses LGBTIQ identity—all comments were from faculty who identified their program as social justice focused. For example, one respondent noted, “LGBTIQ issues are usually relegated to 1-2 courses in the program, and only 1-2 faculty directly address or raise these issues in their courses. It is individual faculty choice that drives the decision, NOT a programmatic decision.” One respondent reported, “I believe it is entirely up to the faculty member.” Another concluded, “Most of the work is done at the individual level and the penetration of systems change and development as it relates to this and other areas of importance has been more difficult.” This finding is similar to research that suggests that race/ethnicity are generally confined to one course in the principal preparation program (Hawley & James, 2010).

Our findings also suggest that individual faculty act alone in addressing LGBTIQ identity in varied department contexts. That is, some faculty work on these issues alone and within a department that does not support his or her efforts to do so. For example, one respondent noted, “Sadly, I’d characterize my program as ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell,’” and another observed, “In Texas, we basically don’t talk about it.” Another respondent reported, “At my previous institution I taught a course where I had required readings. Since I switched institutions, I have never heard this topic raised in the numerous meetings we have.” Another respondent explained,

I am the only person in my department who requires students to read, see films, and discuss issues related to LGBTIQ issues. I will be leaving after spring quarter. I am sure that this topic will be eliminated from the diversity course after I leave. I am in the process of conducting research on diversity in which LGBTIQ issues are included. However, this is the extent that it has been researched in my department.

This last comment reveals clearly how even though this particular principal preparation program oriented toward social justice included a “diversity course,” addressing LGBTIQ identity within the course was optional and up to individual faculty to do so. This LGBTIQ identity as optional in social justice leader preparation is a consequence of a principal preparation program that values public intellectualism as an individual, heroic act focused on particular identities rather than a communitarian project engaged in relation across differences, social in both means and ends (Brady, 2006; Dentith & Brady, 1999; Sandlin et al., 2011).

Though some faculty addressing LGBTIQ identity work within social justice departments that are, ironically, not supportive of this work, other faculty who address LGBTIQ identity in leadership preparation are supported in doing so by the larger department as would be expected in a department that is oriented toward social justice. One faculty member explained,

To my knowledge, students are getting explicit attention to this topic only in my class, however the majority of other faculty members would, I think, be supportive of it being addressed, formally and informally, in our program, by me and/or others. I intend to continue and slightly expand what I am doing on LGBTQ issues in my leadership ethics class from here on.

In this example, though the department is congruent with its social justice mission and supports individual faculty who address LGBTIQ identity in their courses, the department as a whole or the principal preparation program does not take responsibility for doing so.

In some leadership preparation programs, LGBTIQ topics are centered by curriculum planning in particular courses that are taught by rotating faculty in the program. Individual faculty assigned to the course then decide individually and independently to what extent they will discuss the LGBTIQ topics or readings within that course. One respondent explained, “Empirical and/or theoretical scholarship addressing LGBTIQ issues are a required component of the syllabus for at least one course, but I am not positive all faculty that teach that course require readings or cover it in much detail.” Thus, in this example, though a particular course would have been a natural fit for attention to LGBTIQ identity and as the generic course was constructed LGBTIQ identity was included, individual faculty teaching the course varied in the extent to which it was addressed. This independent faculty decision to address LGBTIQ identity in a course that was designed to include attention to this illustrates the limitations of such a course in a department and principal preparation program that is not committed to this effort.

In contrast to the previous examples that demonstrate how limited LGBTIQ identity is addressed in leadership preparation, several respondents

positioned their program further along the continuum of addressing LGBTIQ in leadership preparation—extending beyond individual faculty or welcoming department cultures that were disconnected from the leadership preparation curriculum. One respondent pointed out the positive work of his/her department in this regard, yet the survey itself triggered critical reflection on where improvements could be made:

I think we are very good at helping our students to understand LGBTIQ issues in education as issues of social justice. We are also very good at helping them to cope with and respond to objections to supporting LGBTIQ youth based on religious beliefs or personal discomfort with the topic. Taking this survey helps me to see that we are less good at advocating for LGBTIQ youth by pushing for better local and state policies that are both inclusive and protective.

## **Implications for Principal Preparation**

We have identified two findings of this study as most significant in terms of informing strategic interventions for principal preparation. First, the study identifies a patterned dynamic in which differing historically marginalized identities are positioned with differing degrees of emphasis in social justice principal leadership preparation. Specifically, the study documents that LGBTIQ identities are the least attended identity across non-social justice programs (0% high or moderate emphasis) and comparable with religious/belief identities for least emphasis across social justice-oriented programs (LGBTIQ at 48% and religion/belief at 45.1% high or moderate emphasis). Second, the study found that integration of LGBTIQ identities frequently occurs (or not) at the level of the individual professor often operating in isolation.

A guiding principle generated in our study and informed by our conceptual frame is that integration of identities more frequently marginal to the social justice discourse in educational leadership, such as LGBTIQ, presents one effective measure of the social justice quality of the preparation program. The question here is how a program interested in preparing social justice leaders not only works along established social justice trajectories, such as those emphasizing race/ethnicity or socioeconomic status (87.3% and 90.2% of responses in our sample, respectively) but simultaneously expands and reconfigures those trajectories to be more deliberately inclusive across intersecting identities. Put another way, acceptance of gradations of “dominant” and “marginal” identities within the social justice discourse in educational leadership calls into question the core conceptual structure of that discourse. In concrete terms, it is disturbing to consider that despite the known limitations to equity and access for LGBTIQ youth in P-12 schools and the concurrent

harmful effects to these youth (Kosciw et al., 2012; Robinson & Espelage, 2011, 2012), more than 50% of our respondents report that their social justice-oriented programs give minimal or no emphasis to LGBTIQ topics. A tempered social justice discourse that normalizes attention to particular aspects of identity while legitimizing layers of silence vis-à-vis others carries the risk of devolving into an alternate mechanism of colonization. It fundamentally fails to disrupt the foundational cultural logic that produces and sustains inequitable structures and practices. The counterwork of organizing around shared dissent from marginalization (Butler, 1990) and via coalitions across difference is, as Brady (2006) notes, “a much more complicated strategy than one that attempts to organize around some cohesive unity” (p. 58).

One promising path forward for the field of educational leadership is to consider the possibilities inherent within reimagining our work as a communitarian public pedagogy. To the degree that educational inequity often follows from “systemic organizational practices and policies” (Marshall & Oliva, 2010, p. 7), professors of educational leadership must critique not only PK-12 school and administrator practice but also that of the educational leadership professoriate. This project indicates a need for continued development among the professoriate of the knowledge, skills, and reflective consciousness to counter “marginalization of particular populations” (Theoharis, 2007, p. 248) and actively change the “institutional structures and culture” (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005, p. 202) within our departments and programs that contribute to the problematic enactments of social justice evidenced in the survey data. Of particular import is the task of interrogating a Saidian (Said, 1994) construction of the public intellectual as a heroic response to conditions of inequity and oppression, often by an institutionally located educator (Sandlin et al., 2011). Taken up by Giroux (1997) and related to leadership for social justice by Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005), this view of the public intellectual reinforces the notion of the academic working and leading as an individual in isolation that is evident in the survey data. It is a theoretical investment that supports a practice in which preparation programs identified with social justice nonetheless default to individual professors what manifestations of difference and conditions of inequity are or are not prioritized with aspiring school leaders. Communitarian public pedagogy, as a “critical public engagement that challenges existing social practices and hegemonic forms of discrimination,” shifts PK-12 and university practice away from a focus on individual leadership capacities in favor of collective action across differences (Brady, 2006, p. 58). It emphasizes the work of preparing leaders for social justice as an inherently social process itself, calling for dialogue and coalition building among preparation faculty and also among students, communities, schools, advocates, and activists in

the work of social transformation. In a challenge to individualistic ways of proceeding that can characterize the professoriate, the pedagogical work of social justice becomes located in part in the community of faculty, as distinct persons and public intellectuals, interacting with multiple communities of difference as educators and learners. Concretely, leadership for social justice as a communitarian public pedagogy becomes a continuous and collaborative process of recognizing what identities, experiences, and voices are marginal within our field's and our principal preparation programs' social justice discourse and practice and of taking deliberative pedagogical and practical action within strategic alliances to alter those dynamics. Furthermore, though analysis of teacher preparation programs is beyond the scope of this particular study, collaboration with teacher educator faculty and programs toward these ends is a significant pathway for educational leadership programs committed to realizing a practice of social justice leadership.

Principles of communitarian public pedagogy are a promising yet decidedly non-techno-rational approach to addressing limitations in the current constructions of social justice within principal preparation. At the same time, the study provides pragmatic recommendations for preparation faculty as a starting point for reflecting on and improving the program's practice. First, faculty in such programs need to be clear and explicitly identify the differences they are addressing (or not addressing)—that the identities addressed attend to the full range of identities and their intersections (e.g., race/culture, social class, gender, ability/disability, sexual orientation, language, religion, etc.)—and to be consistent throughout their program about the range of identities addressed (e.g., across program marketing, curriculum materials, program evaluation). Second, programs need to be clear about what social justice means even if that meaning within the department shifts, varies, and changes over time. Ongoing, deliberate faculty and student discussions are needed about what social justice means for their leadership preparation and leadership practice (McKinney & Capper, 2010). Third, faculty in leadership programs need to be explicit about what the term *diversity* means. In this study, it appears the faculty defined diversity to mean "race." We argue that the term *diversity* should not be used as a proxy for race because doing so contributes to a conservative or liberal view of multiculturalism that masks White privilege, power, and structural inequalities (M. P. López & López, 2010). Instead, if faculty in programs are referring to race, they should indeed use the term *race*.

### ***Plan for Moving Forward in Principal Preparation Programs***

Following from this project's literature review, findings, and implications as viewed through our conceptual framework of leadership for social justice as a

communitarian public pedagogy, we recommend the following specific strategies to principal preparation programs in UCEA member institutions and other institutions of higher education. These recommendations are structured for programs that identify as social justice oriented, though it should be clear that we are suggesting that all principal preparation programs adopt a social justice focus. The recommendations are organized into two categories: those that enhance the social justice character of the preparation program in general and those that enhance equitable inclusion of LGBTIQ identities and persons.

### *Enhancing the Social Justice Character of Principal Preparation Programs*

1. Principal preparation programs that identify as social justice oriented ought to clarify precisely what they mean by that construct, with deliberate attention to how various identities and social justice topics are incorporated or marginal within the program's teaching and research activities,
2. Program faculty ought to intentionally and collectively prioritize addressing the widest range of historically marginalized identities possible across the curriculum and its courses, and do so with consistent focus on intersections of multiple identities,
3. Programs and their academic departments ought to provide quality professional development to support faculty's understanding of a range of historically marginalized identities within a framework of intersectionality, recognizing that this is a lifelong learning process,
4. Programs ought to ensure that critique of inequitable discursive and material structures in schools and society as well as equity-oriented advocacy/activism are integrated across the principal preparation curriculum, understanding that critique and advocacy/activism are complementary parts of a whole,
5. Programs are encouraged to pursue these strategies communally with all faculty and staff engaged in building alliances across differences, including differences of perspective, as well as to collaborate with community organizations and agencies to inform the work (e.g., the local GLSEN chapter, local schools, youth community and outreach centers, advocacy groups, etc.).

### *Enhancing Equitable Inclusion of LGBTIQ Identities Within Principal Preparation Programs*

1. Programs ought to collaborate to incorporate LGBTIQ identities within and across the program, department, university, PK-12 schools, and related agencies beyond the schools,



2. University student admission, faculty/staff hiring, and related forms ought to be revised to explicitly offer a range of gender identity options, including female, male, transgender, and intersex,
3. Principal preparation faculty ought to be provided professional development opportunities focused on understanding LGBTIQ persons and related school-based issues, including research-based indicators of what constitutes a welcoming and inclusive environment in schools for LGBTIQ youth, families, and staff,
4. Principal preparation programs in institutions of higher education ought to explicitly recruit, hire, and support faculty who have LGBTIQ-related research agendas in order to respond to the limited LGBTIQ research and knowledge base within the field of educational leadership,
5. Considering UCEA's (2013) commitment to "support the learning and development of ALL children" and to "diversity, equity, and social justice in all educational organizations," we suggest that the organization needs to reconsider its criteria for admittance as a UCEA member institution related to our findings and with the notion that an ongoing pattern of excluding particular historically marginalized identities, such as LGBTIQ, within principal preparation is inconsistent with UCEA membership.
6. Programs ought to advocate at the university, community, and state levels for inclusive policies that create equitable educational and social opportunity for LGBTIQ youth, families, and staff.

### *Limitations*

The findings and implications of this study must be viewed through the study's limitations. The study is limited in that we were unable to ascertain from the UCEA membership list an accurate number of full-time faculty who are associated with the principal preparation program in their department; thus, we were unable to determine the exact response rate of those faculty. Second, the survey data provide a one-moment-in-time snapshot of the perspectives of particular education leadership faculty in principal preparation programs about preparing principals for LGBTIQ equitable leadership. As such, the data are illustrative of certain patterns evident across the national sample rather than definitive of these programs. At the same time, however, descriptive findings from this study have resulted in a national data set reflecting professors' perspectives that can be used to set further agendas for educational leadership research and practice.

## **Significance and Conclusion**

This research generated the first comprehensive U.S. national data set reflecting how principal preparation programs at higher education research institutions prepare school administrators for LGBTIQ equitable leadership. It provides empirical evidence that sexual identity and gender expression difference is an infrequently and least attended aspect of difference in principal preparation programs, inclusive of programs that identify as social justice oriented. It suggests that preparation programs may need to consider possibilities for moving principal preparation beyond a more singular focus on victimization discourses (bullying, harassment, legal implications) to authentically asset-based strategies (Capper, 1999), such as incorporating LGBTIQ issues and persons in the curriculum, normalizing queer and queer-allied student organizations, and creating inclusive climates for LGBTIQ faculty and staff. This recommendation does not refute the necessity of creating safe schools for LGBTIQ persons, a need demonstrated by the literature review above (Koschoreck & Slattery, 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; Lugg, 2006) but suggests a need to extend preparation for leadership strategies beyond minimal safety to more genuine inclusion. Furthermore, the study provides evidence that exclusion of LGBTIQ persons in K-12 schools has been a factor in queer persons leaving school leadership and teaching. The data set and analysis from this national research project provide a descriptive base to inform further and more specific quantitative and qualitative inquiry in these areas, and to guide the structural change associated with leadership for social justice (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005). Finally, the study provides an alternate logic for organizing social justice discourse within educational leadership, one that locates and works from the margins of that very discourse rather than a reproductive logic that equates social justice with a canon of its established and commonly accepted themes, however vital those themes might be. Such a way of proceeding offers the hope of embodying a collective pedagogical investment in continuously locating meaning via difference rather than identity (Brady, 2006; St. Pierre, 2000).

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### Author Biographies

**Michael P. O'Malley** is an associate professor of Educational and Community Leadership and Chair of the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology at Texas State University. He was a Fulbright Core Scholar appointed to Chile in 2012-2013, where he led an interdisciplinary research team investigating the effects of school principals' forms of engagement on the success of the national *Inglés Abre Puertas* program. His research focuses on (a) advancing school leadership preparation and development that links the pursuit of educational and social equity with continuous school improvement processes and (b) theorizing public pedagogy as a socially transformative process.

**Colleen A. Capper** is a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. With expertise in stratification, her research and teaching focus on systems change in schools and districts that advance the learning of all students. She is currently involved in three related lines of inquiry: (a) schools that raise and sustain the academic achievement of students of color, low-income students, students with disabilities, language-diverse students, and advanced learners of all demographics in inclusive ways; (b) preparing and developing leaders to lead these schools; and (c) multiple epistemological perspectives of organizations and administration that can inform the development and practice of leading for social justice.