

Centering Race in a Framework for Leadership Preparation

Journal of Research on
Leadership Education
7(2) 237–253

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DOI: 10.1177/1942775112455266
<http://jrle.sagepub.com>



Mark A. Gooden¹ and Michael Dantley²

Abstract

This article argues that a framework of educational leadership must be so designed as to specifically speak to the transitioning demographics in schools in the United States. Particularly salient is a framework that addresses the issue of race within a broader context of social justice. The article outlines five ingredients of such a framework, including self-reflection, a grounding in a critical theoretical construction, a prophetic and pragmatic edge, praxis, and the inclusion of race language. Furthermore, the article outlines pragmatic ways in which educational leadership preparation programs can address the failures of the dominant system to embrace and struggle with the American issue of race in education. The impact of racism and the efficacy of the blending of self-reflection, introspection, as well as intellectual work are discussed as viable vehicles to deal with the matters of race in preparing prospective school leaders. The article concludes with the presentation of a proposed curriculum module, a project undertaken by the University Council for Educational Administration, to assist leadership preparation programs in addressing, through innovative instruction, the notions of privilege and race in their programs.

Keywords

leadership preparation, privilege, critical race theory, race, racism, UCEA

A March 6, 2012, *New York Times* article (Lewin, 2012) announced a Department of Education's 2009-2010 study that found Black students and especially Black male students face harsher discipline measures than all other students in the public schools in the United States. In the study's sample schools, 18% of the students in these schools

¹University of Texas, Austin, USA

²Miami University, Oxford, OH, USA

Corresponding Author:

Mark A. Gooden, George I. Sanchez Building 310H, 1 University Station D5400, Austin, TX 78712-0374
Email: gooden@austin.utexas.edu

were Black, but 35% of these Black students had been suspended once from school. A total of 46% had been suspended more than once, and 39% had been expelled. The study also found that one out of five Black male students had served out of school suspensions. These students were 31/2 times more likely to be suspended than their White contemporaries. The article quoted secretary of education, Arne Duncan, as saying, "The undeniable truth is that the everyday education experience for too many students of color violates the principle of equity at the heart of the American promise" (Lewin, 2012, p. 11). The article also examined what was called the school-to-prison pipeline and found that 70% of students involved in school-related arrests or referred to law enforcement were Hispanic or Black. When the study examined curricular matters, it discovered that 55% of high schools with low Black and Hispanic enrollments offered calculus, whereas only 29% of high minority high schools did. Finally, the article cited that only 26% of Black and Hispanic students are in gifted and talented programs. These statistics should give pause to educational leaders and cause them to question why this is the case.

Given the current and historical demographics of K-12 public schools in the United States, and the inequities that exist within the cultural and racial differences inherent in these demographics, it becomes incumbent on the field of educational leadership to ground our work in a more critical and progressive conceptual frame that seriously interrogates these discrepancies and creates strategies to do something proactively about them. Undoubtedly, such an interrogation of the policies and rituals that enact these differences becomes the focus of our field's theorizing not only based on solid axiological reasoning but also from a moral imperative as well. W. Foster (1986) in his seminal work on educational leadership offered a sage definition of moral that can facilitate this theorizing project of educational leadership being aligned with a social justice agenda. He said, "The moral side of administration has to do with the larger context of what it means to be human" (W. Foster, 1986, p. 24). Foster also argued that the moral science, to which he offered educational leadership ought to subscribe, was a science concerned with the resolution of moral dilemmas. The moral axis of the field of educational leadership is founded on the empirical premise that throughout the institution of education are discrepancies, inequities, and a host of fundamental discriminatory practices that must be challenged and transformed. Many leadership preparation programs have taken on the project of aligning the technical skills of school leadership with the commitment to changing the contexts of schools through a social justice agenda. What some preparation programs have found is that too often our students have been ill-prepared to engage the multiple layers of social and cultural realities within which students and school communities live everyday. These programs, sensitive to this dilemma, have now included social justice as a stream that runs systematically throughout the course work and extraclassroom experiences in their preparatory curriculum. The emphasis on race, however, has received short shrift, we argue, in this effort to couch the preparation of school leaders in a social justice context.

The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) has taken on a role that recognizes inequities in the field and even within our education administration

departments. In an interesting and early example, Culbertson (1995) chronicled UCEA's partnership with three historically Black universities to develop an information exchange program, as these institutions were recognized for effectively training Black administrators. He also noted UCEA's creation of Computer Research and Placement System (CORPS), a controversial and now defunct data system that was designed "to provide data to help women and minority graduates obtain administrative posts" (p. 161). UCEA and UCEA faculty have fostered conversations through research that call on our programs to consider race in preparing leaders (López, 2003; Young & Laible, 2000). Pounder, Reitzug, and Young (2002) argued that preparation programs should help students recognize the ubiquity of inequities and the threat of individual and institutional discrimination. They continued this line of thinking adding that leadership preparation program elements that support this cause include problem-based learning strategies, cases, simulations, action research, field experiences, and self-reflection on experiences, practices, and beliefs. Rusch (2004) found in a survey of UCEA-affiliated departmental faculty that discussions of gender and race within those spaces found differences in whether women and men reported equity conversations taking place, suggesting a need to explore perspectives and possible resistance. She also noted that department discourse was constrained in a manner similar to that found in our public schools. Scholars have also looked specifically at how race is still relevant to educational leadership (F. Brown, 2005; Dantley, 2005; Tillman, 2005). L. Foster and Tillman (2009) published work on African American perspectives, providing a powerful example of UCEA-supported research that seeks to improve preparation. Particularly relevant to preparation is Lightfoot's chapter on preparing antiracist leaders.

Several scholars have noted that the call to action to address social justice for our students is a clarion call that should include us as educational leadership faculty (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Capper, Theoharis, & Sebastian, 2006; Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009). McKenzie et al. (2008) extended this call by providing their vision for preparation program change via new approaches to student recruitment, curricular content, and the induction process. In addition, Furman (2012) has recently raised the question of skills needed for social justice leadership praxis and has proposed a framework that analyzes capacities needed for leaders working for social justice. In this current work, we explore how race is still relevant to leadership preparation.

Although discrepancies, inequities, and discriminatory practices may be historical, they may also be a product of how we structure school systems and educate children in the country differently based on race. For example, recent research reveals, "Whites are most isolated within their own racial group—attending schools where almost four fifths of the students are White" (Orfield & Lee, 2005, p. 13). According to Orfield and Lee, this is a result of severe White residential isolation in outlying suburbs. Although economically abled Whites may have selected and purchased houses based on some of the typical, ostensibly nonracial criteria such as access to good schools, safety, and increasing property values, rarely are these choices devoid of race. Powell (1995) argued that the history of government-sanctioned housing discrimination and the

development of PK-12 education have influenced the creation of subtle racist policies and practices. Even though egregious acts are not as prevalent today, the historical legacy of these policies remain, and the seemingly innocuous personal decisions of where to buy a home are inherently race-impacted decisions, regardless of whether the actor is conscious of it or not. Moreover, decisions such as buying a home, choosing a school, and arguing for and expecting one's child to have access to more resources operate to create a kind of an ahistorical naiveté about education that could be counterproductive for those educational leaders who expect to address the systemic and historic inequities, even if they are well intentioned.

A direct result of the White "school choice" model described above is the continued severe racial isolation of Black and Latino students, especially those who are living in poverty. Indeed, Orfield and Lee (2005) also reported that Black and Latino students attend schools with a majority of students from their own racial groups at 2 or 3 times that of White students. These children are the ones with the least choice in education and oftentimes that results in lower quality education.¹ Furthermore, Orfield and Lee continued that schools mostly attended by children of color tend to be concentrated in cities, have high poverty rates, substandard resources, and often severely diminished per pupil expenditures compared with those of White students. When it comes to leadership, these schools also are more likely to be assigned principals who take a tough, authoritative approach to education that sometimes go against building a community of learners. These leaders tend to experience high turnover rates of teachers, dwindling resources, and years of neglected facilities, and are expected to change all of these challenges in a year or two as turnaround leaders (Gooden, 2012; Tillman, 2004). Moreover, if the preparation has not passed on knowledge of how to address race and its impact on schools, leaders can find themselves feeling isolated and unprepared.

Despite goals and hopes of *Brown v. Board of Education* and its intent to equalize resources, resources still tend to follow White students. Even in the face of more than 50 years of federal and state litigation to improve educational opportunities for these students, due to state-level resistance, housing patterns, and societal discrimination, most schools attended by students of color remain racially segregated, are categorized as underperforming, and still experience inequities (Gooden, 2004), thus suggesting a need for centering race in educational leadership preparation.

These historical and existing inequities in education challenge us as preparers of leaders. We believe that given the importance of leadership to schools, race-based inequities in schools cause us to consider a framework for leadership preparation centered on race. In this article, we argue why this framework is important and explain what it would involve. We then share what such a framework would look like in practice. Paying attention to past work that has already been done and current UCEA work, we conclude this article with an argument of how things could be different as a result of centering preparation on race.

We therefore offer that a leadership preparation framework centered on race must consist of the following five essential ingredients:

- a prophetic voice,
- self-reflection serving as the motivation for transformative action,
- a grounding in a critical theoretical construction,
- a pragmatic edge that supports praxis, and
- the inclusion of race language.

We assert that the framework adopted by our field for the preparation of educational leaders must have a prophetic and a pragmatic voice. By prophetic we mean that the message this framework carries is challenging, and demands a radical and indeed revolutionary response to its call. A prophetic message is challenging because it requires stark changes in sedimented rituals, practices, and institutionalized behaviors. A prophetically grounded framework is radical because it demands substantive change at the root or the core of the motivations of these educational practices. A prophetic voice is one that dares to rail against the regnant sensibilities or consciousness that facilitated the forming of the foundation for public and private practices in education. In fact, inherent in the prophetic discourse is a call to undermine and indeed usurp the power structure that currently exists, and to replace it with the one that signalizes racial equity, social justice, and democratic practices.

Another characteristic of the prophetic voice is that it sets an unwavering although daunting standard that everyone is expected to meet. A framework for educational leadership preparation that centers on the specificity of race within a broader context of social justice holds all of the players in the educational process accountable for creating equitable spaces for children and youth to learn. A prophetic voice questions why often the most inexperienced teachers are given assignments in some of our toughest schools. It interrogates why there are so few Black children and other students of color in advanced or gifted and talented classes and why schools in the same school district are dramatically different in the quality of education being offered. However, following such an interrogation, the prophetic side of this framework provides reasons why this practice must stop as well as ways to bring this change to pass. In this way, the prophetic edge of this framework not only pinpoints professional practices that are unscrupulous but also concomitantly announces a future vision that offers hope as well as reformation.

When one critically reflects on these and other similar data, it becomes necessary, as an educational leader, to propose and design an agenda of reform whose focus is to rid the system, writ large, of policies and practices that lead to these shameful discriminatory results. Much has been written on the salience of reflection. However, Galea (2012), in her article, "Reflecting Reflective Practice," deconstructed and then reconstructed the utility of this process especially in teaching. One of the issues she outlined with reflection was its penchant toward normalization. In fact, Galea lamented that reflection often loses its primary purpose and potency to become an end in itself. She wrote, "Reflective teaching becomes a commodity, something that cannot be renounced by a teacher who would want to be part of a teaching culture" (Galea, 2012, p. 249). Reflection becomes a practice that has to be what she calls mastered, that is,

“reflecting the dominating representation of the mastery of the teacher at the same time” (Galea, 2012, p. 249). Therefore, reflection ceases to be transcendental, as Galea argued, and fodder for transformative action but becomes an end in itself. Clearly, a framework of educational leadership that focuses on race while also affording primacy to the broader space of social justice must include a call for critical self-reflection. However, self-reflection without transformative action is useless. “Self-critique is powerful in itself, but self-correction is a courageous step often initiated through a spiritual motivation that celebrates the human dynamics of individuality and community at the same time” (Dantley, 2005, p. 665).

In our estimation, a critical theoretical grounding for the work of educational leadership makes good intellectual and practical sense. A critical theoretical foundation for theorizing about the amalgamation of social justice and educational leadership usurps the comfort of confidence in the status quo, and discomfits the desire or the penchant to remain silent and detached from the arduous work of unmasking the ways our PK-12 institutions propagate the marginalizing of students of poverty and students of color. Such a theoretical foundation motivates a kind of righteous indignation intended to ignite a revolutionary fervor in school leaders that creates the relevance of academic work when it is linked with a civil rights, social justice agenda.

Any variation of critical theory—critical race theory, critical Latino (a) theory, and critical feminist theory—can serve as an efficacious grounding for engaging race as a social justice issue in educational leadership. “Critical theory celebrates the practice of individuals questioning or seriously interrogating the tacit assumptions and the asymmetrical relations of power that undergird many of the institutions and discursive practices in a capitalist driven society” (Dantley, 2009, p. 44). What a critical theory demands is that the process of theory production must not divorce itself from the realities and particularly the atrocities of everyday life. Theory cannot afford to emanate in an antiseptic, frictionless environment especially when its goal is to define a social milieu such as education. In fact, Said (2000) critiqued the theories of scholars who composed explanations for social events through a pristine, ahistorical, acontextual lens as those having “only minds so untroubled by and free of immediate experience of the turbulence of war, ethnic cleansing, forced migration, and unhappy dislocation can formulate such theories as theirs” (p. xxi).

Given the complexities and the aberrations of democracy that riddle the educational process, educational leadership must be grounded in a theory that not only facilitates critique but, as Leonardo (2009) offered, must also provide criticism, “as a part of an overall project that aims at material or institutional changes, a process which begins with a language that penetrates the core of relations of domination, such as race, class, and gender” (p. 17).

In addition, any framework that would undergird the creation of a social justice agenda as a part of educational leadership preparation must include not only critique but also praxis (Freire, 1993). What this means is that those current and prospective school leaders must have facility in critically reflecting on the exigencies of marginalization that are replete in educational institutions, but then must also offer solutions,

tactics, or strategies to tackle these discriminatory practices. Simply denuding the problems leaves the situation in a revelatory posture alone. Leaders must then be compelled to use their creativity to offer ways not only to call out racism but also to forge an agenda for transformation.

Not only must this framework have a prophetic voice, engage in self-reflection, and make use of critical theory, but it must also possess a pragmatic bent. The concept of this theory having to be pragmatic is not merely that it includes some kind of performance or utility in its tenets but more so because it adamantly calls for the very strong link between the individual and the community in bringing to pass a greater demonstration of democracy and equity throughout the community and indeed the society, writ large. This notion of pragmatism frees leaders to become subversive in their professional practices as organic intellectuals who see their work as being wider and deeper than getting teachers to prepare students to take a regimen of standardized tests. Indeed, these pragmatic leaders, who are concomitantly operating within a prophetic frame, see the work of schools as being a partner in transforming society, interrogating the very structures and predispositions that undergird so many institutions and societal rituals while at the same time implementing a transgressive agenda aimed at transforming the ways, attitudes, and structures that have for so long propagated a racist, classist, and sexist ideology. So the pragmatic edge brings deliberative action to the prophetic component of the framework.

Finally, a framework that undergirds a project of leadership preparation for social justice, especially one that focuses on race, must include race language (Glaude, 2007). Such an inclusion has to be without apology, forthright and incisive. The assertive use of race language in creating a theory to guide educational leadership practice is one of the initial ways to begin the problem-solving process. As long as there is a vanilla, benign language used to describe the inequality that takes place in schools and the issue of race is obfuscated through homogenized language, then an agenda to deal with the actual root of much of the discrepancies in schools will never take place. We believe, however, that it is important to locate race within a historical context and also to link race with other political, economic, and cultural concerns.

When race is at the epicenter of a framework for educational leadership preparation, the subscription to the tenets of critical race theory, as mentioned earlier may ward against the eventual obsolescence of the theory. Parker and Villalpando (2007) have clearly articulated the components of critical race theory, these being the centrality of race and racism, the challenge to dominant ideology, a commitment to social justice and praxis, a centrality of experiential knowledge, and a historical context and interdisciplinary perspective. The centrality of race and racism argues that race and racism are deeply embedded in the very fiber of the American society. It is ubiquitous in its presence and impact and influences the regular practices of multiple if not all institutions in the United States. What this theory does is challenge the notions of meritocracy, objectivity, neutrality, and the efficacy of color blindness. These too, like the constancy of race, are forever included in the hegemony of American institutional thinking. This then sets an agenda for preparation programs.

Educational leadership preparation programs that unashamedly center race and social justice in their curriculum, we believe, must include a prophetic voice, a grounding in critical theoretical traditions, the notion of praxis and a pragmatic edge, and the race language. This means that the traditional theories that so often are taught in our preparation programs must be critiqued by these more critical theoretical positions. However, it also means that students must be afforded the opportunity to critique these critical positions as well. As we frame our work around the thought of providing quality educational experiences for all children, we are therefore compelled to move beyond the thinking that has traditionally grounded school leadership preparation. But what does a leadership preparation framework that centers race look like in practice? Below we set out to answer that question by revisiting the ingredients and explaining how they could apply in practice. To help us with this task, we are using current UCEA module development work, which provides some practical examples of how this leadership preparation framework can be implemented.

Using the Ingredients to Reframe the Problem

Although previous work has called for leadership preparation programs to include social justice leadership as component (K. M. Brown, 2004), our leadership preparation framework urges the development of a prophetic voice, and a productive focus on race and culture. That focus requires a literal reconsideration of how leadership preparation programs explore issues in education. How a leader frames a problem has a lot to do with the solution one explores (Young, O'Doherty, Gooden, & Goodnow, 2011). Leadership preparation programs are instrumental in helping students frame the problems in education and find that voice. With appropriate attention to race and development of personal awareness, a preparation program can shift students' perspectives to enable aspiring leaders to develop prophetic voices. Leaders in such a preparation program can begin to challenge the status quo and search for viable solutions rather than restating the problem. For example, when considering the massive failure of African American and Latino children in schools, the prophetic leader, as a result of experiences in her preparation program, will have a lens to consider the impact of race and racism in education, and a mind-set to create an agenda to do something about it.

Exploring Diversity-Responsive Leadership

In an effort to learn more about how UCEA-affiliated university leadership preparation programs address the issue of diversity, Hawley and James (2010) surveyed 62 such programs. Using open-ended questions, they asked program professors to list the courses, resources, and strategies they used to help prepare educational leaders to ensure that students of diverse races and ethnicities learn at high levels. With 18 programs responding, equaling a 30% response rate, interpreting the results warrants

some caution and suggests a need to expand this research in this important area. However, respondents, who were possibly more familiar with issues of diversity than nonrespondents, provided some interesting data to build on.

According to Hawley and James (2010), respondents indicated that diversity-related education in UCEA preparation programs for school leaders occurs in a single course. Most programs report offering one course in which diversity receives substantial attention and/or that diversity typically gets some consideration in other courses, most often in internships. They noted that the focus of these diversity-related courses in the leadership is,

The social, cultural, historical, and political influences on the education of diverse learners and how the conditions under which many students live affect their success in school. (Hawley & James, 2010, p. 2)

The extent, causes, and consequences of racial, ethnic, class, and gender discrimination. (Hawley & James, 2010, p. 2)

The results of their work signify in varying forms an emphasis on knowledge of past and present day inequities, discrimination, and economic conditions faced by students and people of color in general. These researchers found very little curricular content discussing strategies for leading diverse students. In other words, there was the knowledge of diversity-related content available to the leaders but not much on how to address these issues in the daily lives of leaders. Incidentally, this seems to imply that information may have been presented in a traditional manner, which fails to address some of the emotional challenges associated with this work. Having only a single diversity-related course marginalizes it as a minor part of the curriculum, and it feeds the notion that this course is “outside” of the real content of leadership. Hawley and James’ (2010) work suggested that more should be done in the procedural offerings (i.e., more than one course) and the substantive learning (i.e., content and experiences embedded in the course) of diversity-responsive leadership. Recall that our framework calls for a prophetic voice that rails against the reigning sensibilities or consciousness that facilitated the creation of current educational conditions. That means leadership preparation faculty will need to push for more than one diversity course as having only one or none can have the effect of marginalizing content that should be integrated within our preparation programs. Beyond the number of the diversity courses offered, a leadership program promoting a prophetic voice will integrate racial equity, social justice and democratic practices and thereby undermine the power structure that currently exists by calling into question unjust practices. How this important content is delivered has to also be considered. Paying attention to pedagogy and facilitating this important content in a way that empowers can really help leaders (and professors) to become reflective, action focused, and able to address issues of diversity in their practice.

Preparing Leaders for Act for Social Justice

In light of limited number of diversity courses and even more limited content as noted by Hawley and James (2010), and the heightened focus and increased work by UCEA and faculty in UCEA institutions over the last decade, what should be the course of action to address this important leadership issue? UCEA has answered this call and committed to develop, pilot, distribute, and support the use of a set of innovative instructional modules under its Leaders Supporting Diverse Learners (LSDL) project. A group of six UCEA institutions has been recruited to create six respective modules focusing on six areas of diversity and leadership. The titles, which also describe the respective foci on important issues, range from “Developing Advocacy Leadership” to “Family to Community Engagement for Diverse Learners.” Each is designed specifically to support faculty as they prepare leaders to support and lead diverse learners and their communities.

One of the modules, Building A Community of Trust Through Racial Awareness, addresses the issue of race head-on. Incidentally, this module embodies several aspects of our framework, which is centered on race. Leadership preparation programs that are seeking a prophetic voice will find that this module really pushes against traditional thinking in educational leadership by requiring a placement of race at the center of practice. The prophetic voice will continue to ask, “Why are there dramatic differences that align with race?” and “How might leaders begin to reframe the way questions are asked?” This racial awareness module includes multiple opportunities for leaders to self-reflect on race, which, consistent with our preparation framework, can serve as the motivation for transformative action. To directly connect self-reflection to praxis, the module asks students to reflect through journaling on race and leadership practices, and to consider how their actions might be affected by this reflection. As other examples, students and professors are also required to complete racial autobiographies. Last, extensions of the module suggest presenting students with opportunities to engage in action research projects and other problem-based learning that can support praxis. The eventual goal of these reflective activities is to impact the students’ thinking and action, and eventually empower them to find ways to operate as tempered radicals within educational systems that should be reformed (Alston, 2005).

Grounding in a Critical Theoretical Construction

The theory of action (Argyris & Schon, 1978) for racial awareness module is,

If we provide participants with multiple opportunities to reflect on how race plays a personal and professional role in their lives and in the lives of students, then our participants will develop a keen awareness of inequities and beliefs that will enable them to actively fight institutional racism in schools and society (<http://www.ucea.org/building-a-community-of-trust>).

Inherent in this theory of action is a grounding in a critical theoretical construction. For example, critical race theory holds that race and racism permeate all facets of American life (Bell, 1987, 1992). This includes how we teach and learn about leadership (Gooden, 2012; Tillman, 2005). To place race at the center of our learning in leadership, we must really think about all processes of the leadership curriculum and consider how they are affected by race as opposed to whether they are affected by race. A grounding in a theory focused on race can support this undertaking.

What this critical race theory does, among other things, is challenge the notions of meritocracy, objectivity, neutrality, and the efficacy of color blindness. Many well-meaning educators assumed they are colorblind, as that notion seems humane on its face. So an understanding of theories is necessary and can help address this question when racism will be part of the discourse: "So, am I a racist?" This is a loaded question that may be asked by White aspiring leaders, especially when exploring diverse perspectives and how they affect their leadership practice. We agree with Tatum (1992) that what students are really asking is whether or not they are bigots or bad White person who intentionally visits verbal and/or physical abuse on people of color. It is helpful to define racism as "a system of privilege based on race" (Tatum, 2003). In America, privilege is afforded to Whiteness. Because much about this system is not readily visible and appears normal and natural, however, all individuals work on some level to maintain this system, regardless of whether it benefits them or not. Tatum (2003) noted that racism is like smog in the air, and we all breathe it. That means people of color also struggle with the construction of racism and how to respond to it as leaders. Some leaders of color even work to enforce tenets or racism (Gooden, 2012). Note that racism is a cultural and societal issue that operates as a cycle of socialization, and it will continue unless there is a process of unlearning and a conscious decision to disrupt status quo thinking. It is important to point out that intentionality or active racism (like that of bigots) is not a prerequisite to cause harm to a person of color and should not be the focal point. In fact, lack of intentionality and belief in liberal views distracts leaders from participating in a true interrogation of his or her role within this system.

Interrogating race is a difficult process for Whites and people of color, and if not handled carefully can really alienate people. When attempting to see inherent privilege built into systems, Whites tend to have more trouble. Indeed, numerous studies on White racism and critical Whiteness studies document the actual challenges associated with presence and the invisibility of Whiteness (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Fine, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993, 1997; Marx, 2004; McIntosh, 1990; McIntyre, 1997; Roediger, 1991, 1994; Scheurich & Young, 1998; Sleeter, 1994, 2001; Tatum, 1992). The scholars exploring this critical area have sought to engage preservice and in-service teachers in discourse that make Whiteness visible and that highlight the role of Whiteness in domination and exploitation.

However, because there is White domination in the United States and there can be political consequences for behavior, people of color, including educators, respond in a variety of ways that may appear to at times support policies and practices of the

dominant school system. This depends on how they racially or ethnically identify themselves and their level of consciousness. Cross' (1991) model of Nigrescence, which means becoming Black, can provide insight on identity development through five stages of consciousness: preencounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment. Similarly, Darder (1991) has explored how Latinos in the United States experience and grapple with stages of biculturalism in describing her four stages of identity development: alienation, dualism, separation, and negotiation. Depending on where the respective people are in their consciousness level, they will respond in a variety of ways to the belief that the accepted, dominant way of education is natural and normal.

In their discussion of White identity development, Derman-Sparks and Phillips (1997) asserted that Whites benefit and receive privileges from the system of racism, albeit on a continuum. They further argued that Whites who do nothing to challenge this system are essentially supporting racism, and thus practicing, even if their aim is not to directly oppress people of color. Similarly, people of color who do nothing to challenge the system and "colludes with his own oppression" are proracists (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p. 26). They defined antiracism as "to consciously seek to reduce and eventually eliminate racism, and in its place to create a new institutional relationships not dependent on domination and subordination of any racial groups" (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p. 23). In their conceptualization, Whites can progress from racists to antiracists, and people of color can progress from proracists to anti-racists. In summary, a grounding in critical theoretical construction that has an intentional inclusion of race language is apparent in this section.

Privilege

In his book, *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect and What We Can do*, Claude Steele reviewed his work over the years on stereotype threat and how it affects the performance of people with contingency identities, such as gender or race. Steele (2011) illustrated that those who are affected by this threat have to contend with biases of the privilege. For example, Steele explained how privilege happens in his discussion of "the observer's perspective, where they are trying to explain poor performance, not success" (p. 45).

Steele (2011) clarified that this approach is a focus on deficiencies of the actor, and it might include a questioning of the "students themselves, their motivations, expectations, self-esteem, cultural orientation, the value they placed on education; their work habits; their families emphasis on school achievement; and so forth" (p. 17).

Another way to put this is that the observers may frame the problem in deficit terms that can lead to an assessment that people of color are not successful because they are different, which is their problem. Oftentimes, observers discuss about the students of color and their families using a deficit frame, and observers instead tend to develop solutions without asking for their input. That too is privilege of the observer. Privilege is difficult for the observer to see as they believe it is normal,

natural, and expected or even earned. It is only when that privilege is threatened to be diminished or taken away that the observer realizes they are not willing to share or lose it to the actors.

How educators think about race and racism affects student achievement, often-times adversely, if privilege is not surfaced and interrogated. To surface privilege, the Building A Community of Trust Through Racial Awareness module requires facilitators and students to complete a series of exercises based on privilege and racial identity (McIntosh, 1990). The Color Arc, one exercise, requires all participants to calculate a “privilege score” and line up along an actual arc. One of the major points of this exercise is to really make White privilege, which is often invisible as noted above, very apparent for all students. This exercise is then followed with an open discussion, paying particular attention to power dynamic and emotions in the classroom. Students and facilitators complete a self-reflection journal entry. In addition, an attached exercise asks the students to explore reasons for the achievement gap, which is the discrepancy between Whites and Asians and students of color in performance as measured often although not always by standardized achievement scores. The point of these exercises is to engage leaders in open discussion and private reflection about the impact of race on their leadership, which ultimately will be foundation for the decisions they will make as leaders. In other words, a person’s leadership philosophy influences how he or she operates as a leader, and self-reflection is important to addressing issues of institutional racism. These multiple opportunities to interrogate race through self-reflection and hands-on exercises can develop confidence in leadership practice and really help leaders address barriers to leadership like privilege discussed above.

Conclusion

As Hawley and James (2010) implied, it is important that participants learn definitions of race, racism, and White privilege/advantage. Although this is necessary, it is not sufficient. As we have tried to demonstrate here, we believe a race-centered framework is needed for leadership preparation. We do not believe that the calling for this framework has started with us. Indeed, faculty in UCEA institutions have conducted and published research in journal articles, books, and chapters. Some of this work has even pointed us in the direction of race (L. Foster & Tillman, 2009).

We work with students to develop their racial awareness of self and others through the use of articles, activities, dialogues, reflective journaling, and ultimately a racial autobiography. There are two things that are important here that help to expand our thinking about this process. First, the racial autobiography makes the socially constructed concept of race more visible and tangible to the lives of participants, as it requires them to interrogate race and grapple with what it means. Like the White teachers in the studies referred to earlier, our students initially resisted when asked to acknowledge and confront their Whiteness. However, we found that perhaps because of a familiarity with racism, our students of color had a harder time because they had

to recount more painful instances. They all eventually completed the document. Second, this exercise provides a panoply of emotions and difficulty that must be managed carefully. Still, this difficult self-reflection should be endured as it can serve as motivation for transformative action in their leadership practice. Indeed, several students experiencing aspects of the module have agreed to the transformative nature of this work. Although the sentiment shared by these students is rewarding and we are excited to see what our colleagues have accomplished, we also know there is much work to do as we move forward with our goal of breaking down barriers to access and supporting the educational needs of all children, especially those who have been historically marginalized due to race and culture.

Racism is a societal problem that often hides in plain site. But as educational leadership preparation programs infuse a prophetic voice, self-reflection, a grounding in a critical theoretical frame, a pragmatic edge, and race language throughout the curriculum, the subject of race will find greater exposure and projects to engage the practices and policies that engender greater demonstrations of racism will be revealed and worked against.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Note

1. In contrast to Whites, Asians are least isolated within their own racial group—with only about one-fifth Asian classmates. Asians attend the most diverse schools of all, with 45% White, 12% Black, and 20% Latino students.

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Bios

Mark A. Gooden, Ph.D., serves as an Associate Professor in the Educational Administration Department. He is also Director of The University of Texas at Austin Principalship Program (UTAPP). His research interests include the principalship, anti-racist leadership, urban educational leadership and legal issues in education. His research has appeared in *Brigham Young University Education and Law Journal*, *Education and Urban Society*, *The Journal of Negro Education*, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *The Sage Handbook of African-American Education* and *The Principal's Legal Handbook*.

Michael E. Dantley is Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership in the School of Education, Health and Society, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. The focus of his research is the leadership of urban schools, critical spirituality and social justice. His work can be found in *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *the Journal of School Leadership*, *Urban Education*, *the International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *Education and Urban Society* and *the Journal of Negro Education*.