Demands for School Leaders

Jill Bradley-Levine
Ball State University, USA

This article examines the ways that graduate courses in teacher leadership influenced the ways that teachers described the nature of leadership and their role as educational leaders. Using Foster's (1989) four demands for school leaders as a theoretical framework, participants' perceptions are examined to determine how teachers synthesized their learning in the graduate courses they took with their work in schools. The findings suggest the importance of purposefully designed teacher leader preparation, as well as school contexts and cultures that support teacher leaders' practice of critical, transformative, educative, and ethical leadership (Foster, 1989).

This article examines the ways that graduate courses in teacher leadership influenced teachers' descriptions of the nature of leadership and their role as educational leaders. The study uses York-Barr and Duke's (2004) definition of teacher leadership as a "process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices" (pp. 287-288) to positively impact student achievement. In addition, this study contextualized teacher leadership within the critical educational theory framework, where teachers are "concerned in particular with issues of power and justice" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003, p. 436). Critical teacher leaders comprehend that individuals have the ability to exercise agency while at the same time experiencing oppression (Bradley-Levine, 2008a, 2008b). These teacher leaders accept a significant "role in reconstructing the power relationships present among all stakeholders" (Bradley-Levine & Carr, 2015, p. 30) in education (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003). A critical theory perspective was appropriate for this study because the educational leadership department at the university where the participants were pursuing their master's degree had a vision and purpose to prepare critical educational leaders. This educational leadership department, which housed the program in teacher leadership, based its definition of critical educational leaders on the theoretical works of Burns (1978), Foster (1989), and Rost (1991).

Theoretical Perspective

Foster (1989) applied critical theory to educational leadership when he proposed four "demands" (p. 50) for school leaders. According to Foster, leaders must be critical, transformative, educative, and ethical. In order to meet the demand to be critical, school leaders have a responsibility to "democratize their practice and work for social change" (Bradley-Levine, 2008a; Bradley-Levine, 2008b, p. 7). This requires school leaders to recognize the ways that privilege contributes to systems of injustice, which limit the opportunities available to marginalized people (Brooks & Miles, 2006; Furman, 2003, 2013). For example, critical school leaders might conduct equity audits within their school to "uncover, understand, and change inequities that are internal to schools and districts in three areas—teacher quality, educational programs, and student achievement" (Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004, p. 133; Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2010). Further, to meet the demand to be critical, school leaders must combine reflection with action by not only recognizing inequities, but also working to

eliminate them (Brown, 2004; Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2000; Dantley, 2008; Furman, 2013). It is through the combined acts of reflecting and acting that school leaders begin to see alternate possibilities.

Foster (1989) also demanded that school leaders be transformative. This means renovating power structures across schools so that power is more evenly distributed and each member of the school community has a voice (Bradley-Levine, 2008a, 2008b). For example, transformative leaders invite multiple voices to the table when forming school policy in order to assure that all students' needs are met in equitable ways (Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2002). These leaders utilize democratic processes to share power with and cultivate relationships among administrators, teachers, students, families, and community members (Dantley, Beachum, & McCray, 2008; Quantz, Rogers, & Dantley, 1991; Theoharis, 2007). Further, when school leaders implement democratic processes, they are able to transform the system not only in their schools, but in their communities as well (Marshall & Ward, 2004). Thus, meeting the demand to be transformative allows for inclusive and extensive participation in the quest for social change across the school and community.

Next, Foster (1989) stressed that school leaders be educative. In other words, they must "question aspects of their previous narratives, to grow and develop because of this questioning, and to begin to consider alternative ways of ordering their lives" (p. 54) to address social inequalities. For example, educative school leaders go beyond just thinking critically and begin to respond to critical reflection by making changes within their schools (Furman & Shields, 2005). These leaders invite colleagues to experience the discomfort of realizing their privilege, and help them become advocates for their students (Bradley-Levine, 2008a, 2008b). They engage in "critical conversations with individuals and groups even when the topic [is] not popular for the whole group" (Santamaria & Jean-Marie, 2014, p. 142). Rost's (1991) definition of leadership as a multidirectional and non-coercive influence relationship challenges all members of the school community to become both leaders and followers, who "restore the humanity of both oppressors and the oppressed" (Freire, 1970, p. 44) through influence rather than intimidation

Lastly, Foster (1989) insisted that school leaders be ethical. He defined an ethical leader as one who recognizes how the "use of power to achieve an individual's ends only" (p. 55) destroys the search for dignity, which all humans share. An ethic of care is a precondition for ethical action; it requires leaders to appreciate and pursue harmony among all people (Furman, 2013). For example, ethical school leaders take an interest in social issues as they relate to harmony within the school, and across the community and world. These leaders work for social change at all levels because they realize that an ethic of care extends beyond their role within the school (Brooks, Jean-Marie, Normore, & Hodgins, 2007; Jansen 2006; Jean-Marie, 2008; Lopez, Gonzalez, & Fierro, 2010; Theoharis, 2007). Additionally, ethical school leaders refuse to allow their limitations to prevent them from acting in ways that support justice (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2000). They continually seek ways to overcome the fears that confine them, and search for ways to abandon their selfishness so that they may put the needs of others before their own.

Methods

The findings presented in this article are from the author's doctoral dissertation research (Bradley-Levine, 2008b), which was conducted using critical qualitative methods. This approach is grounded in critical theory, and linked to Foster's (1989) demands for critical school leaders, which is used to frame this set of findings (Carspecken, 1996). Critical researchers share an interest in "the nature of social structure, power, culture, and human agency" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 3). Thus, the author identifies as a critical researcher who explored the concept of critical school leadership within the framework of Foster's (1989) four demands for school leaders.

Participants

The participants in this study were enrolled in a teacher leadership master's program that consisted of 17 teachers, 12 women and 5 men. They were all invited to participate in the study, and six chose to participate, five women and one man. Table 1 describes each participant. Pseudonyms have been used to preserve all participants' anonymity.

Table 1
Description of Participants

Participant	Credential	Teaching Experience	Personal/Professional Goal	Leadership Experience
Alex	Secondary	7	Master's degree	N/A
Audrey	Secondary	7	Principal's license & incentives offered by the district	Department chair (2 years), Critical Friends facilitator, Co-chair of the Climate Committee for 3 years, and member of the School Improvement Team
Liz	Elementary	8	Principal's license & desire to learn more about teacher leadership	N/A
Megan	Secondary	6	Master's degree & interest in becoming a principal	Promoted to assistant principal at her school during the last year of program
Pauline*	Special Ed. (elementary inclusion)	6	Master's degree & life-long learning	Schoolwide Planning Committee member, Chair of the Family and Community Involvement Committee
Stephanie	Elementary	4	Master's degree & interesting coursework	N/A

Note. *Came to teaching after a career in business.

Observations

I observed the participants in four courses they took during their second year in the teacher leadership program. The program began during the spring semester, and so the participants had completed three course together when I joined them. The first course I observed occurred during the spring semester; two courses were held during the summer semester, when participants were out of school and the fourth course took place during the fall semester. I made an effort to observe classes where the participants might be challenged to think critically or classes that would specifically address social justice issues. For example, I observed the participants debating controversial issues in the education law course, as well as observing a discussion about how Freire's (1970, 1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* related to the responsibility teachers have to serve the needs of all students. During observations, I noted down what teachers talked about, paying close attention to what they said and tracking comments made by individuals throughout the semester. These observations totaled about 45 hours. In addition to the observations, I utilized the online course chatroom, where discussions continued outside of class. The chatroom discussions were especially valuable because they allowed teachers to clarify their positions, further question each other's assumptions, and present reticent students another opportunity to share their ideas.

Document Review

I collected 50 course assignments from the 6 participants. These included an essay on their philosophy of leadership, four reflective analysis papers asking them to connect course readings to situations they observed around their schools, and six discussion briefs requiring them to reflect on course readings. Each participant submitted between 5 and 11 of these assignments for analysis. I chose these assignments because of their reflective nature and because they gave participants opportunities to contemplate the concept of critical educational leadership, especially as defined through Foster's (1989) four demands for educational leaders. In addition, these assignments were completed over the course of one year and therefore represented changes in the participants' thinking as they progressed through their program. These documents provided another way for me to double check what participants had said during class discussions. I could further understand their views and the reflective process itself.

Data Analysis

I coded all the data in an "attempt to discover regularly occurring patterns of action" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 91). First, I applied low-inference codes to "represent the objective features of the data" (Bradley-Levine, 2008b, p. 72), which most people would be able to identify. Next, I conducted preliminary reconstructive analysis with subsets of the data. During this step, I developed meaning fields representing all the possible meanings that an expression or action could have for the participant. After completing this step, I was able to begin pragmatic horizon analysis (PHA) (Carspecken, 1996).

PHA explores the "horizons of intelligibility" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 103) or the possible claims of an action or expression. Carspecken (1996) constructed four types of claims: objective, subjective, identity, and normative. Objective claims are those that are most obvious, on the surface, and accessible to many people; these are represented by low-level codes. However, subjective, identity, and normative claims are explored through the process of pragmatic horizon analysis. Subjective claims represent the actor's feelings in relation to a particular action or expression. Identity claims express the things the actor wishes to believe

about herself in relation to her actions or expressions. Finally, normative claims signify rules or judgments that the actor has about herself or others based on her action or expression. To conduct PHA, I selected meaning fields that I would examine in more detail. I identified each type of claim associated with the possible ideas presented within the meaning field. Then I explored these claims across a horizon where the most obvious claims are in the foreground and the least obvious claims are in the background. This allowed me to identify obvious possible claims, as well as possible claims that are hidden.

When I finished PHA, I was able to develop high-inference codes, which represented the "full range of possible claims made by participants through their actions and expressions" (Bradley-Levine, 2008b, p. 74). With my list of high-inference codes, I revisited all of the data in order to recode for deeper meaning. At this time, I compared the coded data to discover patterns and develop themes.

Validity Checks

I utilized several validity checks throughout the data collection and analysis process. First, prolonged engagement, represented through the length of time I was in contact with the cohort as well as the number of hours I observed and talked to them in their classes, served to "heighten the researcher's capacity to assume the insider's perspective" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 141). Second, I asked several peers to debrief analysis documents; these included professors teaching the courses I observed, doctoral students outside the cohort who took courses with the cohort because they needed to take that particular course, and other teachers who worked in the district who were also pursuing their master's degree outside the cohort. These peers checked the observation notes for possible bias as well as checking the inference level of codes. I also asked other graduate students who were familiar with the critical ethnographic methods to peer debrief the preliminary and pragmatic reconstructive analyses. Third, I requested that participants do member checks to review various analysis documents, and encouraged them to challenge interpretations and add some of their own.

Findings

The participants utilized Foster's (1989) language to express their views of leadership in written assignments and class discussions. They demonstrated the integration of Foster's demands into their concept of educational leadership overall, and teacher leadership in particular. The findings presented below explore the participants' definitions of leadership as critical, transformative, educative, and ethical.

Critical Leadership

In the context of critical theory, Foster (1989) described critical leaders as those who reflect on and question the ways that power relationships influence equity in schools. As described by the participants, these leaders have a responsibility to advocate for social justice through the process of personal reflection and consciousness raising. Liz summarized that critical leaders "share a responsibility to be advocates for all students." Megan further explained the process by which critical leaders become advocates for all students:

In order be an effective leader, a school administrator must advocate for social justice by getting out of their usual routines and critically analyzing themselves and the school that they are leading. If a leader does not want this responsibility, then he/she should not be afforded the opportunity to be a leader.

Megan noted that critical leaders must be open to becoming mindfully aware of what is happening in their school, as well as how they interpret what they observe. They must also think about the meaning of events even when potential meanings cause them to feel uncomfortable. Pauline acknowledged that feeling uncomfortable "takes courage and forces us to engage in critical self-reflection and to be willing to be disturbed." Further, Audrey recognized that being open to feeling uncomfortable is necessary for progress: "If educational leaders never moved out of their comfort zone into a risky area, we would be even more backward than we are today!" Pauline and Audrey shared the belief that becoming a critical leader requires the willingness to disrupt existing assumptions and explore new possibilities despite the possibility such work could be precarious. Megan identified consciousness-raising is a responsibility of school leaders, particularly administrators. Alex agreed,

> It is the leader's job to know when something is not right, even if someone has not communicated that vocally. It is the leader's duty to be critical and to name the problem that exists. It is only then that a resolution to that problem can start to be formed.

Alex referred to the leader's "duty" to engage in the work of becoming critical as essential to being able to solve problems. However, Alex located critical leadership as the job of school leaders in general, not just administrators.

Participants described a process for becoming critical that started with questioning. Audrey shared, "As a critical leader, I would be asking myself several questions: What change do we need to create? Who is not currently benefiting at our school? What tensions exist?" For example, when Audrey noticed that parents were not as involved with the life of the school once their children entered middle school, she asked herself, "Where did our parents go?" She noted that questioning is the first step for "a principal-leader…to get parents on board and move forward." Liz and Pauline also identified asking questions as essential to becoming critical, but they focused on discovering "why," rather than "what," "who," and "where." Liz explained that "in order to drive change within a school or organization, leadership must involve being critical—asking, reflecting on, and answering the *why* questions that get at the heart of improving the lives of others." While Liz focused on asking why things are as they are, external to the leader, Pauline suggested that "why" questions might focus on the leader's personal motivation to be critical:

> The first steps to truly becoming a teacher/school leader are to ask ourselves why we became educators in the first place. We need to define why we are doing what we are doing. For most educators including myself, we became teachers to make a difference in people's lives.

Pauline located leadership itself in the ability to identify one's purpose through questioning, and the capacity to create positive change within a school. Stephanie also linked reflection to purposeful change:

> It is the reflection that inspires change and that makes change purposeful. One could realize that the purposes put forward no longer apply and that they need to reconstruct the purposes to better fit the changing culture of their school.

Stephanie pointed out that reflection first leads to purposeful change, but that continued reflection can later lead to reconsidering or revising changes that have already taken place. As such, questioning and reflecting allow for ongoing purposeful change through critical leadership.

Participants agreed that the process of developing as a critical leader culminates in a drive to pursue social justice. Alex pointed out that critical leaders prioritize social justice over other school concerns:

> I realize that a principal or superintendent has a lot of responsibilities that they have to deal with. I know that they have a lot of pressure on them from a lot of different people and groups, but they have to prioritize these responsibilities, and social justice should always be in the back of their mind when making any decisions.

As described above, Alex emphasized that critical leaders are duty-bound to consider decisions based on what is most socially just even when experiencing external pressure. Pauline and Audrey also maintained that critical leaders address specific social justice issues. Pauline described "social justice is looking at the whole picture of a school community and having the courage to do whatever is needed to educate, protect, and include all students." Audrey emphasized the urgency of critical leaders to act on specific issues:

> As a school or district leader in the 21st century, we cannot continue to blindly follow the ways of the 19th and 20th centuries. Social justice concerns, such as equality in funding, high expectations and standards, and involvement of disenfranchised community members and parents must be dealt with.

She notes that inequity, discrimination, and exclusion are social justice issues that have already existed for far too long without an adequate response from school leaders. For example, Megan shared a story about a principal who refused to question, reflect, and understand the root of a problem so that he could respond in a socially just way:

> He already *knows* why these students skip class and offers no interest in trying to fix the problem. As an educational leader, school must be seen as important for every student. His blatant disregard for encouraging these particular students to attend school is very frustrating as a teacher. In some respects, I feel that he has given up on this struggling group of students. He is not interested in finding a way to help these students succeed in life and later in society. He is not working toward social justice for this particular group of students.

Megan experienced frustration with this principal, who refused to question his assumptions and reflect on why some students were missing school. She realized that without questioning and reflection, the principal could not meet his responsibility to work for social justice. In other words, participants linked developing as a critical leader to working for social justice.

Transformative Leadership

According to Foster (1989), transformative leaders work to build positive relationships among all members of the school community, engaging each member in the work of the school. The participants described that these leaders transform the school environment, creating collaborative, trusting, and supportive structures for individuals to work toward change. Participants discussed the relational nature of transformative leadership. They understood that transformative leaders change the power distribution within schools. First, Alex recognized a need for sharing leadership: "Only shared leadership can guarantee that each issue is considered carefully. If only one person were looking at all of the issues, they would be more likely to give a lack of attention to some areas." He described that formal structures are necessary for sharing leadership to be effective:

> If a school is going to follow a shared leadership model, there would have to be precise, detailed policies outlining how the issues are going to be evaluated as they come up. In order to have effective schools though, the main players need to be involved. If it is not a democratic system with shared leadership, the school will be less effective as a whole.

Alex identified the link between effectiveness across a school and democratic structure where all members of the school community are engaged in decision-making. Pauline and Megan agreed that sharing leadership is about more than inviting members of the school community for input or allocating particular responsibilities to teacher leaders. Pauline identified "multidirectional" leadership where leaders and followers work together, and exchange roles when needed: "Leadership is not…a function of position but rather…is shared and transferred between leaders and followers." To accomplish multidirectional leadership, Pauline believed that leadership must be about building relationships not about positions of power:

> Transformative leadership requires that leaders engage with followers and that leaders and followers become interchangeable. To achieve my goal of becoming a transformative leader, I will need to become reflective and critical of interactions and strategies when dealing with colleagues. This new relationship must be based on the reality that all members come willing into this relationship.

Pauline sensed that empowering others means more than just telling them what one person finds right. She knew that transformative leaders have to allow others to lead in order to accomplish the goal of doing what is in the best interest of students: "As teachers [and] leaders we need to be open to listening to all sides of the issues and have open dialogues about our attitudes." In other words, transformative leadership means considering the best interest of the group and making sure that more stakeholders have a voice. Megan also discussed the idea of leadership being multidirectional. She acknowledged that leaders must sometimes follow, and followers must sometimes lead: "Teachers and administrators must work together as leaders and followers—anyone can be a leader and anyone can be a follower. These roles are constantly changing depending on a person's involvement in the process."

In addition, participants described transformative leadership as an opportunity to create a schoolwide learning community that engages all stakeholders in identifying and achieving a common purpose. Pauline clarified that transformative "leadership is not always about [being] right or wrong, but about working toward a common goal or purpose that is morally right." She

acknowledged that one leader does not create the goal. The group must come to common consensus through a process where everyone has input. For example, Megan shared that at her school, "Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community are using current realities and a group-created vision to make the school a better place for the students." Such a community does not come about without transformative leadership. As Liz described,

> Another important role of the leader in a school [is] to inspire leadership among others. In order to achieve this, a leader and an organization must place great importance in hearing the voices of everyone involved [and] eliminating the marginalization of any group. In creating a democratic community, all involved must be supportive and/or contributing to the purpose.

Liz identified the importance of leaders creating egalitarian structures where all members of the school community have a voice. She noted that under these circumstances, a leader is both transformative and inspiring. Audrey noted, however, that creating structures alone would not establish a learning community:

> As a leader, I also must remember that, in the end, my empowered teacher-leaders may decide on a different action plan to reach our desired result. I have to be comfortable with that, as risky as it may seem. But being in one's risk zone is the place where the most growth—moral consciousness raising—occurs.

Audrey realizes that transformative leaders must be open to allowing others to lead even when that means losing some of the control they have over the direction taken. Such leaders must be willing to take risks; this is what makes these leaders motivating to their followers. Transformative leadership leaves no room for questions about who has more decision-making authority within the school. Instead, such leaders create a sense of community where all members work collectively toward positive change.

Educative Leadership

Foster (1989) described educative leadership as the leader's practice of challenging colleagues to collectively engage in critical leadership. Although the process of becoming critical to oneself is sometimes difficult, the process of encouraging other school community members to ask critical questions and reflect on their perceptions and privilege can be even more precarious for educative leaders. Nevertheless, Foster identifies educative leadership as the responsibility of leaders working for social change. Several participants offered their perspectives about the duty of leaders to influence their colleagues through educative leadership. Liz attributed to educative leaders the obligation to stir their colleagues to challenge themselves. She noted that, through such encouragement, educative leaders are able to influence the work of those around them: "As a principal, your job is not only to positively impact students' lives, but also the lives of your teachers and staff." Liz explained that leaders must remind teachers of "the moral purposes behind [their] day-to-day work" in order to intensify their acknowledgment of teaching as "an extremely rewarding experience." Stephanie also identified the responsibility of leaders to stress the importance of a moral purpose in order to motivate colleagues to become critical educators: "All teachers must see the need for social justice and the leaders need to continue to emphasize

the need." Pauline described a time when leaders at her school challenged their colleagues to engage more fully with the entire school community including the students' families:

> Faculty members became uneasy because they were being asked to look outside their comfort zones to begin this change. Faculty was also being asked to go the extra distance in going out into their school communities.

Pauline's story is an example of why educative leaders must first inspire colleagues by bringing moral purpose to the forefront of their work. If leaders are unable to do this, their colleagues will be less likely to take on the difficult work that Pauline described.

The result of educative leadership is not only a school where all members are driven by a moral purpose to take the risks required to become critical individuals who work for social justice, but also a space where leadership may spread across the school community. As Megan described, "School and community leaders are teaching others and enabling more leaders as they complete this process." Megan identified educative leadership as a communal process that calls individual leaders to serve their colleagues. For example, Audrey linked the experience of becoming a critical school leader to leadership as educative. First, she described becoming critical by utilizing an example from media:

> Oprah Winfrey often talks about having an "Aha!" moment. She talks about how when that light goes off in your head and you say, "Aha!" or "I never thought of that!" you feel alive. The "Aha!" lets you know you're still growing, still breathing. I think what is really going on there is the raising of one's moral consciousness.

Audrey clarified that an "Aha!" moment can be an educative experience for a school leader: "Leadership is about bringing individuals and whole communities to their 'Aha!' moment together. In that way, they become alive and growing again." She said the newly formed perspective can lead the school leader to later give his or her colleagues opportunities to make critical decisions for themselves. This description demonstrates Audrey's belief that educative leadership is communal, and something accomplished in unity rather than individually. Stephanie also examined educative leadership as a communal process:

> Leaders have to give other individuals information to make them knowledgeable about change. Leaders have to lead [and] not direct…. Even when it is placed at the center of the school, social justice will not be achieved without leadership. Many leaders have to be present in a school. One teacher or one principal cannot overcome an entire staff.

Stephanie described a process whereby leaders provide information so that the school community can collectively make decisions. The educative leader does not dictate what will happen, but invites others to the decision-making process. In addition, Audrey and Stephanie explained that through collaboration, colleagues determine together what change is needed to make the school more socially just, and how they all can work toward this change. This description acknowledges that teacher leaders can be engaged in this work alongside administrators.

Ethical Leadership

According to Foster (1989), ethical leaders question how an individual might use power to further a personal agenda. Instead of this use of authoritarian power, Foster calls ethical leaders to invite all members of the school community to participate in constructing a community-based agenda directed toward social justice. Thus, ethical leaders construct egalitarian opportunities, which engage all members of the school and the wider community, empowering them to identify problems within the school, community, and society, and to collectively formulate solutions. Through these structures, students, teachers, parents, and community members are able to work together for social change. Ethical leaders are ultimately interested in serving students' needs, but also in working for social change alongside school and community members. Megan defined ethical leadership, focusing on the difference between leadership driven by the leader's desires and leadership that serves others. She maintained that ethical leaders put students' needs before personal agendas: "The goal of the leadership is not to attain what the leader wants; it is to make the school a better learning environment for the students, the second crucial component of Foster's ethical leadership." Megan also suggested that ethical leaders "must have a moral purpose, question practices, allocate necessary resources, and be present in the process of change." In addition, Megan observed that ethical leaders are concerned with social justice issues beyond the school: "Teachers and educational leaders need to work toward change in society." Audrey shared the perspective when she compared Cornel West's description of modern Christianity to the work of ethical leaders:

> [West's] argument reminded me of a saying I once heard, attributed to some anonymous source: Christianity started as a movement in Palestine, became a philosophy in Greece, became a culture in Europe, and is now an enterprise in America. West's call for social justice simultaneously cries out for moral leadership within the Christian community against [those] who have turned one of the world's great religions of social justice and love into an enterprise.

Through these words, Audrey clarified that ethical leadership is about much more than what happens within the school. It is also about demonstrating concern for the broader community and society, as a whole.

Participants appreciated the need for ethical leaders to be strong leaders focused on social justice within their community. Alex described that ethical leaders have a responsibility to reflect the community's values and to build relationships among community members:

> Being a principal is about making the tough moral decisions; it's about building relationships with the community, parents, teachers, students, and everyone else who has a vested interest in education. It is about bringing social change in order to meet the community's vision of what a graduate from their school will look like.

However, Alex acknowledged that sometimes the ethical leader must make difficult decisions based on what is right or just. He explained, "It is the leader's job to know when something is not right, even if someone has not communicated that vocally. It is the leader's duty to be critical and to name the problem that exists." For example, Pauline portrayed the work of Phil Jones, a principal in a U.S.-Mexican border school:

> [Phil] took a grassroots approach to improving his school community. He first looked at the needs of his communities, and then worked tirelessness to address those needs. His actions were not always popular ones and his job was put on the line many times but he courageously and purposely worked for social justice in his communities.

This story depicts ethical leadership as the culmination of the critical, transformative, and educative processes of becoming a critical educational leader, as described by Foster (1989). Through questioning and reflection, the critical leader has discovered a moral purpose, and has acted on this purpose through transforming structures and challenging others to become critical, which has resulted in the motivation to act on behalf of the whole community even when there is little support for the work. As Liz defined: "The leader must have a moral and ethical disposition individually, in addition to having an ethical dedication to the organization and community." Megan further explained that ethical leaders "are not afraid of conflict and change;" they are ready to "leave their comfortable chair behind their desk to be present in the school and in the community." These participants clearly recognize the vision involved in ethical leadership, and that this vision needs to be derived with the community and in service to the community.

Discussion

In their descriptions of critical leadership, the participants portrayed school leaders with a particular disposition. They reported that to be critical, school leaders must be willing to be disturbed and be courageous as advocates for students in the context of both the school and the community. They described a process of becoming critical that involves observing what is happening around them, questioning why this is happening and who it affects, and reflecting on possible alternatives, all while focusing on their moral purpose (Brooks & Miles, 2006; Furman, 2003, 2013). This process aligns with descriptions from the literature including the use of equity audits to "uncover, understand, and change inequities that are internal to schools and districts" (Skrla et al., 2004, p. 133; Skrla et al., 2010). Further, participants maintained that this process would lead to an attitude that moves leaders to prioritize social justice issues, and ultimately facilitates progress within the schools and the communities.

Participants identified transformative leadership as relational and democratic. They described the ways that school leaders must redistribute power and create egalitarian structures where all members of the school community have a voice (Dantley et al., 2008; Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2002; Quantz et al., 1991; Theoharis, 2007). In addition, participants explained that through shared decision-making, school community members could identify and work toward common goals (Marshall & Ward, 2004). The participants also identified transformative leadership as "multi-directional," an idea offered by Rost (1991). They elucidated that transformative leaders are willing to be followers as often as they are as leaders. In this way, leadership is more fluid, and creates a clearer path for teachers to lead.

The participants considered educative leadership a responsibility of school leaders. They noted a core practice of educative leaders is reminding their colleagues that the primary purpose of the school is to serve students, an idea not discussed in the literature. According to the participants, educative leaders also engage in a communal process where they challenge colleagues to engage with them in social change (Furman & Shields, 2005). Participants also acknowledged that many leaders including administrators and teachers are needed for successful change.

When defining ethical leadership, participants noted that these school leaders would put the needs of others before their own agenda (Foster, 1989). Participants reported that ethical leaders were concerned with social justice beyond their schools, and engaged with the community to address social issues (Brooks et al., 2007; Jansen, 2006; Jean-Marie, 2008; Lopez et al., 2010; Theoharis, 2007). In addition, the participants agreed that ethical leaders are unafraid to lead colleagues to act in ways that were particularly unpopular or difficult (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2000; Santamaria & Jean-Marie, 2014; Starratt, 1986). In summary, participants described that ethical leadership is the culmination of a critical disposition, developed through questioning and reflecting, and transformative and educative practices within their school and external community.

Of potential concern or interest within the study is whom participants often identified as the leader who would enact Foster's (1989) four demands for school leaders. Most often, when participants described how leaders should behave critically, transformatively, educatively, or ethically, they referred to "school leaders" or "leaders." In these cases, they included both administrators and teachers as potential leaders. However, five of the six participants specifically identified administrators as the leaders about whom they were speaking. For instance, principals were given the tasks of engaging in the processing of becoming critical, prioritizing social justice above other responsibilities, inspiring teachers to change their practice, and acting justly even when it is unpopular. Further, Pauline and Megan shared stories about principals who either did or did not act critically. Megan identified administrators, in general, as those who should do advocacy work. Only Pauline referenced teacher leaders specifically, including them in the process of becoming critical. This was surprising given that this was a master's degree program in teacher leadership. On the other hand, it would not have been surprising had they referred to teacher leaders specifically on more occasions. This might indicate that these participants still placed most of the leadership responsibility on the administrator.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that course assignments and class discussions allowed participants to describe accurately the demands for school leaders as Foster (1989) had defined them. Although participants read a variety of texts about educational leadership, Foster's four demands formed a foundation for their preparation program, with many of the readings and activities across courses relating to the demands in an intentional way. Therefore, it is not surprising that the participants utilized Foster's perspectives when talking or writing about educational leadership. The perspectives shared above represent more than just a regurgitation of school leadership theory. They also represent the attempt by the participants to demonstrate understanding and apply this understanding to real or possible situations. However, they also sometimes show the struggle that participants experienced to reconcile what they were learning about leadership in their courses with the ideas about leadership and authority that they brought with them into the program.

These findings have implications for educational leadership departments in particular and teacher education in general. Whether in the context of teacher preparation or master's degrees in teacher leadership or curriculum and instruction, or in administrator licensure, preparing critical educators and educational leaders is important. K-12 students around the world are challenged with living and working in a globalized world with a growing division between the rich and the poor. Working for social justice locally, nationally, and globally is a key role of educators and

educational leaders. The participants of this study demonstrated that preparation programs, which focused on defining, understanding, and practicing teaching and leading for social justice have the potential to grow critical, transformative, educative, and ethical educational leaders including teachers and administrators. Teacher education and educational leadership departments need to reconsider the ways that they support the development of critical educators and school leaders. In addition, findings from this study suggest the importance of creating structures within schools that support critical, educative, transformative, and ethical teaching and leading practices.[1]

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[1] This paper draws on findings from the author's doctoral dissertation research, portions of which have also appeared in other forms in other publications.

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