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Eric C. Sheffield, Managing Editor

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** Our thanks to the cadre of scholars who serve as reviewers without whose services the journal could not exist.

Critical Questions in Education: Volume 12, Issue 3

Hi Friends of the Academy,

Herein you will find Volume 12, Issue 3—marking the end of our 12th year publishing *Critical Questions in Education* and our second year of doing so three times a year, rather than two. I'm happy to report that both the quantity and quality of submissions to the journal has certainly not waned.

I'm also happy to report that the Academy held its first in-person gathering last month in Cleveland, Ohio, and it was a great success. It was certainly nice to gather together in person to discuss critical issues in the world of education. Finally, we are very much looking forward to gathering again in the spring: please consider joining us in beautiful Charleston South Carolina February 21-23 at the Francis Marion Hotel. The call for proposals and hotel information can be found here: https://academyforeducationalstudies.org/.

Volume 12, Issue 3, like other past issues, should certainly engage that critical part of your mind. In our first article, Sarah Straub reports on a study investigating the value of intentional school director pipelines. The second article, penned by Chloé S. Bolyard and A. Minor Baker, considers diversity placements and questions whether such programs encourage a social justice mindset or, instead, reinforce negative stereotypes. The third piece, written by Yuki Hasebe, ponders the age-old question as to the overlap of secular and religious morality and its implications for education. Eran Gusacov closes out our regular manuscript section with a philosophical inquiry as to how parent/school solidarity has played out in the Covid-19 era. Finally, Barry Birnbaum provides a review of Kristien Hens' book, *Towards an Ethics of Autism: A Philosophical Exploration*.

Happy reading.

PAX,

Eric C. Sheffield, Editor
Critical Questions in Education

Critical Questions in Education

Eric C. Sheffield, Managing Editor

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Manuscripts

Review

All Means All: A Case Study on Intentional School Director Talent Pipeline Initiatives at an Urban Title 1 School District

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Abstract

Bogotch (2002) proposed that educational leadership cannot be separated from social justice, and this is a sentiment that is taken to heart at an urban Title-1 school district in Houston, Texas. To intentionally address the need for such alignment between mission and practice, the district implemented a recruitment and talent development initiative that actively sought to change the district's talent pool. This program develops effective leaders through a fellowship that focuses on building and leading an effective team, coaching and managing with excellence, and solving high-impact, complex problems. Using a position-subject approach (Conrad, Haworth, & Millar, 2001), this paper evaluates the extent to which the program uplifts diverse voices in school leadership and the extent to which the program successfully prepares participants for leadership roles. This manuscript includes a description of a successful and inclusive school leadership pipeline, an explanation of challenges and resistance faced for both leadership initiatives, and strategies to continue growth in this particular area of educational leadership through data collected via survey, interview, and autoethnographic reflections.

Keywords: *school leadership; talent pipeline; leadership pipeline; diversity initiative*

Introduction

Bogotch (2002) proposed that educational leadership cannot be separated from social justice and this is a sentiment that is taken to heart at an urban Title-1 school district in Houston, Texas. Important to note that all three of the authors have been directly invested in the programs being studied. One of the authors was a former participant in the Campus Leadership Training Program (CLTP), while the other two authors have dedicated significant time and effort to support and develop each program. To that effect, we intentionally switch from a third-person narrative to a first-person narrative so our relationship to the topic is clear and consistently noticed.

Our district has worked to create exemplary recruitment and talent development initiatives directly related to school leadership. Throughout this paper, the strategic initiatives will be referred to as the CLPT and the School Leader Pipeline Program (SLPP). The names have been changed to allow for anonymity. Both CLTP and SLPP have identified areas of growth for talent development and have actively worked to make change happen in our district's talent pool.

CLTP, a program launched in 2013, has had six cohorts since it began. The goal of CLTP is to build a pipeline of high-performing leaders who serve to fulfill our district's mission and vision (Appendix A). CLTP develops effective leaders through a fellowship that focuses on building and leading an effective team, coaching and managing with excellence, and solving high-impact, complex problems.

In 2014, CLTP split into two separate programs - one geared towards leadership roles on campus including, but not limited to, deans of instruction, deans of students, directors of academics, and the second program focused on school leadership. The two tracks are designed to address the individual needs of the leaders, regardless of title or position in the organization. This article will focus on the school leadership principal track. Current school leaders (principals) and system administrators (district-level positions) make a concerted effort to identify potential candidates, mindful of the goal of including a greater number of minority teachers, and to encourage them to prepare for and apply to the program.

By continuing and improving these programs, our district aims to achieve three overall goals: (1) improve teacher/employee retention rates, (2) increase teacher, manager, and school leadership effectiveness, and (3) increase the number of minority professionals participating in leadership development across the system. As the cultural demographic shift continues to transform the face of our city, our district is committed to bridging the opportunity gaps that, if left unchecked, will continue to widen. Diversity in leadership, especially in the communities where our district operates, allows for authentic engagement both in and outside of our system. Additionally, diversity of thought facilitates creativity, innovation, and initiative. Our district is invested in empowering cohorts of diverse leaders through professional development opportunities so that the students we serve can see themselves in our staff.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, our district began a more extensive school leadership program, as discussed previously, known as the School Leader Pipeline Program. To ensure that our district has exceptional leaders, trained and ready to assume the role of School Director, we must maintain a 50% coverage ratio in the School Director Pipeline. Specifically, if our district has 20 schools across Houston, there must be a minimum of 10 proven leaders in the pipeline. While they are in the pipeline, school directors in waiting will participate in cohort retreats to learn from one another, from experts, and from field experience. In addition to retreats, participants receive customized 1:1 support and personalized coaching. Once they have committed to assume the direction of a school, these school directors in training will transition out of their current roles to spend time shadowing current school directors and planning for their first year leading a campus. In the first year of the program, it had seven residents, six of whom represent various communities of color.

While the CLPT focuses on building skills that will make for a successful leader in whatever leadership capacity an individual might serve, the SLPP builds the technical skillset needed to be an effective School Director through its curriculum, cohort experience, and mentorship programming. To qualify for this program, residents needed to have demonstrated high performance in their current leadership roles at their current schools and a commitment to service within those school communities.

While both programs developed out of necessity in the school district, it is imperative we evaluate them for their effectiveness. To that end, we are focusing this study on two research questions:

1. To what extent does the *CLPT* and the *SLPP* successfully uplift diverse voices in school leadership?
2. To what extent does the *CLPT* and the *SLPP* successfully prepare participants for leadership roles within their district?

In order to address these questions, this case study will take a positioned-subject approach (Conrad, Haworth, & Millar, 2001). A positioned-subject approach assumes that the subjects under investigation are actively reflecting on and constructing meaning in their work. It will also be grounded in critical theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Critical theory focuses on researching how this work benefits those groups traditionally identified as marginalized and the CLPT and SLPP both focus on this initiative.

The method of data collection will include in-depth interviews with the directors of both programs as well as an auto-ethnographic reflection by our district's head. To achieve triangulation, a series of surveys will allow for diverse perspectives and voices to share their experiences in both programs. The purpose of these surveys will be to highlight key successes within our district to prioritize marginalized voices and to innovative leadership pipeline practices. It will also highlight opportunities for continued growth as the SLPP program is in its inaugural year and will require updates.

Ultimately, this manuscript will include a description of a successful and inclusive school leadership pipeline, an explanation of challenges and resistance faced for both leadership initiatives, and strategies to continue growth in this particular area of educational leadership. Implications on future work will be made at the close of this article.

Literature Review

School leadership in general, and the uplifting of diverse leadership more specifically, has been the focus of our school district since the creation of the Diversity Initiative in 2015. The stated purpose of the Diversity Initiative was to "embrace diversity and inclusion to advance social justice." In other words, the initiative focused on staff diversity and inclusion as a driver of equity for children and their communities.

To this end, our school district was intentional in its commitment to recruitment and leadership development. Our school district operated under the assumption that the way candidates interact with organizations, and apply for positions, has fundamentally changed. To address these changes, our school district adopted a more targeted approach. This more proactive recruiting model is known as a talent pipeline.

To address these major themes, this literature review will begin with a brief description of talent pipeline approaches to recruitment and then delve deeper into other studies with a focus on preparation programs for exemplary school leadership. Due to the newness of the talent pipeline models, the majority of sources will not come from academic journals. On the other hand, due to the robustness of research on effective leadership development programs, the majority of sources regarding this topic will come from peer-reviewed journals.

Talent Pipelines

A talent pipeline can most easily be defined as "a collection of candidates that are engaged and can be contacted when relevant roles are created" (Slater, 2019). A necessary component of

talent pipelines is the ability for them to be *relationship*-centric. This means that rather than an organization investing time in searching for qualified candidates, the focus is on building relationships with potential talent for future roles and opportunities. A study completed by Beamery titled "The State of Talent Acquisition 2017" interviewed nearly 600 talent leaders in various business sectors to identify key priorities for hiring. In the study, 82% of recruiters identified proactive recruiting (also known as talent pipelines) as the major priority (Slater, 2019).

To further differentiate within the context of this study, a program like CLPT would be defined as a talent pool while the SLPP would more accurately fit the definition of a talent pipeline. The major difference between the two is that in the pipeline, the candidates are actively undergoing some sort of pathway towards the eventual destination like a school director position. In a talent pool, however, candidates are grouped and categorized by their talent. There is a less defined end goal for the talent pool.

Slater continues to highlight key benefits for organizations to transition to a talent pipeline recruitment approach. Intuitively, talent pipelines produce better candidates. This is due to the long-term approach to hiring as opposed to a more traditional model of filling a vacancy by rushing to find a candidate. In Slater's approach, the candidates are already assembled. Another major benefit, which aligns to the scope of this study, is that talent pipelines have demonstrated that they increase diversity in hiring practices (Slater, 2019). These relationship-building talent pipelines provide organizations with the time to both identify diverse prospective candidates and to build a relationship with those candidates.

This paper will continue with a brief description of the process of developing a leadership pipeline based on the work of Jay A. Conger and Robert M. Fulmer in the Harvard Business Review. Rather than using the term talent pipeline, the authors name this process succession management. The definition, according to Conger and Fulmer (2003) is "combining succession planning and leadership development in a comprehensive process for finding and grooming future leaders at all levels of the organization (pg. 1)." This approach requires the adoption of a talent mindset:

- Time is made for in-depth talent assessment
- There is differentiation between strong and weak performers
- There are challenging assignments to inexperienced but high-potential managers

While this study focused on big businesses such as Dell, Dow Chemical, Eli Lilly, PanCanadian Petroleum, Sonoco Products, and Bank of America, the major takeaways are easily transferable to a school district and its hiring and recruitment processes.

To confirm this correlation, a school leadership study conducted by Linda Darling-Hammond, Michelle LaPointe, Debra Meyerson, Margaret Terry Orr, and Carol Cohen (2007) examined eight pre- and in-service principal development programs. These programs were selected based on evidence of strong outcomes in their preparation programs. Additionally, each of these programs demonstrated unique approaches to the actual programming. For the purpose of this article, while Darling-Hammond, et. al., describe this process as leadership development programs, we will substitute the term talent pipeline as a point of clarity and connection between the sources included in this literature review.

School Leadership Preparation Programs

Much like the current trends on teacher demographics, school leadership data shows that K-12 school principals identify overwhelmingly as White and to this effect oftentimes do not reflect the diversity of the student populations that they serve (Castro, et. al., 2018). This policy brief sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration acknowledged current policies geared towards increased diversity in the teaching workforce and proposed that the same focus be directed towards increasing diversity in K-12 school leadership. Of the policy recommendations, two fall within the scope of this study. Castro, Germain, and Gooden (2018) suggest that "institutions of higher education and school leadership programs can foster partnerships with current school leaders and provide training opportunities to help them identify and recruit promising teachers of color into leadership programs" (pg. 1). CLPT and the SLPP are intentional in this regard--engaging in the talent cultivation of leaders of color early and often ensuring that the diversification of the pipeline is a perpetual practice rather than a point in time attempt.

The other recommendation suggests the inclusion of pathway opportunities like a talent pipeline. The goal is to engage in early recruitment and effective mentoring programs for teachers of color. Both programs discussed in this study include a mentoring component. Every member of CLTP and the SLPP are paired with a senior leader in our district. All members of the executive team, including the CEO, participate as mentors demonstrating the organizational commitment to proactively clearing the path for future leaders to learn and grow. These mentoring relationships last for at least one year and include monthly in-person touchpoints where mentees bring problems of practice ensuring that the mentorship is both targeted and practical.

As stated previously, the academic research on school leadership preparation programs is much more robust than on talent pipelines geared towards the education sector. To that effect, this literature review will focus on highlighting key takeaways from Stanford University's School Leadership Study titled "Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs" by Darling Hammond, LaPoint, Meyerson, Terry Orr, and Cohen (2007).

Essentially, this study of thirteen preservice and sixteen in-service programs found that preparation programs with innovative approaches yielded participants who felt better prepared for their intended role and had a better understanding of leadership practices than others with more conventional preparation (Darling-Hammond, et. al., 2007). One innovative practice outlined in the study was a cohort model and had current administrators as program facilitators. In both the CLTP and the SLPP, members of our district executive team facilitate a number of the leadership courses that are required for the successful completion of the respective programs. For example, in the CLTP, the CEO is responsible for the required sessions titled Managing Conflict and Building Trust. In the SLPP, the CEO delivers a required session on titled Courageous Leadership.

Another critical characteristic of leadership preparation programs is that the components are connected via such actions as field-based projects, action research, and problem-based learning. Both CLPT and the SLPP incorporate several of these specific types of program work. For example, at the end of the CLTP, program participants (divided into cohorts) are required to present findings of their action research to the entire executive team and the Board of Directors. Action research projects always focus on relevant and urgent needs of the organization. In the past, the action research has included parent engagement, college initiatives programming, and diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development planning.

Methodology

We decided to implement a qualitative approach with this study because of the benefits of this method of study. One of the major advantages of adopting a qualitative approach is that subjects can be evaluated in greater detail. For example, during our interview process, we were able to utilize a semi-structured approach so, while maintaining fidelity to the core interview questions, we were able to dig deeper into areas that we may not have initially considered. Qualitative research devotes itself to the subtleties noticed in the information that has been collected. This allows for increased detail and opportunities for insight during data analysis.

Additionally, we adopted the qualitative approach because it lends itself to data collected based on human experiences. The human experience is complex. Individual perspectives will be nuanced. While we may be able to determine some consistencies between accounts, the nuances of human experiences can be better identified and discussed from a qualitative approach. Especially with our purpose of highlighting key successes within our district to prioritize marginalized voices and to innovative leadership pipeline practices, we must consider even the outliers during this case study.

Our case study took a positioned-subject approach (Conrad, Haworth, & Millar, 2001). As stated earlier, a positioned-subject approach assumes that the subjects under investigation are actively reflecting on and constructing meaning in their work. One of our authors, speaking as a former employee in our district, notes that constant reflection was prioritized and instrumental for growth at any level, whether it be teacher or administrator.

The participants in this study came from three sources and all participants are based on convenience as they all come from within the same school district and are active in the same SLPP. Our first source will be one of our authors, the current CEO for our district. He will provide an auto-ethnographical account of his experiences of lessons learned through his own school director training and his role in the development of a radically new approach in our district. Our second source of participants will come from the directors of CLTP and the SLPP. These interviews will highlight the successes and the areas for continued improvement within both initiatives. Our final participant source will be individuals who opted into survey participation. Each of these individuals are a part of a convenience sample, meaning that they are current participants. The participants did not receive any benefit from participation and were allowed to opt-out at any point.

The materials used in this case study are different interview protocols and a survey. The readers can see the survey question types in the tables that follow, and the interview protocol will be attached in Appendix B. The readers must note that these interviews were fluid and semi-structured to allow for the space to dig deeper during the interview process. Questions focused on exclusionary practices for traditional leadership roles, the strengths of CLTP and SLPP, personal experiences in these programs, and opportunities for growth and hopes for the future. After the data was collected, we coded for high-frequency responses and looked for emergent themes which will be discussed in section IV.

Again, the purpose was to judge the effectiveness of the current programs and, as the study progressed, it showed a necessity for increased data collection and an inherently stronger alignment to the goals of this paper by focusing on the SLPP.

Results

All of the responses that were collected were meant to help assess the two guiding research questions:

1. To what extent does the *CLPT* and the *SLPP* successfully uplift diverse voices in school leadership?
2. To what extent does the *CLPT* and the *SLPP* successfully prepare its participants for leadership roles within their district?

Our school organization's CEO composed an auto-ethnographical reflection in which he focused on how his lived experiences, coupled with his understanding of larger systemic injustice and inequity, led him towards advocating for programs like CLPT and the SLPP. Following this, we will deep dive into surveys and interviews completed by program directors and program participants.

Auto-ethnographical Account[1]

In December 2005, I left for winter break as the 6th grade math teacher at my school, and when I came back after break in January 2016, I was introduced to the staff as their new principal. Over that break, the current principal transitioned out to prepare to open a new district campus, and I was approached, without an application or selection process, to lead the school. My preparation for assuming this new role and increased breadth of responsibility was non-existent. At that time, our district explicitly embraced a "sink or swim" and "trial by fire" attitude when it came to school leader development. In part, we were moving so fast as a start-up organization, with such limited resources, that we believed we had no choice but to embrace this approach. In part, this approach reflected a deep, though only superficially explored, belief that the best way to create leaders was through living the crucible of leadership with real, high stakes.

To assess the strengths and weaknesses of my preparation is to presume that there was any formal preparation at all. There was not. My preparation was merely an assessment of how I was performing in my current job as a 6th grade teacher and the grade level chair and assumed that strong performance in my current roles would translate to strong performance in an expanded capacity. A major flaw in this preparation philosophy is clear in retrospect. If I succeeded in my new role as a leader, then the success was assigned to the pathway—or lack thereof. However, if I failed then the failure was assessed to me personally.

My independent nature and natural, though sometimes unfounded belief, that I can overcome even the toughest obstacles created an opportunity for me to thrive in this environment. However, as our district has since realized, this approach can be especially problematic for aspiring female leaders and aspiring leaders who are people of color. From the time I can remember, my leadership was encouraged and promoted. This is not true for all. My potential was affirmed and encouraged. This is not true for all. The stakes of personal failure for me were manageable and safeguarded. Again, this is not true for all. A system that relies solely on the inherent confidence (for me bordering on arrogance) of its aspiring leaders will undoubtedly lose capable leaders on the journey and miss the opportunity of discovering fully capable leaders who do not fully match the archetype.

1. Note that during this section of the paper, we change our writing from a group focus to "I" statements. This is because this section focuses solely on the experiences of one of our authors.

The only way I have found to break the cycle which disproportionately favors white males, and other privileged leaders, is to develop intentional interventions that expand the pipeline and support aspiring leaders through that pipeline. The pipeline must be wide enough to capture many varieties of leaders and have a strong enough flow to ensure that all capable leaders emerge. However, the pipeline must also be unapologetic about articulating and instilling shared organizational values in its leaders in a way that do not force the individuals to assimilate. This is a tricky business—such is the nature of leadership development.

CLPT and the SLPP were born out of the intersection of evolving organizational values and specific organizational needs. They were created to solve both philosophical and mathematical problems. Philosophically, I became convinced that without formal leadership development programs, we would destine ourselves to a monolithic school leader cohort—one that largely did not reflect the demographics of the students our district exists to serve. Mathematically, it was impossible to ignore the fact that our informal leadership development approach was being outpaced by our growth and our need for new leaders. In other words, we launched CLTP first, and then the SLPP, to ensure that we had both a diverse leadership pipeline and a sufficiently large pipeline to serve the thousands, soon to be tens of thousands, of our district's students.

While these programs are still relatively new, the diversification of our team of school directors is unquestionable. Five years ago the majority of this team were white males. Now this team is majority people of color and a majority are women. Over that same time, I have come to believe deeply that diversity is a necessary, but insufficient, measure of success. Diversity must be the foundation of success, but in isolation it tells us very little. What I am most proud of at our district is that by any practical measure we are now, five years after the inception of these programs, both a far more diverse organization and a far more successful one. We serve far more students. We keep far more students. Their achievement is stronger. Our staff members are measurably more satisfied, and we are retaining them longer.

CLTP and SLPP have not just made us a more diverse, inclusive organization. They have made us a better, stronger organization for the 13,500 students we are privileged to serve. What I do note from the results of our survey and the more descriptive responses is there is a disconnect. Participants and program directors are able to articulate incredible pride in these initiatives and yet, within the confines of the survey, there were gaping opportunities for growth. This study will inspire clearly defined action-steps for increased program reflection.

Program Directors

CLTP was established in 2013 and was borne out of a conversation with the executive team about the need for a proactive, offensive (rather than defensive) approach to leadership development. From a conversation at a coffee shop with notes hastily scribbled on napkins to the allocation of resources and a full-time director in the following budget cycle, CLTP went from an idea to a formal structure in less than 6 months—such is the nature of progressive, positive change at our district. A few years later, the SLPP followed a similar path from idea to implementation and addressed the acute need of filling principal-level roles in the organization proactively and with a diverse talent pool. After the origination of these programs, director leadership extended to Heads of Schools. In this model, each school has a School Director who is mentored by a Head of Schools. A Head of Schools is responsible for a region in our district and has previously demonstrated leadership potential in a School Director role. These Heads of Schools are now also working with the talent pipeline through the SLPP. For our study, the program director interviews were limited

to three participants. We acknowledge that the numbers below do not represent a wide range of responses, but feel that we can extrapolate meaning within the context of identifying the potential opportunities for continued study.

Two of the respondents were male and the other was female. One identified as African American. One identified as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. Each of these individuals had more than five years in the classroom, followed by anywhere from seven to nearly 20 years of experience in leadership roles.

Table 1: Perceptions of Program Directors for the CLTP[2]

Does the program...	**Not at all**	**A little**	**Moderate amount**	**A lot**	**Very well**
Create a collaborative learning environment	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Use data to monitor school progress, identity problems, & propose solutions	0.00%	**50.00%**	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Lead a well-informed, planned change process for school	**50.00%**	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Engage staff in decision-making about school curriculum and policies	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%
Develop broad agreement among staff about the school's mission	**50.00%**	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Mobilize the school's staff to foster social justice in serving all students	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%
Handle discipline and support services	**50.00%**	0.00%	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Analyze current systems for equity approach	0.00%	**50.00%**	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Work with parents to support students' learning	0.00%	**50.00%**	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Collaborate with others outside of the school for assistance and partnership	0.00%	**50.00%**	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%

Two of the indicators that solicited the highest response were "engag[ing] staff in decision-making about school curriculum and policies" and "develop[ing] a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making." A specific way that these programs target these initiatives is by formally introducing cohort members to the organization's decision-making framework—IRADP,

2. The survey has been modified from Stanford's School Leadership Survey (2007).

which is an application of Bain's highly successful RAPID framework).[3] This process starts with an intentional focus on input gathering (the "I" in IRADP) as the necessary first step in all major decisions made at our district—highlighting our district's commitment to broad stakeholder engagement as the underpinning to any ethical decision-making framework. Additionally, in the interview portion, program directors highlighted that while participating in the program, the mentor-relationship as one of its foundational and most beneficial pillars.

As identified by the program directors, a demonstrated area of growth for these programs would be to increase the focus on analyzing current systems for an equity approach and develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making. When asked about why these programs were prioritized, one program director responded, "because we need to increase access to the opportunities to lead our organization and ensure that we are mining for people that may not have had access to the roles." Another participant suggested that it was "unclear how we track the success of the program with data and performance of participants to make adjustments each year in the fidelity of the program." This disconnect was readily apparent in contrast between survey and interview responses. While the survey tended to be more critical of the program, the interview responses shifted towards a more positive outlook. This leads us to conclude two things: (1) the program has been successful in how the participants and leaders emotionally connect to this model and (2) the program has not, to date, focused on the intentionality of its components.

Table 2: Perceptions of program directors for the SLPP

Does the program...	**Not at all**	**A little**	**Moderate amount**	**A lot**	**Very well**
Create a collaborative learning environment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%
Use data to monitor school progress, identity problems, & propose solutions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%
Lead a well informed, planned change process for school	0.00%	0.00%	**66.67%**	33.33%	0.00%
Engage staff in decision-making about school curriculum and policies	0.00%	0.00%	**66.67%**	0.00%	33.33%
Develop broad agreement among staff about the school's mission	0.00%	0.00%	**66.67%**	33.33%	0.00%
Mobilize the school's staff to foster social justice in serving all students	0.00%	0.00%	**66.67%**	0.00%	33.33%
Develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making	0.00%	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%
Handle discipline and support services	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%

3. IRADP (Input, Recommend, Agree, Decide, Perform). RAPID is a tool used to clarify decision accountability and assignment of roles when making decisions.

Analyze current systems for equity approach	0.00%	0.00%	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**
Work with parents to support students' learning	0.00%	33.33%	**66.67%**	0.00%	0.00%
Collaborate with others outside of the school for assistance and partnership	0.00%	**66.67%**	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%

Of the two programs, the SLPP performed better on the survey. On a Likert-style survey where a one indicated "Not at all" and a five indicated "Very well," the SLPP tallied 100% for "a lot" of success with "Creating a collaborative learning organization," "Using data to monitor school progress, identify problems, & propose solutions," and "Handling discipline and support." Its two lowest scoring indicators were related to "working with parents to support students' learning" and "collaborating with others outside of school for assistance and partnership." For this program, the program directors were clear. One program director stated, "equity is the lens through which we look at everything we do, including student achievement and curriculum design, leadership competency, operations, systems, schedules, and talent. Ideally, we are building empowered leaders who are advocates for the communities they serve."

As with other successful school leadership training programs, this includes a strong mentor relationship and specific action-based tasks. An area for growth for the CLTP and the SLPP is a call for increased tracking and data collection on program effectiveness. The directors of this program also called for adopting a method for tracking progress with qualitative and quantitative data during participation. In working to analyze the findings of this initial report, our district CEO noted these recommendations and will be discussing the impact of this study later in this paper.

Program Participants

The participants were asked to reflect on their experiences either with CLPT or with the SLPP. By adopting a positioned-subject approach to inquiry, we acknowledge that relating "teacher perceptions 'as is' is… critical to the authenticity of [the] study" (Wolfe, 2012, p. 8). For this specific survey and interview protocol, we were limited to five participants. As with the previous survey results, we acknowledge that the participant pool is limited. Still, the responses elicited from participants have been critical for program reflection and moves for future work and, as a result of this, will be included in the findings.

Of these participants, four were male and one was female. Four of the participants identified themselves as either African-American or Black. One of the participants clarified that although they identified as Black, they were actually bi-racial (Black/Mexican). The fifth participant preferred not to identify the racial identity. In addition, another of the participants identified as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. While one of the participants had only two years of teaching experience, the others had at least four years in the classroom. The number of years in educational leadership ranged from four to nine years of experience.

Table 3: Perceptions of Participants in the CLTP

Does the program...	**Not at all**	**A little**	**Moderate amount**	**A lot**	**Very well**
Create a collaborative learning environment	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	**66.67%**	0.00%
Use data to monitor school progress, identity problems, & propose solutions	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%	0.00%
Lead a well-informed, planned change process for school	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Engage staff in decision-making about school curriculum and policies	0.00%	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%
Develop broad agreement among staff about the school's mission	0.00%	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%
Mobilize the school's staff to foster social justice in serving all students	0.00%	33.33%	**66.67%**	0.00%	0.00%
Develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**66.67%**	33.33%
Handle discipline and support services	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%	0.00%
Analyze current systems for equity approach	0.00%	**50.00%**	**50.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
Work with parents to support students' learning	0.00%	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	**33.33%**	0.00%
Collaborate with others outside of the school for assistance and partnership	0.00%	33.33%	**66.67%**	0.00%	0.00%

Generally speaking, the participant perspective on both CLTP and the SLPP was more favorable than the perspectives shown in the program director surveys. Nearly 70% of participants identified their program as one that created a collaborative learning organization. All participants stated that their program developed a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making. With regard to engaging in social justice approaches, one participant wrote, "through the nature of our work and the topics we explored [during the program], we were inherently working to develop skills to be leaders of equity and tackle barriers to equity."

Table 4: Perceptions of Participants in the SLPP

Does the program...	**Not at all**	**A little**	**Moderate amount**	**A lot**	**Very well**
Create a collaborative learning environment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**60.00%**	40.00%
Use data to monitor school progress, identity problems, & propose solutions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**100.00%**	0.00%
Lead a well-informed, planned change process for school	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	**60.00%**	0.00%
Engage staff in decision-making about school curriculum and policies	0.00%	20.00%	**40.00%**	**40.00%**	0.00%
Develop broad agreement among staff about the school's mission	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	**40.00%**	**40.00%**
Mobilize the school's staff to foster social justice in serving all students	0.00%	20.00%	**40.00%**	20.00%	20.00%
Develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	**40.00%**	**40.00%**
Handle discipline and support services	0.00%	20.00%	**40.00%**	**40.00%**	0.00%
Analyze current systems for equity approach	0.00%	**40.00%**	**40.00%**	20.00%	0.00%
Work with parents to support students' learning	0.00%	**60.00%**	20.00%	20.00%	0.00%
Collaborate with others outside of the school for assistance and partnership	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	**60.00%**	20.00%

Much like the responses for program directors, those responding as participants in the SLPP also demonstrated a more positive opinion. Indicators that measured an 80% or higher for "A lot" and "Very well" included: (1) creating a collaborative work environment; (2) using data to monitor school progress, identify problems, and propose solutions; (3) develop a broad agreement among staff about the school's mission; (4) develop a clear set of ethical principles to guide decision-making; and (5) collaborate with others outside of the school for assistance and partnership. The two indicators that elicited the least favorable responses were (1) analyzing current systems for equity approach and (2) working with parents to support students' learning.

What is noteworthy, however, is when we compare the survey responses to the interview responses. While the majority of responses indicated that an analysis of current systems for equity approaches happened only "a little" or "a moderate amount" of time within this program, each of the participants, when interviewed, highlighted social justice and equity as frameworks for the program. One participant stated:

> From the beginning, this program has been centered on social justice and equitable access to educational opportunities. Through the program, we have explored issues that are barriers to equity for both students and staff. We are constantly challenged to check our biases as we lead and make decisions that affect those we lead and serve (Participant Interviews, 2019).

Additionally, two of the residents specifically praised the program for accepting people of color as residents.

A final area of success highlighted in the participant interviews showcases the action-based approach of this program. The participant stated, "constant practice has given me the opportunity to experience many of the most difficult challenges I may encounter, failing and correcting, before I ever find myself in the real event."

Discussion

One limitation of this study was the small pool of responses that were gathered. Due to major work and program deadlines around the time of scheduling interviews and survey completion, a smaller percentage of participants actually completed both the survey and the interview questions. This lends itself to an extended study to have follow up interviews and provide time for a larger pool of participants to complete the initial surveys and interviews. As a result, we must clearly state that the findings are inconclusive and warrant extended research. The extension would include an initial call for increased participation from both program directors, current program participants, and past program participants. Additionally, the original scope of including both programs would need to be modified to focus solely on the SLPP. This program yielded more favorable outlooks from both the directors and the participants and, in its original year of implementation, is primed for data collection and responsiveness to data analysis.

Our district is an organization fully committed to continuous improvement, and with a fully staffed Analytics and Research team responsible for data analysis and reporting, our district has operationalized its commitment to using data as the primary driver in this improvement cycle. The data we have collected and will collect on the effectiveness of CLTP and SLPP will be no exception. Where they show positive progress, our district will redouble efforts and investments; and where they show concerning or ineffective trends, our district will make real-time adjustments to ensure the ongoing effectiveness and sustainability of both programs.

In conclusion, our district's commitment to diversity is something teachers and school administrators *see*. In the words of one SLPP participant, "Our cohort is living proof of why diversity is important. By having five leaders of color, one woman of color, two previous school leaders, a Teach for America alum, differing sexual orientations, and levels of religion, it shows our entire organization we value diversity in many different ways."

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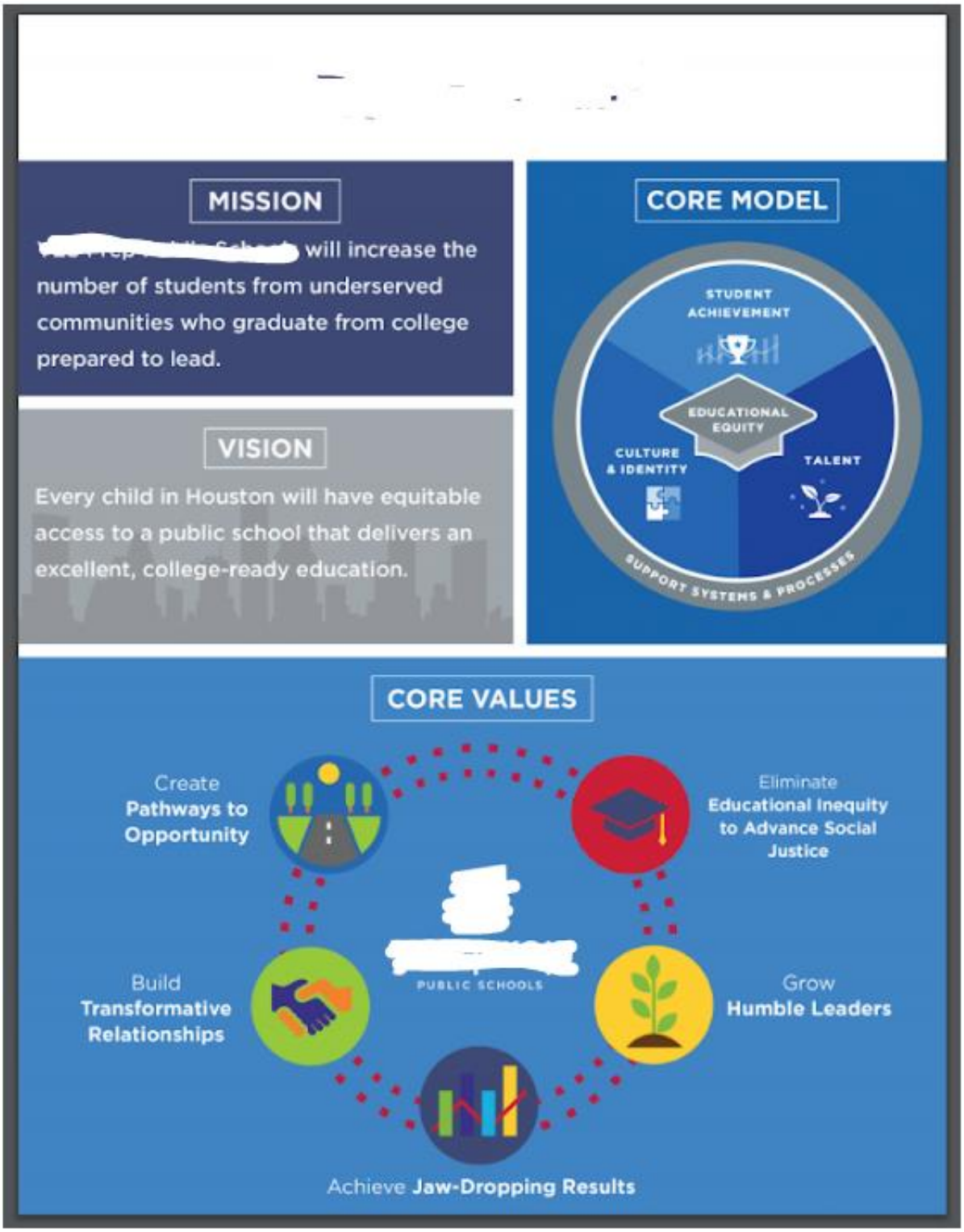
Mark DiBella began his career in education as a 1999 corps member with Teach For America teaching 5th grade at Garcia Elementary in the Houston Independent School District (HISD). Inspired by founder Chris Barbic's vision, Mark left his position at HISD in 2001 to join YES Prep—at the time, a small charter school in southeast Houston where he served in various campus-based positions. In 2010, Mark joined the YES Prep Head of Schools team to manage all YES Prep campuses. From 2011- 2013, he served as the Vice President of Operations and Growth before

moving into the role of Superintendent for the next three years. During his time as Vice President and Superintendent, Mark executed YES Prep's growth strategy and surpassed their vision to serve 10,000 Houston children. For his unwavering commitment to educational equity and undeniable results, the Board of Directors named him Chief Executive Officer in April 2016.

Kelly DeMoya graduated from the University of Texas at Austin and upon graduation, she worked in the YES Prep Home Office where she transformed collaboration among leadership into a proactive framework. After leaving YES Prep, Kelly contracted with the Houston Endowment to assist in the implementation of Theory of Change for K-12 Education portfolios before continuing her education with an MBA from Rice University. Kelly now works as a senior strategy consultant for Accenture.

APPENDIX A


MISSION
[redacted] will increase the number of students from underserved communities who graduate from college prepared to lead.
VISION
Every child in Houston will have equitable access to a public school that delivers an excellent, college-ready education.
CORE MODEL
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY
CULTURE & IDENTITY
TALENT
SUPPORT SYSTEMS & PROCESSES
CORE VALUES
Create Pathways to Opportunity
Eliminate Educational Inequity to Advance Social Justice
[redacted]
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Build Transformative Relationships
Grow Humble Leaders
Achieve Jaw-Dropping Results

APPENDIX B

Semi-structured Interview Questions (Program Participants):

1. In what ways does this program intentionally address social justice?
2. In what ways does this program bridge opportunity gaps?
3. What impact does this program have on improving teacher/employee retention rates?
4. How does this program increase your leadership effectiveness?
5. Why is diversity in leadership important?

Semi-structured Interview Questions (Program Leadership):

1. What specific training did you receive to prepare you to lead this program?
2. How are these trainings aligned with the mission of social justice?
3. Why does YES Prep need to strategically invest in preparing minority-identifying individuals for leadership roles?
4. What is a strength of this program?
5. What is an area of growth for this program?

Diversity Placements: Supporting the Development of Socially Just Teachers or Reinforcing Negative Stereotypes?

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Abstract

While K-12 schools become increasingly more diverse, teacher preparation programs continue graduating mostly White teacher candidates from a middle-class background. If not mitigated, this cultural mismatch can have a detrimental impact on students, as teachers' beliefs about diverse students go unchecked and impact their practice with students. One way teacher preparation programs have sought to prepare teacher candidates to meet the diverse needs of students is through requiring a diverse field experience. This paper shares findings from a mixed-methods study that examined the influence of a diversity placement on elementary teacher candidates' personal and professional beliefs about diversity at a university in the Midwest United States. As a large, public university, Midwest University draws students from a wide variety of settings, from rural locations to dense urban communities. The majority of teacher candidates at Midwest University are from suburban and rural communities. Using a pre-/post- survey design, the researchers note two significant increases in participants' scores after the diversity placement. Additionally, qualitative data analysis from interviews provides a nuanced understanding of survey score changes. Three recommendations for teacher preparation programs are provided.

Keywords: *elementary teacher education; teacher candidates; multicultural education; field experiences; teacher beliefs*

Given the increasing student diversity within schools (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2019) and the predominantly White, middle-class, female teaching force (Hochschild, 2003; Loewus, 2017), teachers must gain competencies related to serving diverse students through inclusive, equitable, and just practices. By diverse students, we mean students belonging to "historically marginalized sociocultural groups" (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001, p. 161). Teacher beliefs and practices, specifically related to students who are different from them, have a profound impact on the teaching and learning environment (Kahn et al., 2014; Nelson & Guerra, 2014; Sleeter, 2001). The demographic mismatch of teachers and students creates significant cultural and social gaps that contribute to the likelihood of marginalized students' poor performance in public education (Sandell & Tupy, 2015). Responsive teacher preparation programs (TPPs), therefore, must prepare teacher candidates (TCs) for the social and cultural contexts found in public schools. These contexts are defined in the diversity standards required by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (CAEP, 2013).

Some scholars have argued that teacher education tends to perpetuate the status quo by

failing to adequately prepare TCs to work with diverse students (Allen et al., 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Nelson & Guerra, 2014). Current inadequate teacher education practices include a cultural homogeneity of faculty (Ladson-Billings, 2010; Warren, 2018); an additive, piecemeal approach to multicultural education (Ladson-Billings, 2010; Mills & Ballantyne, 2010); a "diverse" field experience as a hoop to jump through (Ladson-Billings, 2010) or that reinforces problematic stereotypes (Haberman & Post, 1992; Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Warren, 2018); and simplistic notions of culturally relevant pedagogy (Sleeter, 2012).

One way TPPs can disrupt the status quo is by working to enhance TCs' equity literacy (Gorski, 2016) through meaningful and structured field experiences in schools with diverse student populations, sometimes referred to as "diversity placements" (Acquah & Commins, 2016; Siwatu et al., 2011). Community-based experiences can be more important than coursework for developing TCs' equity literacy (Sleeter, 2001) and self-efficacy as culturally responsive teachers (Siwatu et al., 2011). The intent of this study was to explore the influence of a diversity placement (i.e., a Title I school in a Midwestern state) on elementary TCs' personal and professional beliefs about working with diverse students. After reviewing the theoretical influences and research literature on teacher candidate beliefs about diverse students and teacher education's approach to improving those beliefs, we describe the context and research design of the current inquiry. We share both quantitative and qualitative findings and discussion related to the study's research question and conclude with recommendations for teacher preparation.

Theoretical Influence: Teacher Candidate Beliefs about Diverse Students

Our research on TCs' beliefs about diverse students is influenced by a number of understandings related to beliefs. In this section, we detail our conception of beliefs, how beliefs are formed and altered, TCs' beliefs about diverse students, and a two-dimensional view of beliefs.

Because TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity are the object of examination in the present study, it is necessary to clarify how we conceptualize beliefs broadly and personal and professional beliefs about diversity more specifically. Pajaras (1992), in a detailed synthesis of research on beliefs, provided several characteristics of beliefs. They are formed early and are part of a belief system acquired through cultural transmission. This belief system is made up of beliefs, attitudes, and values (Guerra & Wubbena, 2017). One's belief system influences how one makes sense of the world, linking knowledge and beliefs. Beliefs have varying levels of centrality to an individual based on the number of connections to other beliefs. More central beliefs and those formed earlier in one's life are resistant to change, making belief change in adulthood rare (Guerra & Wubbena, 2017). Guerra and Nelson (2009) echoed Pajaras' (1992) contention that beliefs act as filters, influencing one's perceptions.

Beliefs about teaching are well established by the time an individual begins a TPP (Kyles & Olafson, 2008; Pajares, 1992), largely influenced by one's apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975; Smagorinsky & Barnes, 2014) and prior experiences (Garmon, 2005; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). Teacher candidates, as insiders to the profession from their experience as students, have deeply ingrained beliefs about the teaching profession that may be resistant to change during their coursework (Garmon, 2005; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Pajaras, 1992). Researching such beliefs is of critical importance to teacher educators since beliefs have been linked to action (Bandura, 1982; Nelson & Guerra, 2014; Pajaras, 1992). More specifically, researchers have found predictive power in TCs' beliefs about diverse students and TCs' expectations and treatment of diverse students based on gender, social class, and race/ethnicity (Nelson & Guerra, 2014; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). For example, teachers' deficit views that place blame on the

individual rather than on systemic structures limit students' academic success (Guerra & Wubbena, 2017).

In the present study, we adopt Pohan and Aguilar's (2001) two-dimensional view of beliefs (i.e., personal and professional beliefs) when examining TCs' beliefs about diverse students. We examine personal and professional beliefs about diversity separately because of the idea that "one's beliefs about a given issue could be in direct conflict with [their] beliefs in a professional context" (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001, p. 160). Personal beliefs are related to one's "opinions, expectations or judgements that a person considers in their daily life" (Chiner et al., 2015, p. 19). Whereas professional beliefs "refer to issues related to school (e.g., instructional practices)" (Chiner et al., 2015, p. 19).

Review of the Literature

Given the deeply held nature of TCs' beliefs by the time they begin a TPP and the influence of various factors outside of teacher preparation on TCs' beliefs toward diverse students, what, then, is the role of teacher education in actually altering TCs' beliefs about diverse students? This literature review provides a synthesis of the research that has examined this question related to diversity placements and TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity.

Diversity Placements

Scholars have agreed that experience is critical to fostering "the multicultural awareness and sensitivity" needed to support diverse students (Garmon, 2005, p. 277). Garmon (2005) contended that intercultural experiences have the potential for enhancing TCs' cultural competence. Field experiences provide TCs with an opportunity to observe and/or participate in the connection of theory to practice, providing TCs with an opportunity to apply what they have learned in their coursework to their work with students (Acquah & Commins, 2016). Diversity placements serve the same purpose, with the goal of increasing TCs' beliefs about diversity and efficacy as culturally responsive teachers. Such diversity placements have been shown to be effective at achieving this and similar goals: increases in cultural awareness, awareness of different contexts, and awareness of biases (Fry & McKinney, 1997; Gomez et al., 2009; Lastrapes & Negishi, 2012; Sleeter, 2001); perspective-taking (Lastrapes & Negishi, 2012); and the necessity of relationship building (Fry & McKinney, 1997; Martin et al., 2013; Miller & Mikulec, 2014).

Several scholars have agreed that the value of diversity placements depends upon appropriate guidance and support provided to TCs (Brown, 2004; Grant, 1994; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). Diversity placements should be well planned and closely supervised (Mason, 1999; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). Having a cooperating teacher (CT) who models culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is more beneficial for enhancing TCs' self-efficacy for teaching diverse students compared to field experiences with CTs who do not model CRT (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Siwatu et al., 2011). Additionally, a course coupled with a diversity placement enables TCs an avenue to interpret their experiences (Siwatu et al., 2011; Sleeter, 2001) and examine their existing dispositions and beliefs through meaningful dialogue (Cochran-Smith, 1995; He & Cooper, 2009; Kirkland, 2014). TCs should have regular opportunities for reflection throughout their diversity placement (Bondy et al., 1993; Brown, 2004; Johnson, 2002; Kyles & Olafson, 2008).

As mentioned previously, not all experiences have the same impact on TCs. As far as the impact of diversity placements on TCs' confidence working with diverse students, research findings are mixed. While some scholars have noted an increased confidence among TCs after a

diversity placement (Haberman & Post, 1992; Lastrapes & Negishi, 2012) and an increased willingness to teach in urban schools (Groulx, 2001; Sleeter, 2001), others have noted the adverse effect of a diversity placement on TCs' confidence to teach and interest in teaching in diverse settings (Gomez et al., 2009).

While diversity placements have the potential to make valuable contributions to TCs' cultural competence, scholars have also noted ways that such experiences have been counterproductive at developing TCs' cultural competence. Diversity placements have been linked with reinforcing TCs' biases and negative perspectives of marginalized populations and communities (Cross, 2005; Gallego, 2001; Gay, 2000; Haberman & Post, 1992; Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Jacobs, 2015; Nelson & Guerra, 2014). For example, Haberman and Post (1992) noted that TCs use "their direct experiences to selectively perceive and reinforce their initial preconceptions" (p. 30). Diversity placements have also resulted in TCs developing new problematic perspectives of marginalized students and communities (Burant & Kirby, 2002; Gallego, 2001). Kirkland (2014) reiterated that diversity placements alone do not ensure transformative outcomes.

Deficit beliefs become even more problematic when considered in light of the asymmetrical power imbalance between teachers, students, and students' caregivers. Teachers hold positional power over students through the decisions they make: which grades students earn, what groups or tracks students are placed in, which topics are covered and how, when students can go to the bathroom, which students can speak and when, and how much homework they assign (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Shim, 2016). Teachers' relationships with caregivers are also grounded in unequal power relations, evident through their expectations for parental involvement, facilitation of parent-teacher conferences, and invitations to participate in field trips (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). White, middle-class teachers make up the majority of teachers in the U.S. and hold privileged positions in society, contributing to asymmetrical power relations with students and caregivers (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Shim, 2016). When teacher educators ignore the way power operates through teacher candidates' positional status, authority, and Whiteness, diversity placements can reify racism, classism, linguicism, and other forms of oppression (Cross, 2005).

Personal and Professional Beliefs about Diversity

Research findings on educators' personal and professional beliefs about diversity have been mixed. Chiner et al. (2015), when conducting a quantitative study with 233 teacher candidates and in-service teachers in Spain, found that survey respondents showed greater sensitivity toward diverse students in the personal beliefs domain when compared to the professional beliefs domain. This contrasts with Wassell et al.'s (2018) findings when examining 142 teacher educators' conceptions of and beliefs about diversity. They found greater tolerance for diversity in the professional domain (Wassell et al., 2018).

In terms of a diversity placement's potential influence on TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity, Pohan et al.'s (2009) comparative study of secondary TCs' beliefs after completing a field experience at either an urban school or a suburban school revealed that significantly altering TCs' beliefs over one semester is unlikely. As a result, Pohan et al. (2009) contended that TPPs might be content with slight shifts in a psychometric score toward more openness. Further, they found that TCs in diversity placements became more culturally responsive over the semester, specifically noting positive impacts on both personal and professional beliefs (Pohan et al., 2009, p. 48).

These mixed findings necessitate additional research into the influence of a diversity placement on TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diverse students. Further, Pohan et al.'s (2009) mixed-methods study revealed the importance of going beyond quantitative findings related to TCs' personal and professional beliefs to better understand how even one semester of a diversity placement might alter TCs' beliefs, even when statistical significance may not be achieved.

Research Question

This case study, therefore, was framed by the following guiding question: How does a diversity placement influence elementary teacher candidates' personal and professional beliefs about working with diverse students?

Methodology

The current mixed-methods exploratory case study (Yin, 2014) was designed to examine the influence a diversity placement (the bounded case [Creswell, 2013]) has on TCs' personal and professional beliefs about working with diverse students. The *Personal and Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scale* (*PBADS*, Pohan & Aguilar, 2001) was administered before and after the diversity placement. Qualitative data in the form of open-ended survey questions and interviews (both one-on-one and focus group) provided additional insight as to the influence of the diversity placement on teacher candidates' beliefs.

Context and Participants

Twenty-nine elementary teacher candidates from a public, comprehensive university in the Midwest United States participated in this study. Located in a midsize American city, Midwest University (pseudonym) has a total enrollment of approximately 26,000 students, including 22,000 undergraduate students. Typically, the semester before student teaching, TCs in the elementary TPP at Midwest University complete a five-week course focused on integrated unit lesson plan development followed by a 10-week diversity placement at an elementary school (1st - 6th grades) in Midwest Public Schools (see Table 1 for district demographic data). During the diversity placement, TCs spend two full days per week in the classroom working alongside a CT. As part of the diversity placement, TCs are required to teach two lessons, one short (20-30 minutes, "T1") and one long (50-60 minutes, "T2") during which they are observed by a university supervisor. State teacher certification requirements dictate that TCs complete one practicum experience in a ***diverse setting***. Midwest University, as directed by the state Department of Education, uses the following criteria to determine if a school is considered a diverse setting: Title I status, percentage of free/reduced-price lunch, percentage of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), ethnic and/or racial diversity, percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs), and a variety of grade levels. This 10-week field experience serves as the diversity placement for Midwest University TCs who will complete traditional, semester-long student teaching the following semester. TCs who complete year-long student teaching meet the diversity placement requirement in a different route, dependent on their practicum experiences.

Table 1: Diversity Placement Elementary Student Demographics

Variables	Percent
Race / Ethnicity	
Two or More Races	6.5%
Black	7.7%
Hispanic	7.0%
White	74.3%
Asian	3.3%
Native American / Pacific Islander	1.2%
Free & Reduced Lunch Eligible	58.1%
Special Education	13.1%

To answer our research question, data were collected at the beginning and end of the fall 2018 semester. The *PBADS* (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001) was sent to 42 elementary TCs enrolled in the diversity placement. Of the participants who completed the diversity placement, 76% (n = 29) completed both the pre- and post-survey in their entirety (see Table 2). The demographic makeup of those participants who completed both surveys was majority White (n = 21, 73%) and female (n = 27, 93%).

Table 2: Survey Respondents' Demographic Statistics

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Race / Ethnicity		
Two or More Races	1	3.4%
Black	2	6.9%
Hispanic	5	17.2%
White	21	72.4%
Gender		
Male	2	6.9%
Female	27	93.1%
Grade placement		

1st	4	13.8%
2nd	5	17.2%
3rd	9	31.0%
4th	7	24.1%
5th	4	13.8%
Pre-Diversity Placement Instructional Setting		
Seated	24	82.8%
Online	5	17.2%

Note: Pre-Diversity Placement Instructional Setting represents the type of university classroom setting the TCs experienced before starting their diversity placement. All diversity placements were completed in a face-to-face elementary school setting.

Five TCs participated in one of two one-time focus groups. One TC participated in a one-on-one interview in December of 2018 (see Table 3). The demographic makeup of the interviewees was majority White (n = 4, 67%) and female (n = 7, 83%). The population surveyed and interviewed for this study is largely representative of the elementary teacher population in the U.S. (Loewus, 2017).

Table 3: Interview Demographic Details

Interview Setting/Participants	Race	Gender
One-on-one		
Natasha	Black	Female
Focus Group A		
Jessica	White	Female
Samantha	White	Female
David	Black	Male
Focus Group B		
Rebecca	White	Female
Elise	White	Female

Note: All names have been replaced with pseudonyms. Each interview setting occurred once.

Instrumentation

The 40-item *PBADS* consists of two subscales, the first is designed to show individuals' personal beliefs, those that are impacted by an individual's lived experience and worldview (n = 15), and the second measures individuals' professional beliefs, those which are influenced by individuals' workplace or professional life experiences (n = 25) (Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011). The two subscales are identical in design, consisting of 5-point Likert-formatted items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This instrument has been regularly used and validated since its development and testing, with only minor changes made to questions throughout that time (Brown, 2004). The reported Cronbach's Alpha reliability for the *Personal Beliefs About Diversity* subscale ranged from .71 to .81 and between .78 and .90 for the *Professional Beliefs About Diversity* subscale (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

We added demographic questions (i.e., age, ethnicity, gender, and grade level of diversity placement), an open-ended question (i.e., "Describe what you learned about working with students in your current placement"), and an invitation to participate in an interview to the *PBADS*. The pre-survey was administered via Qualtrics at the end of the 5-week course, prior to the beginning of TCs' 10-week diversity placement. The post-survey was administered following TCs' completion of the placement.

Focus Group and Individual Interviews

In order to provide a more thorough understanding of TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity, both authors conducted one-hour, audio-recorded interviews. Of those TCs expressing interest in an interview when completing the *PBADS* (n = 10), six participated in interviews (see Table 3). The researchers opted to conduct focus group interviews based on the understanding that interviewees' interactions may yield more insightful information when compared to individual interviews (Creswell, 2013). Due to a scheduling conflict, "Natasha" was unable to attend either of the two focus group interviews but instead participated in an individual interview. Interviews followed a semi-structured format (Glesne, 2011), allowing researchers to modify/add to pre-established questions during the course of the interview. Interview responses to the following questions were transcribed and analyzed:

- What does diversity mean to you?
- How did people talk about diversity at your field experience site?
- How does the field experience compare to your schooling experience at a similar grade level?
- How does this field experience compare to other field experiences during your time at [Midwest University] (in regard to a "diversity" placement)?
- Describe what you learned about working with students in your current placement.
- Prior to beginning the field experience, what did you expect the placement in a diverse setting to be like?

Findings

Quantitative Findings

Data were prepared (e.g., reverse coded) for analysis using SPSS statistical software. Paired-samples t-tests were used to compare the TCs' personal and professional beliefs before and after their 10-week diversity placement. The purpose was to determine the mean score difference in question responses before and after the diversity placement (see Table 4). Statistical significance was set at 0.05. Statistical significance was set at 0.05, which is the same as other studies that have used the *PBADS* (e.g., Cardona, 2005; Kahn et al., 2014; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics: Personal and Professional Beliefs Pre-/Post-Treatment Change

Test	Pre-Treatment	Post-Treatment	Difference
Personal Beliefs about Diversity	4.26	4.30	0.04
Professional Beliefs about Diversity	4.06	4.22	0.16

Note: The Pre-/Post- scores account for the mean score of all questions per subscale (i.e., *Personal Beliefs about Diversity* and *Professional Beliefs about Diversity*).

For both personal and professional beliefs, the overall trend in mean score change indicated that TCs moved toward greater openness following the diversity placement. Mean scores can best be understood to indicate the relative level of acceptance, awareness, or openness to diversity-related issues (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). A low score (1.00) indicates a low level of openness, awareness, or acceptance while a high score (5.00) indicates the opposite. In regard to the *Personal Beliefs about Diversity* subscale, the result of the paired-samples t-test did not indicate that statistical significance was achieved for any question (see Figure 1). Nine of the 15 questions indicated a small shift toward greater acceptance of diversity, and the other six questions point to a small regression away from acceptance. In regard to the *Professional Beliefs about Diversity* subscale, two survey questions (Q:16, Fig. 2; Q:21, Fig. 2) yielded statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) increases in mean scores. We present the findings in this section for the questions that reached statistical significance.

One question focused on language of instruction (Q:16, Fig. 2): *Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction.* Respondents showed a statistically significant increase ($p = 0.013$) in their response to this question at the completion of the diversity placement ($M = 4.414$) compared to their pre-placement response ($M = 3.862$). The results indicate that following the diversity placement, TCs were more likely to agree that ELLs should receive instruction in their native language until they become proficient in English (see Figure 2).

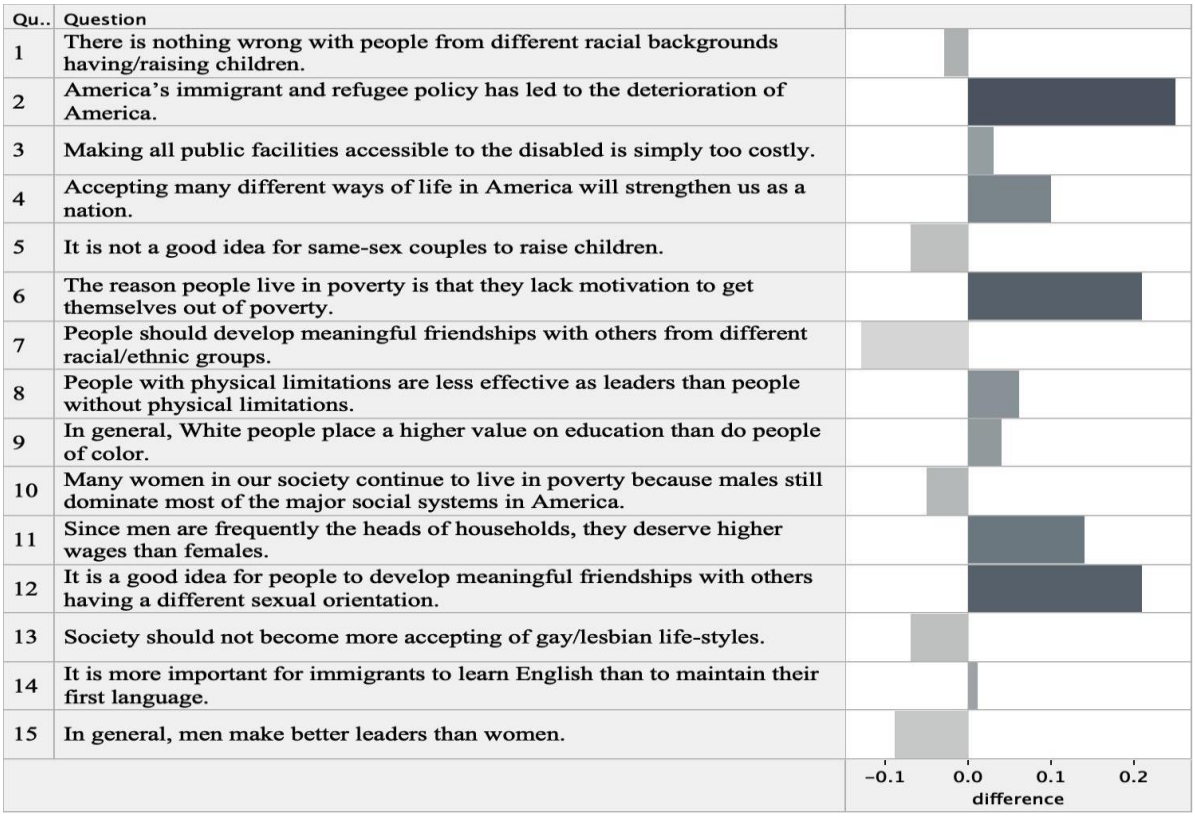
The second question that yielded statistically significant responses on the post-placement survey dealt with teachers' experiences working with students from diverse racial and ethnic

backgrounds (Q:21, Fig. 2): *In order to be effective with all students, teachers should have experience working with students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.* Respondents showed a statistically significant increase ($p = 0.032$) in their response to this question at the completion of the placement ($M = 4.966$) compared to their pre-placement response ($M = 3.862$). While pre-placement results indicated that TCs agreed with this statement, the post-placement results indicate this notion was reinforced (see Figure 2).

The shift in TC perceptions—both personal and professional—was small, ranging from -0.13 to 0.25 for personal beliefs, and -0.18 to 0.65 for professional beliefs. Although small, shifts indicate a move toward change. The length of the bars in Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the amount of change from pre-test to post-test but should not be confused with statistical significance. Overall, results suggest a move toward more openness in both personal and professional beliefs, with professional beliefs showing a more consistent shift toward openness, reiterating previous research (Wassell et al., 2018). Although larger mean score change can be seen on two statistically significant questions (Q:16; 21, Fig. 2), it is important to understand that the mean score change alone does not indicate statistical significance.

Finally, the use of paired-samples t-tests indicates there was a specific *treatment* (i.e., the diversity placement) that may have resulted in a change in post-diversity placement survey results. However, because the TCs in the study were also engaged in additional activities and classes at Midwest University, it is possible that those activities and classes had a mediating effect on the post-diversity placement scores. A paired-samples t-test is unable to account for the effect of these other mediating variables.

Figure 1: Personal Beliefs Post-Diversity Placement Differences



Note. Difference values reflect the direction of change in mean scores between pre- and post-test. Bar length does not indicate statistical significance.

Figure 2: Professional Beliefs Post-Diversity Placement Differences

Note. Difference values reflect the direction of change in mean scores between pre- and post-test. Bar length does not indicate statistical significance.

Qualitative Findings

The open-ended survey question responses, focus group transcripts, and interview transcript were imported into NVivo 11, computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. While the first author assumed the primary responsibility of coding the data, both authors engaged in frequent dialogue during analysis about analytic memos, codes (i.e., their definitions and examples), categories, and emerging themes (Saldaña, 2016).

The first author utilized three rounds of coding, following Saldaña's (2016) processes for Attribute Coding, Values Coding, and Focus Coding. During first-cycle coding, Attribute Coding (i.e., participant characteristics) was applied to facilitate easy location within the data set (Saldaña, 2016). Next, we utilized Values Coding to better understand participants' values, attitudes, and beliefs expressed through either their open-ended responses on the survey or their responses during the interviews (Saldaña, 2016). Finally, Focus Coding (Saldaña, 2016) was utilized to look for participant words and/or phrases related to our research question (i.e., How does a diversity placement influence elementary teacher candidates' personal and professional beliefs about working with diverse students?). When identifying codes for professional beliefs or personal beliefs, we relied on Pohan and Aguilar's (2001) conception of personal and professional beliefs about diversity. In terms of personal beliefs about diversity, Focus Coding generated 12 categories including but not limited to *home life/parents* and *class/socioeconomic status*. In terms of professional beliefs about diversity, Focus Coding yielded 14 categories including but not limited to *differentiated instruction*, *student-teacher relationships*, *classroom management*, *support*, and *assumptions*. Finally, 32 codes made up the articulated changes in beliefs category.

Through peer debriefing, we identified and consolidated the major categories from the list provided above (Saldaña, 2016). Within the personal beliefs theme, the two major categories we identified were deficit beliefs about families and deficit beliefs related to socioeconomic status. Within the professional beliefs theme, the two major categories we identified were differentiated instruction and student-teacher relationships. In this section, we detail our findings related to personal and professional beliefs about diversity and articulated changes in participants' beliefs.

Personal Beliefs

After concluding the diversity placement, the interviewed elementary TCs articulated a number of beliefs related to the personal sphere (i.e., "opinions, expectations, or judgments, that a person considers true in [one's] daily life") (Chiner et al., 2015, p. 19). Highlighted in this section are the personal beliefs expressed related to elementary students' families and socioeconomic status.

Deficit Beliefs about Families

TCs' comments about elementary students' home lives, living conditions, parents, and/or caregivers often revealed deficit beliefs based on stereotypes. For example, Natasha reflected on the differences between her upbringing and home life (two-parent household until her parents' divorce when she was in high school) compared to her students' home lives: "I know a lot of families, especially single-parent homes and things, the mom is working like crazy. There's multiple kids, and there's so much to do."

Similarly, "Jessica's" comments revealed her beliefs about students' parents' lack of care:

> I worked at a daycare last year, and one of the parents left their kid. And it's like after 30 minutes, you call them. After another 15 minutes, you have to call the police. So, they had to call the police to come get this kid because their mom didn't pick them up. And their excuse was that she was napping. I'm like, "You have children that you have to take care of!" And I don't know. It's just crazy to think that parents do forget about their kids.

A potential result of these expressed deficit beliefs that surfaced during the interviews dealt with TCs viewing themselves as filling a parental void/need for students. "Samantha" shared that she felt like some of her students needed her because they did not have an active parent at home:

> Especially just like one of my students, I feel like he doesn't see his mom as often. And so, I think as a person he just, he clings on to me more 'cause I think I'm like the mother figure that he kind of doesn't have right now.

While the above quotes highlight latent deficit views teacher candidates held about students' families over the course of the diversity placement, some comments, however, showed a more nuanced understanding of elementary students' home environments. "David," for example, in response to his peers' discussion of parents' lack of involvement in school-related matters, was the only TC of the six interviewed who articulated an awareness of parents' work schedules that may conflict with that of the school rather than assuming that parents/caregivers do not care about their child's education:

> So, viewing the whole scope, like everybody works on different times in life, you know? Some families, like adults in the family, like they'll work at night. Some work early in the morning. And so, they aren't able to make it to certain meetings, or certain events and all that stuff because of the time that they're working with. And so, I definitely think it's so important as a teacher to be able to work with families however you need to.

Deficit beliefs that go unexamined, like those held by David's peers of their students' families, have been documented as a negative outcome of diversity placements (e.g., Kirkland, 2014). Without a means for continually interrogating biases before, during, and after a diversity placement, the placement actually works against the TPP's goals of promoting TCs' equity literacy. Further, the diversity placement can perpetuate a system of power and domination through the TCs' unidirectional gaze on students' families, granting "them the power to describe others as different or aberrant" (Cross, 2005, p. 270).

Deficit Beliefs Related to Socioeconomic Status

Due to state requirements that TCs have at least one diversity placement, Midwest University determined that its TCs diversity placement would occur the semester prior to student teaching, although TCs' may be placed in a qualifying practicum earlier in their experience as well. Depending on previous field experiences, the diversity placement may be the first time a TC is placed in an elementary school with the majority of students living in poverty. The diver-

sity placement contrasts the TPP's first required field experience that placed TCs at the university's private, tuition-based, laboratory school. Although the university laboratory school does not have an economically diverse student body, it does have a student body that is more racially and/or ethnically diverse than surrounding school districts. It may be unsurprising, then, that during the interviews, the difference in field experiences related to poverty came up numerous times. Yet, often during these discussions, TCs' personal beliefs showed the deficit lens through which they viewed children living in poverty, reiterating previous findings (e.g., Jacobs, 2015). See Table 5 for representative statements related to students living in poverty.

Table 5: Representative Statements Related to Students Living in Poverty

Natasha	"Obviously if you could choose, you would be on the wealthier side where you have possibilities."
Samantha	"I had a student [ask] me if I liked Universal or Disney better, and I feel like at my school right now, none of the kids would ask me that. Just because I feel like they haven't gotten to experience that; where[as] the students where I'm going to [student teach] next semester are able to experience a lot more than my students are now."
David	"Because a lot of the time, like diverse students, it is seeing that they don't have as many supportive relationships as a student that may come from a wealthier situation."
Elise	"A lot of 'em have no idea what some of the foods even are because they've never seen fruits and vegetables before."

These comments reveal the assumptions TCs hold about students living in poverty and the types of experiences they deem as valuable. While Natasha comments that students in poverty have fewer possibilities, we are left wondering what she meant by "possibilities." Samantha's comparison of students' experiences across her field experiences hints at the value she associates with certain types of experiences. Moreover, David assumes students in poverty lack supportive relationships, and Elise assumes students in poverty have not seen healthy food, echoing similar findings in other studies where teachers have associated students in urban schools with a lack of family and community resources (Watson, 2011).

While TCs expressed numerous deficit beliefs about students in poverty, comments about students attending the university's lab school showed a different perspective. Samantha, for example, expressed feeling as though the elementary students from her first field experience at the university's private lab school were smarter than she was:

> They're just really advanced. I remember going in there, and they already knew our whole entire lesson. And we were just like, "Okay, like there goes all of our hard work." ...Like I'm sitting there thinking, "Wow, this student is probably a lot smarter than me at that age." I just felt out of my element.

The university's lab school is almost entirely composed of students from homes with parents who are university faculty or who possess significant monetary resources that make paying private school tuition possible. Lab school students who are not able to keep up with the aggressively rigorous curriculum timelines often leave the lab school for other local options. This leaves a student population that is more academically homogeneous and able to move through the curriculum faster than is often considered developmentally appropriate.

One of the open-ended survey responses also showed a connection between socioeconomic status and the TCs' perception of student intelligence: "I got to see a wide range of socioeconomic classes and how that compared to their learning abilities." Again, both of these comments—Samantha's and the survey response—reveal the way TCs assign value to certain types of knowledge, experiences, and skills linked to students' socioeconomic status (Jacobs, 2015).

Professional Beliefs

In addition to our findings related to TCs' personal beliefs, our analysis suggests that TCs' professional beliefs about diversity centered on differentiated instruction and student-teacher relationships. Professional beliefs "refer to issues related to schooling (e.g., instructional practices, educational resources, and inclusive education)" (Chiner et al., 2015, p. 19). A discussion of each major category is detailed below.

Differentiated Instruction

The most frequently recurring code related to TCs' professional beliefs about working with diverse students concerned ways that TCs and/or their cooperating teacher could and should differentiate instruction based on various student factors (e.g., readiness and/or first language). Differentiated instruction is when a teacher modifies curriculum, instruction, and assessments based on students' readiness, interest, and learning profile (Tomlinson, 2014).[1] Knowing how to effectively differentiate instruction is a critical component in supporting diverse learners. TCs expressed an increased awareness of academic diversity within a single classroom and the difficulty of responding to this type of diversity as indicated by Natasha:

> When we do our lesson plans, we comment how we're going to reach the lower level learners and the higher level, but never in my lesson planning has my lower levels been so low. That was the most challenging, or my higher-level kids being so high. Again, it was just... they were just all over the place, and to try to find something to hit every kid or most of them was the most challenging because it was again nothing I ever expected.

Similarly, Jessica mentioned feeling ill-equipped to respond to students' diversity in a way that supported them, specifically when teaching ELLs in her upcoming student teaching placement:

> I would say more like anxious just because I don't... it's something unknown for me. And it's like I don't like to not know things. So, it just makes me anxious because I want to accommodate for those students, but I'm scared that I'm not gonna know how. So, I feel

1. Tomlinson (2014) defined readiness as the "entry point relative to particular knowledge, understanding, or skills" (p. 18). Further, one's learning profile is shaped by "intelligence preferences, gender, culture, or learning style" (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 19).

> like that's something me and my cooperating teacher are gonna have to figure out when I first go there.

Perhaps one of the reasons TCs expressed feeling anxious about differentiating instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners can be partially attributed to the support or models [not] provided by their CT. Both "Elise" and "Rebecca" reflected on instances when their CTs provided little insight on supporting diverse students academically:

> Whenever I taught my first lesson, we read a book, and I translated the entire book that I read in Spanish and gave [the Spanish-speaking student] a copy. My teacher was like, "Why did you spend so much time doing that? Like, that's insane." But what's the purpose in her sitting here if she doesn't understand what I'm talking about? She's wasting her time. I'm wasting her time. It's just a waste of time. I wish my [cooperating] teacher would've been more helpful.

> I would say that my [cooperating] teacher, she never brought up diversity herself. The only time it was brought up is when I was planning my lesson, and I said, "How can I differentiate?" And the only tip she was able to give me was to say to read the questions out loud so that all the students can hear [them], especially the ones that aren't as good at reading as other students are.

Although the diversity placement increased TCs' cultural awareness and provided them with an opportunity to apply previous learning on differentiating instruction, TCs struggled to confidently respond to student readiness, interest, and/or learning profile. Transitioning from writing lesson plans for courses to writing lessons for actual students proved difficult, exacerbated by TCs' limited experience working with diverse students and their CTs' lack of modeling. A diversity placement, then, is greatly limited in its ability to promote TCs' equity literacy when TCs are partnered with CTs who, themselves, neither model equity literacy nor provide guidance to TCs on supporting diverse students. We take up this issue in greater detail in the latter portion of the discussion section below.

Student-Teacher Relationships

All six interviewed TCs discussed the importance of student-teacher relationships between a classroom teacher and their students, some identifying that relationship as the most important thing they learned about when working with diverse students. Their comments revealed specific instances when they formed connections with students, how the relationships affected their interactions and work with students, and perceived gaps in their CTs' approaches to fostering student-teacher relationships. Natasha, for example, mentioned attending specials classes (e.g., art) with her students and using music to connect with a particular student:

> I went to art with them a couple of times, and I was like, "Oh, what kind of music do you listen to?" I asked [a student] if she knew who Selena was, and she's like, "Selena Gomez?" I'm like, "No, the real Selena." She's like, "No." I was like, "Oh, I forgot you're like seven." Well, she's nine, but whatever. Just trying to connect with her that way…

Similarly, Rebecca commented on the impact of talking with students each morning while they ate breakfast:

> My biggest takeaway from this [diversity placement] was the importance of building relationships with students. I feel like just even talking to them every morning, I would stand out in the hall, and students were allowed to eat breakfast out in the hall. I would just talk to all the students who were out there eating breakfast, even in that 15 minutes of just getting to talk to them, I built really close relationships with the students.

Some of the TCs' comments revealed ways that they were vulnerable with students, allowing TCs to form relational bonds based on shared experiences. Jessica, for instance, reflected on connecting with a student whose grandfather had died before the school year by sharing her experience having recently lost her father:

> He expressed to the class that his grandpa's death was holding him back in class...he's one of the students that never wants to do his work, just wants to sit at his desk and sleep or like cry. And so, when we were done with the lesson, he was still crying and I was just observing that day. And I was just standing there like, "I could do so much for this kid and like help him." And my teacher was like we need to move on. And she was like trying to get him ready for the next thing. And I went up to my teacher, and I was like, "If you want me to take him out in the hall, like I know what to say to him. I've gone through this. Like I recently just went through this." So, I took him out in the hallway. And now he just responds so well to me in class whenever I get him to do things because he'll sit there and not do his work. And I'll look at him, and I'm like, "Get on your work." And he'll look at me and smile. And then he'll start working.

David reiterated the sentiment that building relationships with students can increase student compliance:

> I really feel that is so important to build those key relationships with students. And being able to be like a supportive relationship for students. Because whenever you are building those supportive relationships with the student, it makes it easier for them to be able to listen to you whenever you need them to be able to do something. Like just lining up, casual things. But whenever they have the trust in you with that supportive relationship, it's just, I don't know. It just really makes things go a lot easier.

Although TCs identified the importance of student-teacher relationships when reflecting on their time in the diversity placement, David and Jessica's comments point to the more utilitarian purposes of those relationships. In other words, rather than building relationships with students from a place of genuine, unconditional care to better understand them as people (and hopefully disrupt TCs' deficit beliefs about them), some TCs' comments hinted at using the relationship to elicit desirable student behaviors. Genuine caring should not be dependent upon a child's behavior.

Articulated Change in Beliefs

As TCs reflected on the diversity placement, they mentioned several ways their beliefs shifted, particularly related to expanding notions of diversity. Their comments highlighted an increased awareness of diversity and the assumptions they held about diverse students. Some of their comments even point to a reality shock as they detailed feeling surprised by their elemen-

tary students' experiences, especially when compared to their personal experiences as an elementary student. Natasha mentioned being surprised to learn that she had immigrant students whose parents were in Mexico; children whose parents were in jail; and children raised by single fathers, uncles, or grandparents:

> The sentences they would write, I was just like, "Where are you ...?" I would laugh because it shocked me, but I'm like, "Why are you writing this?" One girl wrote, "My parents were scared ... " or afraid or whatever the word was, " ... when child services showed up at our door." I was like, "What? What's happening?" Things like that. Again, me growing up, in fourth grade if I was writing sentences it was like, "Oh, I love my mommy and daddy. My life is great. Cool. This summer we went to Texas," you know, a happy thing.

Similarly, Rebecca compared her childhood to that of the students in her diversity placement:

> I would say that when I started, I didn't really see how certain situations the students are in at home would affect their school life. Meeting these students and them coming up to me and telling me the problems they're having at home, and then seeing them fall asleep in class, you kind of understand why they're feeling that way. I didn't really have that empathy before. I just didn't grow up around situations like that, so I didn't really understand.

Other comments showed that an increasing awareness of elementary students' diverse realities caused TCs to interrogate the assumptions they sometimes made about students:

Table 6: Statements Showing an Increased Awareness of Elementary Students' Diverse Realities

Samantha	"You never would have thought in a million years that that would have happened, but her mom had to go to a women's shelter in [another city]. Took her daughter with her. We're all just like, we'd just never known"
Elise	"I learned to not make judgments and not pass judgments so quickly...Seeing kids and just assuming, yeah, they're asleep in class, that they don't care, they're not paying attention, you know being able to not pass that judgment and be like, why? Ask that why question before I pass any judgment on anything."
Natasha	"It taught me, one, to ask questions and not to just assume and also to be more understanding that I know not every family's the same, but not every family's the same. It was my first real interaction with something so extreme"
David	"But at the same time, we don't always know like what's going on."

This increasing awareness shows both the possibilities and limitations for diversity placements. As will be discussed in greater detail in the following section, one diversity placement is not enough to significantly alter TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diverse students.

We wonder how differently they might have experienced this final semester before student teaching if they had multiple diversity placements throughout their TPP that included critical reflection and ongoing dialogue about biases and opportunities to learn alongside and collaborate with elementary teachers who model equity literacy.

Discussion

Although the sample size in this study was small (n = 29), a number of findings are worth noting related to TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity at the conclusion of a 10-week diversity placement. In this section, we summarize the significant findings from the quantitative data and extend the discussion by drawing on the qualitative findings. Together, these data enable us to answer the question guiding this study: How does a diversity placement influence elementary teacher candidates' personal and professional beliefs about working with diverse students?

Personal Beliefs About Diversity

Pajares (1992) contended that deeply ingrained personal beliefs or those based on early experiences are resistant to change when compared to professional beliefs. The initial findings of this study reiterate Pajares' (1992) findings. Nine of the 15 questions on the *Personal Beliefs About Diversity* subscale revealed only a small increase in awareness, acceptance, or openness in regard to the question asked. This finding aligns with existing research that has shown that drastically altering TCs' beliefs about diverse students over one semester is unlikely (Pohan et al., 2009). However, Pohan et al. (2009) argued that even a small increase toward more openness reflects movement in the desired direction. We discuss the small moves toward increased openness to diversity in greater detail in the implications section below.

Additionally, our qualitative findings shed light on *how* TCs' personal beliefs were altered post-diversity placement. Corroborating previous findings on the potential of diversity placements to reinforce negative perspectives about marginalized populations (Cross, 2005; Gallego, 2001; Gay, 2000; Haberman & Post, 1992; Jacobs, 2015), our findings (see, for example, Table 5) suggest that placing TCs in a diverse school setting may reinforce deficit beliefs about students' families and students' socioeconomic status. While it is impossible to know how the participating TCs in this study viewed students prior to the diversity placement aside from their responses on the *PBADS* pre-diversity placement, it is possible that the diversity placement may have resulted in the development of new problematic perspectives toward marginalized communities (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Burant & Kirby, 2002). Deficit beliefs coupled with teacher candidates' positions of power (Cross, 2005; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Shim, 2016) point to the continued need for TPPs to disrupt TCs' deficit views before such views end up limiting TCs' students' academic success (Guerra & Wubbena, 2017), as will be addressed in the implications section.

Professional Beliefs About Diversity

In terms of TCs' professional beliefs related to diversity, of the 25 questions on the *Professional Beliefs About Diversity* subscale, all but two questions—ELL language instruction (Q:16, Fig. 2) and the necessity of teachers' experience working with racially and ethnically diverse students (Q:21, Fig. 2)—saw an increased score on the post-diversity placement survey.

These general findings are not altogether surprising as they have been observed in other studies using the *PBADS* (e.g., Cardona, 2005; Kahn et al., 2014). Professional beliefs, especially for TCs, are still evolving during one's time in a TPP and thus may be less resistant to change when compared to personal beliefs (Pajares, 1992). While it is perilous to draw conclusions from anything that is not statistically significant, it is worth recognizing broad trends present in the data. For both personal and, to a slightly greater degree, professional beliefs, the overall trend indicated that TCs moved toward greater openness following the diversity placement. Finally, the two questions that were statistically significant highlight the importance of diversity placements (i.e., *PBADS* scores showed more openness, awareness, and acceptance as a result of the placement). Each of these findings is discussed in detail in the following sections.

Working with English Language Learners

First, the question (Q: 16, Fig. 2) regarding second language development (i.e., *Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction***)** points to one of the important aspects of diversity placements. Nearly all of the diversity placement sites (i.e., Title I elementary schools) were attended by ELL students. For many of the TCs, this would have been their first opportunity to apply theory to practice by working with ELLs in an elementary school setting. The increase in mean scores on this question from pre- to post-diversity placement survey could be a result of this placement being the teacher candidates' first direct contact with ELLs in a school setting.

Interviews showed an increased awareness of the diversity present in elementary classrooms as a result of the diversity placement, particularly related to ELLs. While TCs acknowledged the need to differentiate and provide individualized support for ELLs, some commented on feeling ill-equipped to do so. Rather than making them feel more confident in their ability to support ELLs, the diversity placement actually had an adverse effect on TCs' confidence to teach diverse students, echoing previous research by Gomez et al. (2009). This low self-efficacy may be a result of cooperating teachers who provided little guidance to TCs in terms of specific ways to accommodate for ELLs, reiterating the necessity of partnering TCs with CTs who model culturally responsive teaching, specifically as it relates to supporting ELLs (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Siwatu et al., 2011).

Necessity of Diversity Placement

Additionally, prior to the diversity placement, the majority of TCs agreed or strongly agreed (n = 25) that teachers need to have experiences working with diverse students (i.e., *In order to be effective with all students, teachers should have experience working with students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds* [Q: 21, Fig. 2]). After the diversity placement, TCs felt even stronger about this statement. Moreover, interviews revealed specific ways the placement enhanced TCs' effectiveness with diverse students. For example, the diversity placement provided TCs with relationship-building strategies, which TCs noted are particularly important when working with diverse students, aligning with previous research (e.g., Fry & McKinney, 1997; Martin et al., 2013; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). Additionally, interviewed TCs' articulated changes in beliefs highlighted the reality shock TCs experienced during the diversity placement. Such experiences, according to TCs, allowed them to notice ways that their personal experiences as former elementary students are not representative of all students' lived experiences. TCs' cultural consciousness increased during the diversity placement which may have enabled them

to interrogate various assumptions they held about diverse students, even though their personal beliefs about diversity point to the need to continually interrogate biases before, during, and after similar diversity placements (Kirkland, 2014).

Limitations

While our research extends the literature on the impact of diversity placements on teacher candidates, our study has a number of limitations. As mentioned previously, when using a paired-samples t-test, a small sample size makes it difficult to reach statistical significance. In addition, focus groups and interviews were conducted in the final semester before participants returned to locales throughout the Midwest to complete their student teaching. Multiple rounds of interviews and member checking with participants would have increased the validity of the analysis (Creswell, 2013). Future research utilizing the *PBADS*, informed by this and similar studies, will benefit from larger population samples. Also, future research design that allows for multiple rounds of interviews may lead to additional nuance around teacher candidates' personal and professional beliefs about diversity.

Implications for Teacher Education

Based on the aforementioned findings, we present three recommendations to TPPs that utilize diversity placements to enhance TCs' personal and professional beliefs about diversity. Our recommendations are especially suited for TPPs like Midwest University that enroll mostly White, middle-class TCs.

Require Multiple Diversity Placements

In TPPs requiring a diversity placement as part of TCs' degree completion, that field experience should be moved as early in TCs' learning experiences as possible. This recommendation is especially important for TPPs situated within communities with majority White K-12 student populations. Midwest University TCs in this study experienced the diversity placement one semester prior to student teaching. For some, the experience was overwhelming because a majority of the previous field experiences had taken place in school settings with majority White and medium-to-high income student populations. Earlier placements in diverse settings allow TCs to contextualize their TPP coursework related to working with diverse students (Gomez et al., 2009), while also highlighting potential areas of professional development TCs may be interested in pursuing. For example, early exposure to ELL student populations allows TCs time to pursue additional certification/education in ESL/ELL or bilingual education.

Provide a Scaffolded Approach to Diversity Placements

Midwest University's elementary TPP scaffolds TCs' field experiences by requiring an observational practicum at the beginning of their time in the program and gradually requiring TCs take on more of the classroom teacher responsibilities during subsequent field experiences. However, Midwest University does not follow this same scaffolded approach to diversity placements by only requiring one such placement which typically occurs during the final semester of coursework before student teaching. Aligning with the recommendations put forth by Siwatu et al. (2011), we recommend TPPs follow a similar progression but with an emphasis on providing

TCs with "substantial contact" in diverse settings (Groulx, 2001, p. 85). Merely adding more diversity placements does not ensure meaningful change in personal and professional beliefs about diversity (Kirkland, 2014). Following previous research recommendations, we suggest that diversity placements should be embedded throughout the TPP and coupled with a course that allows TCs to interpret their experiences (Sleeter, 2001); examine their evolving dispositions, beliefs, and biases through discussion (Cochran-Smith, 1995; He & Cooper, 2009; Kirkland, 2014); and engage in critical reflection before, during, and after the diversity placement (Acquah & Commins, 2016; Dyce & Owusu-Ansah, 2016; Kyles & Olafson, 2008). Such coursework would ideally equip teacher candidates to build genuine relationships with a diverse group of students based on mutual trust rather than building relationships as a means to an end as was hinted at by some of the participants in this study. See Table 7 for an explanation of this approach to diversity placements over time in a TPP.

Table 7: Scaffolded Approach to Diversity Placements

Observation: School Community	In conjunction with a class on diversity and inclusion, TCs engage in an observational diversity placement, during which they seek to increase understanding of the school and its various stakeholders.
Observation: Students	In conjunction with a class on cross-cultural relations, TCs engage in an observational diversity placement, during which they observe students.
Community-Based Service Learning	In conjunction with a class on learning theories (e.g., educational psychology), TCs engage in one-on-one tutoring with diverse students.
Microteaching	In conjunction with a methods course, TCs design and carry out small-group lessons with diverse students.
Student Teaching	TCs move from co-teaching to teaching independently.

Note: Adapted from Siwatu et al. (2011, p. 215)

Place Teacher Candidates with Cooperating Teachers Who Model Equity Literacy

Finally, the impact of one's cooperating teacher on a TC's personal and professional beliefs cannot be overstated. Scholars studying teaching self-efficacy and drawing from Bandura's (1982) social cognitive theory, have provided ample evidence as to the impact of a cooperating teacher on TCs' teaching self-efficacy development. In particular, cooperating teachers may contribute to TCs' self-efficacy development through the feedback they provide (or don't provide) on TCs' teaching and/or through the way they model various teaching practices (Christopherson et al., 2016; Martins et al., 2015; McKim & Velez, 2017). The same is true for enhancing TCs' beliefs about working with diverse students: cooperating teachers may contribute to TCs' increased or decreased sense of self-efficacy teaching diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Siwatu et al., 2011). During the interviews in this study, TCs noted several instances when their CTs expressed deficit beliefs about diverse students and families (e.g., parents don't care,

poor students haven't seen fruits or vegetables). Additionally, TCs spoke of times when CTs removed "difficult" children from the classroom when TCs taught a lesson that would be observed by their university supervisor. CTs rarely acknowledged diversity in the classroom with TCs and offered little guidance on responding to student difference through differentiation. Due to the role that vicarious experiences (e.g., cooperating teacher modeling), verbal persuasion (e.g., cooperating teacher feedback), and mastery experiences (e.g., actually teaching a group of diverse students) (Bandura, 1982) play in TCs' self-efficacy to teach diverse students, it is not surprising that TCs felt ill-equipped to teach in diverse settings when their CT rarely acknowledged diversity, expressed deficit beliefs, provided little guidance for supporting diverse students, and limited TCs' opportunities to teach all students. Therefore, given the impact of CTs on TCs' beliefs and practices, TPPs should intentionally foster partnerships with cooperating teachers who model equity literacy in their work with elementary students and families. In order to enhance relationships with CTs who model equity literacy, TPPs must establish systems for supporting CTs' equity literacy while also actively avoiding placements with CTs that have little interest in supporting or modeling continual development of equity literacy. One way TPPs may accomplish this task is by providing and supporting professional development on culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2017) with partner districts. TPPs often have the expertise and resources to provide meaningful training, and districts are often open to this type of development without always having the resources or expertise to provide meaningful professional development.

Conclusion

Teacher preparation continues evolving in response to ever changing educational challenges combined with student population changes and needs (NCES, 2019). This study highlights the challenges and opportunities presented by diversity placements in teacher education, particularly in teacher preparation programs (TPPs) with a largely homogeneous student and community population similar to that at Midwest University. In this study, the diversity placement was the first time the majority of participating Midwest University teacher candidates (TCs) had worked closely with diverse students. For the most part, those interactions and experiences contributed to an increase in openness, acceptance, and awareness, especially when it came to TCs' professional beliefs about diversity. At the same time, TCs showed smaller gains in their personal beliefs, and as indicated during the interviews, the diversity placement actually reinforced negative stereotypes and deficit beliefs about students and families. Simply requiring a diversity placement as a hoop to jump through (Ladson-Billings, 2010) has been shown to be ineffective at positively altering TCs' beliefs. Therefore, as TPPs work to address the cultural mismatch between TCs and their future students, TPPs may need to restructure their course sequence and field experience requirements to promote multiple opportunities for TCs to engage with diverse students over time and with adequate support from associated coursework and exemplary cooperating teachers.

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New Direction for Moral Education: Reconsideration of Moral Pluralism and Christian-Secular Moral Dualism

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Abstract

Christian-secular moral dualism, the idea that Christians and secular people hold different moral values, is prevalent in our social views and moral education. This belief, however, does not correspond with the findings of current studies on people's moral perceptions. This article presents an empirically defined welfare/harm-based morality that stands across different cultures and personal-social diversities including religious beliefs. This domain of morality differs from social conventions and rules as well as virtuous acts (e.g., honesty), both of which are often classified as a part of moral quality in other literature on moral perceptions and traditional character/moral education. The article describes the reasons why moral pluralism and Christian-Secular moral dualism have been prematurely, yet widely supported in societies, followed by pedagogical suggestions for a new direction for further understanding of welfare-based morality per se, as well as Christian morality in the context of the universal moral principle.

Keywords: *morality; moral education; moral pluralism; Christianity; universal morality; domain theory*

Introduction

Moral pluralism, a major theoretical framework of moral views in our current society, supports the idea that people's definition of morality varies among individuals of different backgrounds, beliefs, and values (MacIntyre, 1981; Cherry, 2008). Religion is one predominant factor believed to diversify individuals' moral codes (Crittenden, 1990). Along with this belief, widely supported is an idea that morality cannot be addressed independently of the aspects of religion. Consequently, the belief that Christians hold a different set of moral values from secular people is largely supported in our societies. As evidence, millions of American children and youth are educated via homeschooling or in private institutions, based on their parents' beliefs that public-school enrollment cannot ensure instruction in accordance with their religious convictions, particularly with reference to the aspects of morality (Lyman, 1998; Farris, 2013). This belief and educational trend, however, do not correspond with the findings of recent studies on people's moral judgments and reasoning (Nucci, 2009). This article presents an empirically supported universal moral notion found to stand across social-personal diversities such as culture and religions. The article then analyzes why moral pluralism/Christian-Secular moral dualism is prematurely, yet prevalently supported in our societies, followed by pedagogical suggestions for a new direction of moral education that applies the universal moral concept.

Limitations of Current Moral Views and Pedagogies

Real-life examples demonstrate the prevalence of advocacy of moral pluralism. In my Psychology classes at a university, I ask my students what would be the criteria for determining a person to be moral. Their responses uniformly refer to a common phrase "*people who know what is right or wrong*." Every time I ask the question, I sense that some students think that the statement "*knowing right or wrong*" sounds good in tone, yet intuitively feel that the dichotomous classification of social matters as right or wrong is somewhat inadequate in fully addressing the philosophical depth and complexity of human morality. However, they are not able to articulate exactly where the inadequacy stems from, and therefore rarely challenge the statement. The perceived inadequacy of the statement, however, precisely reflects the ongoing limitations in our current understanding of morality. As the class discussion continues, the students' definition of morality, in reference to the ideas of right or wrong, naturally leads to another way of thinking: what is considered right versus wrong differs from person to person, and therefore, people hold a different set of moral values depending on their upbringings, personal experiences, and beliefs. Students then typically refer to religion, including atheistic beliefs, as one major element that shapes and diversifies a person's moral codes.

The pluralistic moral view based on what is socially right or wrong has major limitations. First, it fails to provide a specific guideline as to exactly by what and whose standard certain actions are determined to be right, therefore *moral*, or wrong, therefore *amoral*. When we say a person has moral character or that we, as a group, pursue a moral community, there is no explicit, theoretical framework or guideline by which the person or society's morality should be evaluated. This ambiguity leads to subjectivity and variation in defining morality wherein moral behaviors are inclusive of a variety of social-personal conducts that range from social rules and conventions (e.g., dress codes), or virtuous acts (e.g., honesty), to more philosophical ideas such as altruism. Accordingly, the term "moral education" was altered to "character (or virtue) education" that would serve "*as the generic, publicly accepted label for a range of approaches to moral education, without any clear conceptual framework for what the term character even refers to*." (Nucci, 2001, *p.128*). In an assumption that a teacher's individual moral views would naturally differ from the students' moral views, character education then included morality as one of "character" traits and taught it, but using a teaching method that lessened the connotation of indoctrinating moral values to the students than it was for traditional moral education (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). Consequently, character education teaches a variety of actions and beliefs that carry out an admirable connotation in one way or the other (e.g., kindness, respect, and fairness) as well as social conventions and rules culturally suitable and supported by social standards and expectations (e.g., etiquettes and religious rules). All of these elements of virtues, including morality, are classified under one category as *characters/virtues*, referred to as character/virtue education, or as *morality*, referred to as moral education as a whole, or the labels being interchangeably used with an unclear boundary between the two. I call this style of teaching "*all-in-one*" moral/character education.

Second, moral pluralism, and the pertinent moral/character education, contain an analogical error, a failure to recognize the definitive conceptual distinctions among different domains of conduct in a social life. Studies demonstrate that people systematically distinguish moral conduct from non-moral conduct (e.g., social rules/conventions and virtues) (Nucci, 1985). Here is a real-life example. The tragedy of the 9/11 Attack (2001) is still fresh in our memory. According to a media report, the U.S. passenger airplanes were hijacked by terrorists and purposely crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon. These incidents were reported to be

the deadliest attacks in the history of the United States, which resulted in the deaths of almost 3,000 people, many of whom were civilians. I asked my students what they thought of the terrorists' actions in terms of characteristics such as patriotism, diligence, loyalty, etc. Without exception, they agreed that the behaviors of the attacker could be considered in accordance with these specific characteristics. Then, I further asked whether they thought the attacker's actions were moral. In uniformity, they responded that the actions were not moral, followed by a welfare/harm-based reason that the attackers killed *innocent* people. What is striking in their responses is the way they *instinctively* distinguished virtuous characteristics (e.g., loyalty) from what they believed as moral. In addition, not only did they distinguish between the two, but they also justified their disapproval of the attackers' actions precisely in reference to the vice of *unprovoked harm* resultant of the attack. The way the students distinguished between the two implies that virtues and morality are not the same elements. Therefore, moral/character education that lumps them together may have an essential analogical flaw in the initial classification of what morality is about.

Third, what lies behind our advocacy of moral pluralism/Christian-secular moral dualism is a non-scientific conviction. The advocacy is based on a denial of a moral objectivity, which has never been empirically substantiated just as moral pluralism/subjectivity has never been empirically supported, either. In general, our society views moral subjectivity and pluralism positively as equivalent to *moral democracy* that suits the notion of our democratic society that celebrates individual differences and freedom of expression. Such subjectivity is also prevalent in the research field. Some researchers focus on the aspects of empathy and sympathy in interpersonal relationships as a key factor for a person's moral development (Weissberg & O'Brien 2004). Others focus on teaching virtuous traits as a way to educate children to be socially competent moral individuals (Wynne & Ryan, 1993), and the others focus on an individual's cognitive ability to rationalize the process of moral reflection (Kohlberg & Turiel, 1971). Despite the prevalence, advocacies, that are not empirically supported, could be based on speculations, feelings, thoughtless acceptance of social opinions, and researchers' remiss. This could be especially the case when studies have supported otherwise that contradicts the traditionally supported beliefs. People often hold a negative view of the idea of moral universality. People misperceive it as a form of authoritarian repression of people's individuality that attempts to mold forcefully people into the certain moral codes through a top-down indoctrination against their will. Nevertheless, the shared moral principle is, by no means, equivalent to moral indoctrination by external forces, but it could imply the existence of a cognizance of certain moral make-ups naturally shared among humanity.

Empirically-Identified Moral Universality: Moral Versus Non-Moral Distinction

Provided these limitations, current moral views and education require a ground-up, systematic re-examination. Reconceptualization of what defines morality, based on scientific data is, by far, the most important prerequisite in this endeavor. In this section, I present a social domain theory (Turiel, 1978, 2011) established based on rigorous empirical data collected extensively in the United States as well as other countries. I begin with the general outline of three theoretical implications relevant to the moral universality, a direct counter to moral pluralism/Christian-secular moral dualism. I then extend each implication with the supporting data from domain-related studies.

First, the theory has *scientifically* specified the concept of morality. Morality pertains to the aspects of welfare and harm of others, involving relational fairness and social justice in the context of social-interpersonal relationships (Turiel, 1983, 2006). Morality is interpersonal and

welfare-related. Pertinent to the moral definition, domain theory specifies the concept of interpersonal unfairness and social injustice, otherwise ambiguous, from the context of harm, defined as deliberate acts that inflict gratuitous harm to others: simply put, "*hurting the innocent*." Interpersonal welfare, together with the notion of anti-gratuitous harm, is the fundamental, inductive principle of morality. Examples of moral conduct are various forms of actions to attain welfare such as helping others. Examples of amoral conduct are acts of slander, rape, and unprovoked violence, embedded in all of which is significant gratuitous harm to others.

Second, the theory identifies *four* different domains of conduct regulated in people's personal-social life. These are the *moral* domain (acts concerning welfare and anti-gratuitous harm to others), the *personal* domain (a person's preference and discretion such as hairstyle or the content of a diary), the *prudential* domain (acts with consequential harm to the actor such as substance abuse), and the *social-conventional* domain (prototypical social rules such as etiquettes, courtesies, and religious rules) (Nucci, 2001; Turiel, 2006). Each domain is idiosyncratic in nature and functions with different meanings, roles, and objectives within the different aspects of people's social-personal life, along with different developmental pathways in people's perceptions. People do not treat all social matters in the same way. Studies have found a *systematic* difference in ways in which people view, judge and reason about the conduct of one domain from the other domains. The conceptual distinction of social-personal matters is not identified in other studies on moral perceptions, therefore, they fail to clarify a conceptual distinction between moral and non-moral conduct. On the other hand, the domain distinction model that separates among four domains of conducts concurrently distinguishes *morality* (welfare/harm) from *non-moral* aspects (i.e., social conventions, prudential and personal matters), which traditional moral view lumps together under one label as 'morality' or 'characters' *per se*. The welfare/anti-gratuitous harm principle is the essential axiom of the moral domain, but not for the other domains at the same degree. With such idiosyncrasy of moral domain, people do not judge and reason about non-moral matters in the same ways or the same welfare/harm context that people normally apply in the judgements of moral matters. (Term 'morality' hereafter refers to the domain theory's welfare/harm-based morality, unless otherwise noted).

In addition to the moral-non-moral distinction, more recent studies have found that morality also differs from the acts of virtues (e.g., honesty), the separation of which had been a difficult task (Perkins & Turiel, 2007). As stated earlier, the acts of honesty and truth telling are generally viewed as a pristine *moral* quality. In our traditional moral/character education, honesty is often treated as a "hallmark" of the person's *moral* character required to be a socially trust-worthy person. Nevertheless, studies have found that people generally do not judge the acts of dishonesty or honesty in the same, definitive manner by which they judge moral violation in reference to the up-front opposition to the deliberate gratuitous harm of moral violation. In particular, people judge the acts of dishonesty (virtuous transgression) in more relative and situational ways as opposed to the absolute and generalized ways in the events they judge moral transgressions (Perkins, at al., 2007). This moral-non-moral distinction model identifies a number of conducts, previously misclassified as morality, and methodically excludes these conducts out of the loop.

Third, domain theory has identified that the welfare/harm based moral principle is universal and objective (Helwig, Tisak, & Turiel, 1990; Turiel, 1983, 2015), which is an up-front contradiction to moral pluralism. Studies have found that the notion of anti-gratuitous harm is a shared moral axiom in people's moral cognizance that stands in common regardless of social and personal diversities (e.g., culture, gender, and religions) (Turiel, 2015). In general, people invariably judge against the acts of moral transgression, deliberate unprovoked harm to another, typically followed by fairness reasons in reference to anti-gratuitous harm ("*it is wrong to hurt the innocent").* This

pattern of moral judgement/reasoning stands across people with social-personal diversities including religious beliefs such that the ways in which religious youths (e.g., Christians) and their non-religious counterparts have perceived and judged moral matters versus non-moral matters were similar (Nucci, 2009). Both groups identified the same conducts as moral (e.g., helping others) or amoral (e.g., slander) based on the welfare-harm justifications. Both defined acts of moral transgressions in reference to the idea of deliberate gratuitous harm to others. Religious children/youth considered their religious rules (e.g., fasting before a service) as important but they judged moral imperatives as more important than religious rules in social interactions. The basic pattern of their convention-moral distinction, including their religious rules, was the same as the ways their non-religious counterparts differentiated moral matters from social conventions and virtuous expectations. Important to clarify here in reference to people's agreement or disagreement on moral views is that what is universal is the moral *concept*, not moral *decisions*. Moral concept is universal with consensus and objectivity, moral decisions and justifications are not. Decisions and justifications vary among individuals and by situations. Additionally note is that the domain distinction is valuable in specifying morality, and yet difference does exist between people's perceptions of '*ought to be*' (idea) and what they actually '*do or would do*' (actions) because people's assumption and interpretation of the "gratuitous harm" aspect of morality vary among individuals.[1] The next section expands these three implications along with the supporting data.

Five Criteria that Differentiate Morality from Social Conventions

This section starts out with the description of simple, but profound data of the basic ways children distinguish between moral matters and non-moral conventions. One of the earlier studies examined children's reasoning about moral and conventional transgressions through interviewing children about their peers' social interactions and conflicts that took place in a free play setting (Nucci, Turiel, & Encarnacion-Gawrych, 1983). The following examples are the quotes from the study that illustrate a 4-year-old girl's distinction between morality and social conventions (Italicized sentences are the interviewer's statement):

Moral issue:

Did you see what happened?
Yes. They were playing and John hit him too hard.
Is that something you are supposed to do or not supposed to do?
Not so hard to hurt.
Is there a rule about that?

1. Many factors lead to a variation in people's moral decisions. Moral matters are complex, intricate with multi-dimensional aspects. People make moral decisions by integrating the matters of different domains (e.g., conventional and personal matters). Social-personal diversities (e.g., culture) affect the ways people demarcate and balance out what they believe belongs to a person's rights versus violation of personal rights that, in turn, affects their judgements of notion of gratuitous harm. Additionally, moral decisions are not necessarily altruistic or the acts of total selflessness, but often involve reciprocity and mutuality. People weigh the advantages and disadvantages of their decisions for the self and others. People consider the availability of the resources they could provide for others as well as the closeness and meanings of the relationship for which moral decisions take place. The extreme opposite to the normative pattern of people's sense of moral obligation is individuals who portray little or no consideration to others' welfare. In which case, their views of gratuitous harm to others would be quite different from the normative pattern wherein such harm is normally viewed as wrong.

Yes.
What is the rule?
You are not to hit hard.
What if there was no rule about hitting hard, would it be all right to do then?
No.
Why not?
Because he could get hurt and start to cry.

Conventional Issue:

Did you see what happened?
Yes. They were noisy.
Is that something you are supposed to do or not supposed to do?
Not do.
Is there a rule about that?
Yes. We are to be quiet.
Is there a rule about it?
Yes, we have to be quiet.
What if there were no rule, would it be all right to do then?
Yes.
Why?
Because there is no rule. (Nucci, 2009. p.9)

As is shown in the quotes, the child responded differently to moral and conventional transgressions. While the child generalized moral situations involving the welfare of others (e.g., "It would be wrong to hit"), she did not generalize their own conventions and rules (e.g., "It would be OK not to be quiet if there is no rule"). She also reasoned about moral matters in the context of interpersonal harm; the importance of authority dictated the enforcement of rules for conventional matters. The behavior could be acceptable if a rule does not exist. The child's responses were consistent with the general pattern of moral and conventional distinction (Turiel, 1987) and with the responses of children in other observational studies in school settings (Much & Shweder, 1978; Nucci & Nucci 1982; Nucci & Turiel, 1978). Cultural differences exist in youth's reasoning of conventions. Youth in Korea gave a greater credibility to societal roles and status than US counterparts, but this does not mean they did not distinguish morality from conventions. Substantial evidence confirms that this general pattern of a moral-conventional distinction is not affected by participants' gender, country, age, or economic status (Turiel, 2006). The moral-conventional distinction of people's conduct has been supported in various contexts, including the context of the parent-child relationships, children's social interactions, and the observations of various groups of people, including those with criminal backgrounds or with different religious backgrounds (Nucci, 1985; Nucci & Turiel, 1993).

People differentiate moral conduct from conventional/religious rules based on the following *five* criteria: 1) *rule generalizability* (if the rule is applied to society in general or only to a local group), 2) *rule alterability* (if it is acceptable to change/drop the rules), 3) *rule contingency* (if the rule is contingent on authority or not), 4) *wrongness/seriousness of rule transgression* (the degree of negative consequence), and 5) *justification unique to each domain* (e.g., welfare reasons associated with moral conduct and functionality associated with conventions) (Nucci, 2001). People view non-moral conventional issues, social norms and customs (e.g., table manners) as subjective,

alterable and relative to context, location and culture, and therefore do not always apply conventional rules as an absolute standard for everyone if the society does not have the same rule for the action (Turiel, 1983, 2006). Contrarily, people view moral imperative as absolute, universal, objective, and non-contingent on contextual or authority variation. The moral principle of anti-gratuitous harm is generalizable to everybody and not limited to certain cultures and specific individuals (e.g., "the rule slander is wrong" applies to everywhere). People generally judge moral matters and obligations to be more important than conformity to conventional matters and obligations, and the moral violation as more serious, wrong, and punishable than violation of social-conventional rules (Helwig et al., 1990). Justifications people apply for each domain also qualitatively differ from one another. People apply welfare/harm justifications when analyzing moral matters (e.g., unprovoked hitting is not OK because it hurts), as opposed to justifications of social order, practicality, maintenance of social functions, and authority associated with conventional matters (e.g., calling a teacher by her first name is not OK, because that is the rule) (Nucci, 2001).

Commonly believed is an idea that religious beliefs (including atheism) diversify people's moral codes. Both Christians and non-Christians generally believe that a given set of Judeo-Christian moral values essentially differ from secular moral values. Adherence to this religious set of values is based on "*an encounter with God as lawgiver*" (p. 284) or on some actual transcendental or mystical encounter with God himself, while adherence to secular moral values is based on humanist ideas about human emotion, intuition, and rationality (Cherry, 2008). Christian-Secular moral dualism, however, contradicts the empirical data such that the ways in which children and young adults from different religions (e.g., Christians and Jews) distinguished morality from social conventions (and acts of sexuality) were generally the same as those of their nonreligious counterparts in reference to those five criteria outlined above (Nucci & Nucci, 1985). In the study (Nucci, 1985), Catholic sophomores attending at a Catholic high school and a Chicago-area university reflected on if it would be wrong of the Pope and Cardinals to disregard conventional and moral rules ("rule-alterability") and if it was wrong for non-Catholics to be engaged in "inappropriate" actions if there was no rule about the actions in their religion ("rule-generalizability" and "rule-contingency"). The moral issues involved situations that entailed gratuitous, deliberate harm to another (e.g., slander). The church conventions were actions prohibited under the rules of Catholic churches (e.g., not attending services on Sunday). Overall, the participants rated moral transgressions as more serious than the transgressions of the religious conventions. The majority of high school and university Catholics (average of 91.6% and 98% respectively) also responded that it would be wrong if the Pope removed rules governing moral transgressions (e.g., slandering), while removing church rules regarding non-moral, conventional religious issues (e.g., fasting prior to communion) was viewed as wrong by less than a half of them (40.8% of high school and 32.7% university Catholics). It appears that devout Catholic youth grant authority to the Pope and other religious leaders, in the non-moral domain, whereas moral issues appear to be treated as non-contingent on the mandates of authority. With regard to whether it would be acceptable or wrong if non-Catholics engaged in amoral acts (deliberate harm) if there was no rule, their response pattern was the same. A majority of high school and university Catholics (91% and 97% respectively) viewed it as wrong in the event members of other religions engaged in acts that transgress moral issues even if the other religions did not have a clearly stated rule. Contrary to moral issues, only one-third of high school students and fewer than one-fourth of Catholics university students viewed it wrong for those in other religions to engage or not engage in conventional acts if they did not have the same rules. In sum, Catholics viewed the expectations of religious conventions as more restricted to Catholics than to Non-Catholics. This pattern was, however, not the case with regard to the moral matters that entailed unprovoked harm and injustice to others. The Catholic

participants generalized the moral issues to both Catholics and non-Catholics. The ways non-religious youth and Catholic youth distinguished moral acts from social-religious conventions were identical.

The subsequent interview studies with fundamentalist Christians and Jews further confirmed the similarities between religious and nonreligious youths along with more details of their judgements and reasoning for the moral-religious rule differentiation (Nucci, 1985; Nucci & Turiel, 1993). The participants were conservative Mennonites/Amish from a rural area of Indiana (10-17 years), Conservative Jewish (10-17 years), and Orthodox Jewish children (14-17 years). With regard to the judgments of the rule alterability (that asked if it would be wrong or not for religious leaders to alter or dismiss rules regarding acts of moral transgression), a majority of the children, across denominations, viewed it as wrong to alter the rules and it would be also wrong for people outside the religion to do the act. Remarkably, a relatively large number of children also viewed altering conventional rules as wrong (83% of Orthodox Jewish children). This made it appear as if these children did not make a moral-non-moral distinction. The reasoning for these judgements was, however, different as it was from the context of an authoritative mandate, common for conventional rule alterability, versus a reference to harm and welfare, applied for moral violation. Religious children viewed moral transgressions as wrong even if there was no biblical prescription or God's words in reference to those acts ("rule contingency"). This further confirms the definitiveness in perceiving moral issues as wrong versus the *less than one percent* of the children across denominations, who viewed religious conventional transgressions as wrong (e.g., women preaching, premarital sex) if their God did not make any reference to the acts. Lastly, similar to Catholic children and non-religious children, these religious children (up to 95%) extended the moral obligation of the prohibition of unprovoked harm to outside their religious groups ("rule generalizability"), yet did not apply their religious conventions to people outside their religious groups.

Another Criterion: Personal Discretion Versus Socially-Regulated Domains

The other criterion for domain distinction is whether the conducts are regulated socially or subject to a person's discretion (Nucci, 1981). People believe some aspects of their lives to be personal, therefore they should be able to decide how they choose to act. This is a legitimate expression of preferences, individuality, and a need for privacy in their lives. People also believe there are other areas of conduct that should be legitimately regulated by social laws and by those who possess a greater authority (e.g., parents, teachers, and lawmakers), and therefore, beyond the person's discretion. Domain-related studies have found that the areas people express freedom for, versus acceptance of social regulation or others' directives, is not random, but *domain-specific* (Nucci, 1981). People generally view conduct of their *personal* domain (e.g., clothes to wear) as subject to their own discretion; the decision is up to them and beyond authority's control. People, however, do not claim the same discretion for all four domains equally. People view their conduct within the *prudential* (e.g., substance abuse), *conventional* (e.g., table manners) and *moral* (e.g., unprovoked interpersonal harm) domains as matters that should be regulated under the guidance of authority figures and social rules and regulations. Morality is part of socially regulated matters. The distinction pattern stands across social/personal diversities and is confirmed by studies within a variety of relational contexts in different cultural settings. For instance, children and youth do not claim or expect the same degree of freedom over the matters of prudence, morality and social conventions as they do for personal domain (Hasebe, Nucci & Nucci, 2004). Youths raised in Japan, classified as a "collectivistic society" wherein parental authority is highly valued, claimed

personal freedom (e.g., for choice of friends) just as their US counterparts did. Youths in the US, "individualistic society" wherein personal rights and independence are valued, accepted parental control over what they consider socially-regulated matters (e.g., use of substance) as their Japanese counterparts did. Children's needs for freedom versus parental control is not unilateral. Parents also view parental involvement and guidance as legitimate, for these three socially-regulated domains, and children's discretion for the personal domain necessary for optimal development. Conformity for social laws/regulation is not limited to children whose freedom could literally depend on how much discretion a parent is willing to grant. Young adults who are not under restriction of such power dynamics like parent-child relationship also acknowledge what is legitimately up to social rules.

Morality is fairness-based. The distinction between the areas of self-entitlement versus social-obligation is essential for determining what is legitimately fair so that it is not a violation of personal rights, or unfair so that it is a violation of personal rights. In traditional moral views, wherein the distinction is not clear, judgments of what is fair or not fair are generally unclear. People's personal preferences can override their moral obligations. Some individuals overextend a sense of discretion into the area normally considered up to others. Others under-claim personal rights even within the area normally viewed as purely personal. The theorized self-others distinction clarifies a psychological and behavioral boundary between the area of entitlement and social obligations in dealing with social matters. It could clarify that not all of personal desires that are unmet are always moral transgressions as some people claim, whereas prolonged intrusion to a person's rights is no longer a personal issue, but becomes a moral issue.

Super-Ordinance of the Moral Domain

Another point of interest is that people do not equally treat all three socially regulated domains. First, justifications for each domain differ. Parents justify parental control as an important parental obligation for the sake of their children's social learning (conventional domain), children's welfare (prudential domain) and the safety of others who interact with their children (moral domain). Second, the degrees of seriousness people view, for violation of each domain, differ. People generally view moral violations as most wrong, severe, or punitive (Tisak & Jancowski, 1996). Studies on parent-child interactions found that parents attempted to exert a higher degree of parental authority over children's moral violations (e.g., unprovoked hitting of a friend) than conventional or prudential violations (Smetana & Gaines, 1999). These findings imply what conduct is prioritized in social interaction with the *super-ordinance* of the moral imperatives, along with compliance to conventional and prudential rules being subordinate to moral rules.

The following real-life episodes illustrate the legitimacy of parental authority over the social domains and the super-ordinance of moral obligation. The first episode of a mother-child dyad interaction was in a Metra train going north to Chicago. A common parent-child interaction is a parent directing a child who misbehaves on a train. As the Metra train slowed down to enter one of Chicago stations, a child, around four years old, saw, through the window, an ambulance approaching the station. Holding the child in her arms, the mother pointed at the ambulance and repeated the word "ambulance" to the child. The ambulance suddenly made a high-pitched noise of the siren, which excited the child, and the child started leaning on the window screaming along with the siren sound (etiquette problem). Immediately, the mother reacted to the child and nicely but firmly shushed the child in order to be considerate of the other passengers in the car. The mother's action was in line with research findings that parents tend to exert parental authority over

children's transgression of socially regulated domains (Smetana & Daddis, 2002) and in this particular case, the mother's interaction was to teach etiquette in a social situation.

The second episode is an interaction of another mother-child dyad also in a Metra train. This dyad was slightly "unconventional" in that they were the only loud passengers in the quiet train car, which was half-filled. The mother let the girl, around 4 years old, scream and move around in the car as the child pleased. This mother appeared to view etiquette and mannerism in a train to be a personal choice. This behavior does not correspond to the normative pattern in which society treats the social convention domain, but studies support several factors (e.g., aggression) that affect a person's view of the boundary between what should be socially regulated and what should be under personal discretion (Tisak, et al., 1996). People with this propensity tend to have a sense of entitlement extended into the area others normally consider as non-personal. The next observation was that the girl carried over her unruliness as she was playing physically with her mother on the seat. The girl got upset and intentionally punched her mother in the face. The mother, who apparently took her child's conventional transgressions (of being noisy in the car) casually, did not take the hitting lightly. Being hit in the face by the child, the mother immediately yelled at the child, "*Never hit your mother!*" With a pause of a second or two, the mother added "*Or anybody…!*" ("Rule generalized to all"). It was quite interesting to see that the mother cared less about the child's conventional transgression but reacted immediately to her child's moral transgression (unprovoked hitting), which illustrates the super-ordinance of morality. Also interesting was that the mother extended her remarks of discipline not only within the interaction with her mother but included general others as well (moral generalizability).

Morality-Virtues Distinction

Unanswered questions with respect to moral/non-moral distinction are whether people also differ morality from virtuous characteristics (e.g., honesty and kindness) similarly to the distinction pattern of moral-social convention, and if so, whether the pattern stands universal or differs by personal diversities such as religions. This section describes virtues with a focus on the acts of honesty because honesty has always been a hallmark item in *moral* teaching and in traditional research of moral development (e.g., Wynne & Ryan, 1993). The focus on honesty is also due to the scarceness of the empirical data, currently available on the other virtues (e.g., empathy and kindness), examined in relation to the aspects of welfare/harm-based universal morality.

Recent studies have shown that morality differs from virtues (Perkins, et al, 2007, Hasebe, Harbke & Sorkhabi, 2021). The opposition to gratuitous harm is universal, objective and non-situational; judgments on virtuous acts (e.g., being honest) are subjective, and situational and localized (i.e., judgements may differ among individuals/groups). The ways people differentiate virtuous obligations from moral obligations are systematic, similar to those of moral-conventional distinction. People judge moral transgressions (deliberate gratuitous harm) invariably wrong. As opposed to the definitive judgments against acts of gratuitous harm, people's judgments about honesty are situational because people do not consider all lies as invariably wrong and all truth telling to be right. Moral-virtues distinction is obvious in people's everyday behaviors. One example is, as described earlier, my students' responses to the question whether the actions of the attackers in the 9-11 incident were moral or not. In response, the students recognized virtuous values in the pilots' acts (e.g., loyalty, diligence and patriotism), and yet simultaneously rated their acts as amoral. They intuitively differentiated concepts of virtues from morality.

As two different elements, a person's moral perceptions and virtuous characteristics do not necessarily develop in a person at the same rate; neither do they always play out orthogonally in

people's actions. Moral and virtuous actions can be intricate and even contradictory in social interactions. For example, there are individuals known in our history as having fought for a moral purpose of human right against the systemic social-interpersonal injustice due to racial discrimination (e.g., Rosa Parks). They were, by no means, "nice" by the social standard. These individuals aimed for a society with a higher moral conscience and yet were deemed to be "rebellious" because they acted against the rules, traditions, and expectations of the societies of the time. Another historical example is a political treaty, at one point during World War II, which is said to have freed prisoners of Turkish descent from Nazi camps. Japanese and Turkish diplomats falsified the list of prisoners' names by including prisoners who were of non-Turkish descent. As a result, the lives of those who were non-Turkish were also saved, along with Turkish prisoners. Diplomats' dishonesty aimed to uphold the moral principle of saving the lives of the innocent. I call these acts 'morally-aimed virtuous transgression.' The opposite exists. If a person has highly virtuous traits, it does not guarantee that s/he also holds equally a high level of moral conscience and moral judgement. Stories about those classified as "political dictators" present their style of régime to be quite amoral (as reported to be causing gratuitous harm to many) and yet their propagandas demonstrate some virtuous characteristics (e.g., diligence and patriotism) at an exceeding level.

Studies on Judgments of Honesty

Moral education, at both secular and religious schools, often fails to address the moral-virtue distinctions. The conceptual mix-up between morality and non-moral virtues, coupled with ambiguous moral definitions, causes instructional errors, what I call "*reversed*" priority teaching, in which educators attempt to teach virtuous characters (i.e., situational) as absolute fixed traits, and moral concept (i.e., non-contingent) as relative and situational. In our moral education, children are encouraged to be honest and truthful as a responsible and trustworthy individual. In this context, lying is considered *morally* wrong and telling the truth is *morally* right. This teaching based on the absolutism of honesty and the dichotomous view of honesty or dishonesty contradicts empirical data. Studies support that people, in both hypothetical and real-life situations, do not judge all lies as the same or invariably wrong. People appear to view lies in the certain circumstances (upholding moral aims) as acceptable and justifiable, while lies in other circumstances (aimed for personal gain and entailing gratuitous harm) are considered morally wrong (Perkins, et al, 2007).

Additional counter evidence to the absolute view of virtues is classical work by Hartshorne and May (1928) that studied the frequency of school-aged children's deceptions in a game that would test "eye-hand coordination." The results showed that a majority of the children in the game cheated a similar number of times and a few children never or rarely cheated. The number of falsehoods was not significantly different among the participants despite the diversities of their educational backgrounds, such as children regularly attending Sunday schools, secular schools, or religious schools. They cheated regardless of the secularity or religiousness of the education they received. Limitations exist in this study, such as that the validity of the experiment because the participants might not consider their occasional cheatings in the game as serious acts of dishonesty because the task was presented as a game. The results still suggest that honesty is not a "*fixed"* trait in a way a person is described as a "honest person" in the same notion that "*someone as being a blonde or having brown hair"*(Nucci, 2001, *p.126*). Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, (1989b, *p.127*) noted that Hartshorne and May (1928) concluded that virtuous characters are not *traits per se*.

Classifying a person as honest versus dishonest is like two extreme opposites of one pole. If honesty is not a trait, this dichotomous classification of honesty is not realistic. Equally unrealistic is a pedagogical approach that continues to teach children to be invariably honest.

People recognize the circumstantial variations of honesty. A study in the medical field supported that a majority of physicians judged a certain type of deception toward insurance companies as justifiable if its aim was to prevent harm (e.g., otherwise the patients would not receive medical treatments that were necessary) (Freeman, Rathore, Weinfurt, Schulman, & Sulmasy, 1999). Children, college-aged students, and adults also viewed lies that prevent harm and save the feelings of others as acceptable, while viewing lies for personal gain as wrong (Peterson, Peterson, & Seeto, 1983; Lindskold & Walters, 1983). This situational variability substantiated in studies further implies honesty prescriptively differs from morality. Domain-related studies support that acceptance of dishonesty and deception is domain-specific. People view dishonesty and lying as acceptable and justifiable, if not a necessity, in the event that telling the truth will impose a violation of personal right and gratuitous harm. Children and adolescents judge withholding information through non-disclosure to parents as more justifiable, particularly over matters of privacy, the personal domain, than the moral and prudential domains, which children and youth normally view as subject to parental authority (Smetana, Metzger, Gettman, & Campione-Barr, 2006). Adolescents avoid parental directives when the commands conflict with the moral principle (gratuitous harm to others) or are viewed to be imposing on their privacy and personal rights (Perkins et. al., 2007). Variations existed that adolescents with aggression problem (i.e., peer bullies), compared to non-bullies, had a greater tendency to prioritize personal gain (e.g., monetary profit at the cost of others) over moral obligation of interpersonal welfare (e.g., disclosure of a potential harm to another that inhibits personal gain) (Hasebe, et al., 2021). Nevertheless, those adolescents as a group, like normative samples, still judged dishonesty for moral obligation as more acceptable than moral violations. These studies together confirm the super-ordinance of morality that people treat moral concerns more importantly than virtues of honesty and truth-telling in the order of what ought to be prioritized in accordance with social-interpersonal matters. People value honesty but do not supersede honesty with moral impingement. I presume subordination to moral imperatives is not limited to honesty, but applies to other virtuous characteristics (e.g., niceness) that hold the same propensities (e.g., situational variability).

Moral-virtue distinction is essential for moral education. We consider virtuous characteristics highly important and strive to educate children/youth in order to develop those characteristics as requisites of good and trustworthy social individuals. These characteristics are never to be denied. Yet, being nice alone is not sufficient in dealing with the complexity of moral issues. Character/moral education that contradicts what should be prioritized can cause an ironic contradiction to the education's purpose. Pursuits of virtuousness without first prioritizing moral imperatives can perpetuate the cycle of injustice. For instance, in a relationship involving acts entailing gratuitous harm, to whom are we to be nice? The perpetrator, the mistreated person, or both? Some people may decide to be nice to the perpetrator because they simply desire to be "virtuous" or fear of retaliation. Others may act nicely to the mistreated out of sympathy, and yet niceness alone would not adequately deal with the complexity and vice of interpersonal unfairness. Respect is another virtuous characteristic. Individuals can take advantage of the idea of respect and make unilateral moral rules instead of bilateral rules, wherein honesty is a duty of the subordinates but not required of the dominants, which creates and perpetuates the cycle of unfairness and injustice for these in subordinate positions. Countless incidents in societies delineate such 'virtue-based moral transgression,' wherein systemic forms of interpersonal unfairness and injustice are directed and justified through virtuous propagandas without prioritizing moral consideration.

One may argue that virtuous acts (e.g., kindness) become moral acts in an event the act of kindness succeeds in averting or correcting a harm to the one receiving the action. This hypothetical situation describes a contextual intricacy between two distinctive domains wherein the act of kindness takes place to uphold moral purposes. The act of kindness in the scenario serves as a *means* to achieve moral purposes; hence, the kindness does not transform itself to morality. Conducts of multiple domains often intertwine with one another in complex social matters, and yet the nature of the acts in one domain does not cross over or transform to another domain.

Analyses of Misconceptions of Christian-Secular Moral Dualism

Evidence supports a moral objectivity, and yet, societies continue to advocate moral pluralism/Christian-secular moral dualism. The next section describes the reasons why the discrepancy continues to exist.

Definition Problem of Morality

One straightforward reason is a lack of literature that applies theory-based moral views. Consequently, people continue to define morality vaguely. The notion of fairness and justice, the essential aspect of morality, therefore, continues to be unspecific. For instance, Christians in different positions (e.g., laypeople, ministers, and theologians) point to the aspects of sexuality as a vital standard of Christian *moral* values[2]. Sexual immorality includes the issues of premarital sex, sexual promiscuity, and homosexuality. Christians claim that their practices and beliefs regarding sexuality, and objections to these sexual immoral practices, make Christian *morality* different from secular morality in contemporary societies wherein these sexual activities and experimentations are more and more acceptable (Cherry, 2008). Another example of moral standpoint is a dress code. Some Christians define a dress code, particularly of women, in reference to the context of morality. Clothing that is considered provocative and seductive because it shows too much bare skin is improper by their *moral* standard. This '*sexuality-morality equation*' is one ground Christians apply to rationalize and support Christian-secular moral distinction.

Nevertheless, this classification of sexuality contradicts research findings. Studies demonstrate that Christians do not view some conduct of sexuality (e.g., premarital sex between contented adults) or dress codes precisely as moral issues[3], nor do they judge those acts from the context of welfare/harm in the same way they judge or reason out a breach of moral conduct (e.g., slandering) that deliberately inflicts gratuitous harm. Instead, both Christians and secular people view acts of sexuality, between consenting adults, as mainly under personal choice, and choice of clothes mainly as a personal matter, that yet situationally becomes a conventional matter in certain settings that require social appropriateness (e.g., funeral). Age affects the judgements that younger adolescents (13 years), compared to older adolescents (16 years), viewed sexuality issues (e.g., whether

2. I recognize that Christianity is itself diverse with regard to moral questions. Moral definitions and decisions are not monolithic, but diverse within Christian groups and individuals. Therefore, term "Christians" in this paper refers to the *specific* individual Christians holding particular beliefs referenced in the given context, and not intended to generalize as "*all* Christians."

3. The problem of Christians' 'moral classification of sexuality' is not the classification itself, but the contextual incongruence between the classification and their rationale. They generally use *conventional* rationale (e.g., sexual abstinence is *God's "rules"*), but not *moral* rationale from the *welfare/harm* aspects of sexuality. In my view, sexuality is a moral matter. Understanding the moral meaning related to sexuality requires understanding the theory of welfare/harm from the deeper level of spiritual/supernatural realm, lacking in the current debates.

I start dating) as cross-domain matters, fitting partly within the conventional or prudential domain for consequential harm, and partly in the personal domain regarding their freedom to choose in action and preference (Hasebe, et al., 2004). Yet, they still did not equate sexual practices totally with morality. Discrepancy exists between Christians' actual views of sexual conduct and the ways in which some Christians have traditionally defined and taught sexuality. Which is true? Are sexual conducts a part of Christian morality, or matters of privacy? While the discrepancy still exists within Christians, a belief 'sexuality-equates-morality' is inadequate to validate Christian-secular moral dualism. The validity issue of classification exists beyond the area of sexuality. Further examination is necessary to investigate whether conducts, customarily classified as moral matters, would truly fit the welfare notion of moral domain, or they would better fit the notion of the other domains.

Methodological Flaw: Overlooked Reasons Behind Decisions

Another reason for the continuous advocacy of moral pluralism is due to a methodological flaw in our moral reflections and debates. We tend to focus on the decisions and conduct ("*what"*) in our debates, but overlook the reasons behind the decisions ("*why*"). Current advocacy for moral pluralism/dualism is premature because it is based on the differences of moral decisions. People's moral perceptions cannot be fully evaluated and determined solely by the decisions. For instance, Kohlberg's theory utilizes a scenario of Heinz's moral dilemma about choosing to steal the drugs or not stealing (Kohlberg & Turiel, 1971). To determine people's moral stages, the theory examines the respondents' decisions, whether Heinz should or should not have stolen the drug, and the reasoning behind the decisions. People in the pre-conventional moral stage (the lower stage) and those in the post-conventional stage (the higher stage) likely reach the same decisions in approval of Heinz's decision to steal the drug. Their reasoning for the decisions, however, differs, which is the key that determines the different developmental levels between the two groups. In sum, people of different moral levels can reach the same moral decisions, yet based on different justifications; in reverse, people can differ in decisions based on the same moral reasoning. Moral pluralism/dualism cannot be sufficiently validated solely by looking at the differences in people's moral decisions.

Theoretical Flaw: Moral Concept Versus Moral Decisions

In the advocacy of moral pluralism/dualism, additionally overlooked is a fact that a moral concept and moral decisions are two different things. As stated earlier, the moral concept ("*It is wrong to hurt the innocent*") is a universal notion; people's moral decisions vary. This section repeats some aspects (b) described above, but further addresses the theoretical element of qualitative difference between concept ('ought to be') and actions ('do or would do') that is overlooked in *moral* debate. When people support moral pluralism based on outwardly differing moral decisions among people, they mistakenly presume such variation also suggests variation in people's moral concept. This is a fundamental theoretical error. People's moral decisions (whether the conduct is moral or not) naturally vary (see footnote 1). Yet, the variation in people's moral decisions is, by no means, to negate the presence of a universal moral principle; neither does the moral consensus guarantee people's decisions to be always the same. Christians and secular people may well differ in their moral decisions because of the fundamental differences in belief system. Yet, if you look closely at their reasoning, the differing decisions could be based on the same wel-

fare/anti-harm reasons. Current advocacy of Christian-secular moral distinction is premature because this theoretical distinction of concept versus decisions is not applied in the rationales and debates.

Overlooked *Domain-Inconsistent* Rationale

Lastly, people support moral pluralism/dualism based on the flawed rationales that apply "domain-*inconsistent*" reasoning. As stated earlier, each domain stems from its own unique roles and functions of the different aspects of a social life. For the rationale to be valid, conduct of each domain, in debate, must be discussed and reasoned out from the context precisely corresponding to the nature of the domain. For instance, the primary roles of the social conventional domain are for the smooth and effective maintenance and organization of the desired social functions within the community. Welfare concern is not the primary concern of the domain as conventional violation is not primarily aimed to cause deliberate gratuitous harm. For valid discussion, conventional domain needs to be discussed from the context of effectiveness and maintenance of social functioning; the matter of personal domain from the context of an individual's right and discretion and moral matters from the aspects of interpersonal welfare/harm. I call this method "*domain-concordant rationale*." "Moral" debates wherein the topics in discussion are not addressed from the welfare/harm context are inadequate to be classified as moral debates. Decisions and advocacy resultant of such debates are equally invalid.

As stated earlier, Christians claim certain clothing is a *moral* violation. This statement is generally followed by a reasoning that the clothing is improper due to a sexual connotation determined by a social/religious standard of what is appropriate or not appropriate. In response, secular people, who generally view choice of clothing as a personal matter, simply accept the Christian statement, and both of them agree to conclude that *their morals differ*. In this context, however, neither of them addressed the issue of dress code in reference to a moral principle, yet both concluded to support Christian-secular moral dualism based on the inadequate, domain-inconsistent rationale. When we look closely at the reasoning behind their disagreement on dress codes, we see that the debate itself is not even a moral debate, but it is a debate of *conventional* versus *personal* matters. This is a major flaw in our "moral" debates. Domain-inconsistent rationales occur when the topic in discussion is indeed of a moral issue but we fail to recognize the deeper level of the moral nature, or the conduct initially classified as a moral matter is really a non-moral matter, therefore welfare/harm reasoning simply does not apply. Quite a number of what we consider "moral" debates/decisions are, therefore, not moral debates/decisions, hence, insufficient to substantiate Christian-secular moral dualism/moral pluralism.

Another example of domain-incongruent reasoning is the disagreement between pro-life (normally Christians) and pro-choice (normally secular people) groups on abortion of a pregnancy (refer to footnote 2). Although their disagreements are based on several principles, one disagreement between them is prominent; what age a baby or a fetus in the prenatal stage is considered a human. Pro-life Christian groups usually point out Bible references and claim that a life begins at conception; therefore, abortion of a fetus at any time during pregnancy is akin to killing a human. Pro-choice, secular groups do not deny that human life begins at conception. They, however, disagree with the interpretation of a personhood based on the reference of the Bible. They view that human life at conception is not equal to the concept of a personhood because of their views of the functional limitation of physical elements (e.g., zygotes). Zygotes or embryos before a certain trimester are not yet a human with a personhood, and abortion of the pregnancies before the certain trimester is not equivalent to murdering *humans*; therefore, it is not moral transgression. Pro-life

and pro-choice groups' decisions are outwardly opposite, and that makes it appear as if the groups disagree in moral codes. Two errors are noted in this debate. One error is the fact that people overlooked that they reached different decisions, and yet their decisions are based on the same welfare reason. Both agree with the importance of securing welfare for the unborn, through the means of avoiding gratuitous harm of murdering a human. Yet, with the disagreement in defining how old is old enough for the embryo to become a human being, they reach opposing decisions. Laying behind the opposing decisions is a shared moral concept of anti-gratuitous harm. The other error is that their debate is not precisely a moral debate. It is a *conventional* debate because the focus of their rationales is now individuals' interpretations about "what ages and physical functions define an embryo or a fetus to be a human." People's attempt to define a personhood by personal interpretation of the trimesters is essentially a *conventional* inquiry[4], hence, takes their debate off the track of the initially intended moral debate.

Conclusion

This article refutes moral pluralism and Christian-secular moral dualism based on the empirical findings of a universal moral principle. Studies demonstrate that Christian and secular people share the same moral concept. In our democratic society, "*everybody is different*" is a convincing phrase, commonly yet thoughtlessly recited like magic words. Students grew into the faith of moral pluralism as if it were the humanistic position that all individuals with a 'modern' mind in pursuit of a democratic society must take. People advocate moral pluralism as if moral diversity were a foundation for individuality and equality for democratic society. Christians, on the other hand, appear to take pride in their non-worldly morality reflective of their religious fundamentalism they consider is non-existent in secular morality. Christians appear rather resistant to the idea of moral universality possibly because they view it as a way to secularize God-inspired sacred morality, and is therefore an abomination to God. In my opinion, a moral universality is, by no means, disgraceful to Christianity, neither is authoritarian oppression towards moral democracy. A centrality of Christianity is morality[5]. "Being virtuous" is not the same as being moral, nor being a Christian, or vice versa. Theological morality is deep and requires the inquiries from the theoretical and pheumatological aspects. Whether it is Christian or secular moral education, pedagogies built upon a false philosophical basis or not coinciding with the make-ups of human cognitive structure cannot attain the desired goals. The pedagogies in our moral education built in harmony with and for the advancement of moral pluralism must be re-examined within the scopes of the

4. Describing a personhood as "conventional" debate does not reduce the significance of a human life into "*mere*" convention. Although generally viewed as subjective and situational, some conventions/traditions (e.g., cultural festivals) are embedded in objective truths of spiritual realm and serve as powerful tools in a social life that affect human perspectives, minds and spirituality.

5. One may wonder whether Christian moral reasoning considers the role of religious insistence on 'righteousness' as preferable to, or it incorporates morality. My personal view is Christian concept of righteousness incorporates morality. More precisely, morality itself is the centrality of the righteousness. The righteousness refers to three types. First is righteousness of the God, an ultimate attribute of the God. Second is righteousness of men's acts and quality of being righteous, or attaining righteousness by obedience to the God's laws (e.g., the Ten Commandants). The last one is salvation, righteousness of humans attained by faith through Jesus. Commonly lays among the three forms of righteousness is the God's aim for the redemption of creations, that is, a restoration of all (welfare), otherwise continues to be in the states of struggle (harm). (For details, refer to "Redefining Christian Morality" and "Pneumatological Analysis of Christian Morality through Scientific Approach" Hasebe, 2021, in review).

theorized morality. A valid, theory-based reconceptualization of morality in general, is now readily available that, in turn, advances the understanding of Christian morality.

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On the Complexity of Solidarity between Parents and the Educational System in the Days of the COVID-19 Crisis[1]

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Abstract

I present here the normative argument that the role of the democratic-liberal state is to ensure solidarity between the public educational system and the parents of students, during routine times and during emergency times. I shed light on the weakness of the values of solidarity and equality, which have characterized the relations of the Israeli educational system and the parent population, especially during the COVID-19 crisis. Based on Michel Foucault's ideas, this article uses the productive-constructive possibilities of power that Foucault termed "pastoral power" for the creation of solidarity between the educational system and parents, especially during emergency period.

Keywords: *Solidarity; Parental involvement; Foucault; Pastoral power; COVID-19*

Introduction

Extreme conditions make it possible to think, and in specific, to think about education, to breach the routine and inertia and to re-examine, in a critical manner, the taken-for-granted, the accepted, the regular. Indeed, in an emergency, which is an extreme situation, the distinction between a democratic and an absolutist regime becomes blurred, and the legal order becomes suspended (Agamben, 2005). As a result, the educational order is also suspended. This situation invites the discipline of the philosophy of education to update perceptions and educational perspectives in a wide variety of educational aspects, including the relationship of solidarity that exists between the educational system and the students' parents.

Thinking about the emergency situation created during the COVID-19 crisis leads to the discussion and exploration of "bio-politics" (Foucault, 1996), which relates to all the actions, the approaches, the techniques and the actual attempts undertaken by the ruling system in order to administer and control in a rational and regulated manner the civilian population. This is the power platform at work in society—"bio-power," as Foucault called it—a form of power that "applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects" (Foucault, 1982, p. 781).

A Judeo-Christian source from which bio-power and bio-politics emerged is pastoral power, that aims to supervise, direct and manage people's behaviour. Later, on the last part of this

1. This study was supported by Mahut Research Center for Parents-Teachers Relationships.

paper, I will elaborate on Foucauldian pastoral power and on its connection to the concept of solidarity. At this point I just wish to draw your attention to the importance Foucault gave to the need for solidarity in society, telling us that "after all, we are all members of the community of the governed, and thereby obliged to show mutual solidarity (Foucault, 2001, p. 474).

According to Foucault, it is worthwhile to free oneself from thinking that sovereign, concentrated and mighty power is the only possible power (Foucault, 1980). In his opinion, pointing to concentrated power, which is in the hands of the national system, cannot explain the entirety of power relations, the action and the response in the social space. This is because the appearance of "bio-power" depends upon the existence of small and numerous social power networks that work among and on the members of the networks.

I will now turn to an examination of how "bio-power" can create solidarity between the educational system and the population of parents and how solidarity, in turn, allows for the action of the "bio-power." Specifically, I will re-examine and clarify and critically examine a number of issues, which connect to solidarity between parents and the educational system (in its widest terms: from the nursery school playground and the school corridors through the discussions in the Knesset – the Israeli parliament, and the government). These issues have been especially visible on every level during the emergency that evolved as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and on the dynamic and vague seam that separates/connects the parents to the educational system. After all: "humanity needed a catastrophe, a hard push to reach a higher level of consensus and solidarity" (El Maarouf, Belghazi & El Maarouf, 2020, p. 16).

The importance of parental contribution to the education of their children in the schools is clear. Furthermore, as Sperling (2019) argues, the welcome influence of good and open communication and continued cooperation between the educational system and the parents has been well-known for a long time (albeit some parents choose different styles of education for their children, e. g. homeschooling. See Neuman, 2019).

As a result, the COVID-19 crisis does not teach us something we did not know. However, it does shed a very strong, clarifying and emphatic light on two notable topics, when trying to cope with the virus. The first is the great need for parental involvement in online learning (Borup, Stevens & Hasler-Waters, 2015; Hasler-Waters, Borup & Menchaca, 2018; McCarthy & Wolfe, 2020). The second is the injustice and inequality in education that are deepening and intensifying when the learning is taking place online. These injustices and inequalities are found between families with a high socio-economic status, who understand the importance of helping their children, invest time in this and possess cultural capital that makes it possible for them to control and use the newest technologies in a good and efficient manner, and other families.

The Questions to be Addressed

I will address the following ethical and principled questions: What is the desired and possible character of solidarity between the educational system and the students' parents during routine situations and during emergencies? Is solidarity feasible between the educational system and parents in the different sectors, in light of the differences in religion, nationality, culture, economic resilience and value perceptions of the sectors? Is solidarity feasible between the educational system and parents who ask for full authority over the education of their children (for example, parents in the Charedi sector – the traditional ultra-Orthodox, religious Jews – or parents who do home schooling)? How does the neo-liberal perception influence the feasibility of this solidarity during routine and emergency times?

These questions will be answered via a theoretical-philosophical examination that problematizes (Foucault, 1984) the concept of solidarity, as it is embedded, or should be embedded, in the relations between parents and the educational system, when it is clear that solidarity is essential especially during times of crisis and emergency. I will discuss normative questions (and not descriptive ones) that arise from the problematics that were discovered in connection to parental-educational system solidarity during the first six months of 2020 in Israel concerning the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

So, in what follows I start (in Part A) with exploring the connection between the idea of the liberal democrat**i**c state and the obligation to express civil national solidarity with the citizens ("organic solidarity" as it was coined by Durkheim). Then (in Part B) I examine the characteristics of teaching in the COVID-19 era, giving special attention to solidarity and justice in education in Israel during the pandemic. Then (in Part C) I build on Foucault's concept of "pastoral power" for the creation of solidarity between the educational system and parents, especially during emergency period.

On Solidarity in Democratic Countries

I adopt here the normative assertion that worthy citizenship is citizenship that "sees democracy and its organs not only as a governmental procedure, but rather as expression of an essential value platform, whose principles can be summarized by the slogan of the French revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity" (Michaeli, 2014, p. 25). However, in extreme conditions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the legal order is suspended (Agamben, 2005) and, in Israel, like in every other place in the world, the liberty, the first word of the slogan, has been harmed and is decreasing. However, at this time, there is no necessity to abandon equality and fraternity (which, in this essay, will be termed, solidarity – the more common name), and specifically not as they appear in the relations between the educational system and the students' parents.

Solidarity and equality are not concepts from a distant culture, which are alien to Israeli reality. Rather, they are basic values of the State of Israel. They are the clear desire of the right-wing in Israeli social thinking (Maor, 2004) and in the left-wing (khenin & Filc, 2019). I assert that the role of the State of Israel is to ensure solidarity of the public educational system toward all of the students' parents.

I will begin with an exploration of the connection between the obligation to express solidarity with the citizens, and the liberal basis of the State of Israel. I will then discuss the value and ethical question if the state is required to express solidarity with groups that do not wish to express solidarity with all the other groups in the country.

On the Connection between the Obligation to Express Solidarity with the Citizens and the Idea of the Liberal State

As a preface to this section, I will provide here a short context explanation about the complex social-educational situation in Israel.

The Israeli society is roughly comprised of four population sectors that correspond to four official educational streams in Israel. Three of them are full state-sponsored and full state-supervised streams of mostly public schools: General-secular Hebrew education stream, comprises 38 percent of first graders of 2018; Arabic-language education stream whose students are mostly Muslims but Druzes and Christians as well and comprises 25 percent of Israeli 2018 first graders

(I am not discussing here the case of the Palestinian Arabs who have been living under Israeli occupation since 1967 and are not Israeli citizens); National-religious Hebrew education stream (with 15 percent of 2018 first-graders). The fourth is the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish education stream (the Charedi sector, with 22 percent of first graders) that is characterized by largely independent curriculum and loose state supervision (Sachs & Reeves, 2017). The schools in that stream are private schools, and about half of them are full state-sponsored.

The State of Israel is a liberal state, even if it is not completely so (Smooha, 2016), and even when more voices in the public are calling to change this characteristic of the country (see, for example, Haivry & Hazony, 2017). The country can be seen to be a liberal country by relying on, for example, the basic principles of the country – the Declaration of Independence – which painted Israel in strong liberal colours. As such Israel does place the values of freedom and equality in the center (Sagi, 2017, p. 71).

If this is so, it appears as if the liberal state, according its definition, is required to act according to the value of equality between citizens. This is certainly so concerning everything that is connected to equality in the education of the future citizens. And, what about the value of solidarity?

Following Menachem Mautner (2013), I differentiate between two kinds of liberalism: the liberalism of the negative rights, or liberalism of the autonomy, which is the dominant kind of liberalism in Israel, and "the liberalism of the individual and social prosperity," which is the kind of desired liberalism in a country that aspires to wave the flag of solidarity.

The liberalism of the autonomy deals with the conditions of freedom, which will make it possible for the subject to be autonomous, and it will provide him/her with liberal rights, such as freedom of movement, freedom of religion and freedom from religion.

It appears as if this kind of liberalism has no special interest in the existence of a state with wide social solidarity, altruism, or the spirit of volunteerism. Moreover, of course, there appears to be no interest in the promotion of solidarity that is supported and advanced by the state.

The second kind of liberalism, according to Mautner, is liberalism of individual and social prosperity, which deals with the development of human abilities and their realization: intellectual, moral, and artistic abilities. This kind of liberalism does not focus solely on the value of freedom in liberalism of autonomy, but rather on the conditions, which make it possible for citizens to realize their freedom in a way that will be meaningful for them and to be able to fully realize this personal autonomy. The pre-condition for personal prosperity is that the person be rooted in her/his society.

Therefore, this kind of liberalism is not only concerned with individual rights, but also with social rights (such as, the right to education, the topic of this essay, as well as the right to health, to housing, or to the guarantee of income). Liberalism places the obligation to realize these rights on the state and on society. The essence of this liberalism is:

> [...] seeing the person as the source of the value and striving for the creation of the conditions in which the person can realize his humanity to the highest degree. This is liberalism in which the state will discover interest not only in the education of children, but also in the ongoing spiritual enrichment of the adults and will ensure that the person will be awarded the best spiritual products, not only the elites, people with means, but rather all of the country's citizens. (Mautner, 2013, p. 67).

This second kind of liberalism relates to social rights of all citizens, who live throughout the country, and together form civil society. Therefore, its call for solidarity is not for a narrow local solidarity, like Durkheim's "mechanical solidarity", neither for wide cosmopolitan solidarity as was suggested by Camus. However, it calls for civil national solidarity, coined by Durkheim as "organic solidarity".

Even if it is very important to create solidarity between the governmental system and the groups of citizens – a solidarity that grew "from below," in the initiatives and motivation of the citizens – when taking a real look, it is clear that it is not enough to depend on the good will of the different groups of parents for the creation of solidarity between them and the educational system. The responsibility for the central role of the creation of sustainable solidarity, needs to be placed on the sovereign, which is the main powerful entity here, as I will demonstrate in the third and final part of this article.

Is Solidarity of the Liberalism of Personal and Social Prosperity Possible? Specifically: Is it Possible in Present-Day Israel?

It is clear that "It is all too easy to have refined sympathy for those close to us in geography, or class, or race, and to refuse it to people at a distance, or members of minority groups, treating them as mere things" (Nussbaum, 2010, p 109). That is the way of the world. However, there is room for the question if the emotion of solidarity can also exist between groups in the country whose members cannot eat at one another's home, whose sons and daughters cannot marry one another, who, at times, do not speak the same language at all, and whose customs, dress and culture are different.

However, in this article, I am focusing on very limited Israeli solidarity, educational solidary between parents and the educational system, as it has been shown to exist during an emergency situation. Solidarity in the educational space is influenced by the weakness in general solidarity in the country. The weakness is considerable in the Jewish sector: The Democracy Index of 2018 describes "a real decrease in the appreciation of solidarity in Jewish-Israeli society" (Hermann et al., 2018, p. 13); as well as in the Arab-Israeli sector, whose members estimate that solidarity in Arab society is even lower than the estimate within the Jewish sector (Hermann et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is very little solidarity between the Jewish and Arab groups (Smooha, 2018).

If this is the case, the liberalism of personal and social prosperity, from my viewpoint, neither honors nor accepts the existing situation, which clearly lacks solidarity, but rather aims to establish in its place a normative goal: solidarity between the different groups of parents of students and the public educational system, especially during emergencies.

To all the short-sighted people, who have a hard time seeing the feasibility of general Israeli solidarity, I recommend using empathic imagination, as described by Martha Nussbaum. This leads to "the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have" (Nussbaum, 2010, pp. 95-96).

It appears that empathic imagination has a basis in Israeli reality since the distances and the gaps between the groups, even if they are indeed large and wide, are neither static nor fixed. It is possible to notice growing, slight movements of nearing a common denominator in the Israeli space. For example, the language of speech is becoming more and more shared by the diverse social groups (Abu-Bakr, 2007; Assouline, 2014; Brand, 2015); Furthermore, there is noticeable

willingness of Charedim, the ultra-Orthodox religious Jews, to set up their households close to people who are not Charedim (Kahaner & Shelhav, 2012). At the same time, it is possible to identify movement of the Israeli Arabs toward general Israeli society. They have:

> ...undergone partial modernization in their lifestyle and in their thinking. They have become accustomed to Israeli standards and Jewish society is a reference group for them. They appreciate the advantages of the life in Israel – accessibility of modernization, the services of national welfare and the provision of allowances, the rule of law and democratic institutions and defense against Islamic control or Jewish fundamentalists (Smooha, 2013, p. 23).

In light of this trend, in my opinion, the answer to the question that was posed at the beginning of this section is positive: solidarity of liberalism of personal and social prosperity is possible in Israel.

Is the State Obligated to Maintain Solidarity with Parents of Students in All of the Sectors?

In this section, I will briefly relate to the questions that deal with the extension or the exclusion of solidarity between the educational system and parents, in routine and emergency situations. As I noted above, such solidarity is essential. While I relate here to the Israeli case, the responses to these questions also have universal relevance (with slight differences in semantics). Should the state care about solidarity with parents from groups that do not look for solidarity with all of the groups in the country? Should the state express solidarity with the Charedim, who do not accept the State program of core studies? With Arabs who refuse to sing the national anthem? With parents who do home schooling and whose approach to education says, 'we feel no solidarity with the public?' I aver that the answer to these, and similar, questions is simple and clear. The aim of solidarity between the educational system and the parents, which is presented in this essay, is the safeguarding of the rights of the students for education and for equal education. One of the famous is that the State of Israel declared, at the time of its independence, that it would completely safeguard equal social and political rights for all of its citizens. Moreover, the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (which was ratified by the State of Israel in 1991, and its principles are integrated into Israeli law – see, for example, Arbel, 2018), determined that, "the states that are members acknowledge the right of the child to education [...] on the basis of equal opportunities" (Section 28). Here, there is no condition for the provision of this right to a child. The convention promises that,

> States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

The convention further states that,

> States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members (Section 2).

As a result, the beliefs and perspectives of the parents, including the character of the needed solidarity in the country, neither increases nor decreases the right of the child to education on the basis of equal opportunity.

We can ask a harder question: Is the state obligated to express solidarity with parents from groups who have behaved in ways that do not reflect solidarity and, perhaps, even expressed anti-solidarity stances during the COVID-19 crisis? Mautner (2020) averred that, "We will need to treat the Charedim's lack of solidarity." Adopting the assumed secular and national religious public viewpoints, Mautner accused the Charedi public of expressing anti-solidarity with Israeli society, of not following the guidelines of the sovereign regime and of not taking precautions to avoid infection or to take care not to infect others with the COVID-19 virus. In a similar manner, he accused the government project manager of the battle against the virus, Professor Ronni Gamzu, of not expressing solidarity when he said: "The Arab sector in the last two weeks, after the Eid al-Adha holiday, almost carried out an attack that would have resulted in hundreds of patients" when having meals with many participants, and holding parties and gatherings (Lukash & Yanko, 2020).

In light of this, we can ask if engaging in collective blaming of moral transgressions, which reflect a lack of solidarity during the pandemic crisis, constitutes acts of morality or solidarity. My answer to this question is negative: if we adopt Anderson's words, the Charedi collective is an imagined matter, which is divided into imagined sub-collectives, such as the Lithuanian stream, the Hasidim, and the Mizrachi Charedim. Moreover, these three streams can also be sub-divided into internal groups. Therefore, there should be no blaming of an abstract figure of a Charedi person, who lacks solidarity. One can blame a specific person, who happens to be a Charedi to this or that degree, but one cannot blame the collective. This is also true for an Arab-Israeli citizen, who is not at all responsible for the lack of solidarity expressed by an anonymous Arab-Israeli. There should be no collective blame placed on the Charedi collective or the diverse Arab collective due to certain individuals expressing a lack of solidarity, even if their numbers grow. A people should not be blamed for not behaving in ways that reflect solidarity or morality (Jaspers, 2000, p. 34).

Erecting fences between the general population, which is adhering to the solidarity promoted by the state, and a specific public, which is excluded from the general solidarity and which is prevented from receiving state benefits because of the transgressions of individuals in the group, is a kind of collective punishment. The Justice, Haim Cohen, stated: "that every 'collective' punishment, in which the sin of a person is visited upon his family or village or organization is fundamentally wrong and is neither in line with justice nor with the law of the Torah (Cohen, 1996, p. 692).

I will now move from the theoretical and principled plane—the worthy, as it was presented above, to the given, which is discussed below.

The Given

The Characteristics of Teaching in the COVID-19 Era

In 2020, the Coronavirus changed the character of learning in the world. Many of the students in the pre-school, elementary, middle and high schools, post-high school and academic institutions began learning at home, learning that is both synchronic and a-synchronic, and mainly based on online technologies. The ministries of education, which are responsible for the schools, and is the focus of this essay, compelled the teachers to move from teaching in a classroom in a school to teaching online. Furthermore, this change demanded the preparation of completely new

lesson plans and demanded completely different didactic emphasis than what was required beforehand in classroom teaching. For example, during the months of the lock-down in the United States, there was an increase of 90% in use of the instrument, EdTech, which combines technology and education, in comparison to the previous year (Molnar, 2020). The new way of teaching has required teachers to depend more on the parents and on their cooperation. Research has shown that parental involvement in their children's online learning is essential. Therefore, it is important to relate to this involvement in a different way than their involvement in education and learning that takes place within the school (Borup et al., 2014).

The importance of parents' support, of course, depends upon their desire to help their children in the process of online learning and in their ability to do so – in terms of their educational abilities, their technological skills, their command of the language of the studies, and their availability – tied to obligations concerning livelihood or responsibility for additional children of different ages – as well as having a technological infrastructure at home that can support all the children, without disturbing others at home, who need the technology for their work or for their studies.

We can understand the importance of parental support if we look at this issue via a critical viewpoint held by many teachers (for example, in Australia and New Zealand), who felt that, after the schools were closed, because of the pandemic, that they were not receiving the expected support from the parents, because the parents have not upheld anyone of these conditions (Flack et al., 2020). This can also be seen from the viewpoint of the parents of children in elementary schools (for example, in the United States), who need technological support in order to organize online learning for their children at home (McCarthy & Wolfe, 2020).

If, indeed, online learning during a crisis, such as the COVID-19 crisis, requires technological infrastructure and the ability of parents to help their children in their studies, it is clear that there will be inequality between the education that children of parents who can provide what is needed and that of children who come from homes where the conditions are not possible. Therefore, inequality that already exists in the educational system in the world, during quiet periods, has grown during the COVID-19 crisis, because education is now increasingly dependent on technology. Studies have shown that families with a high socio-economic level consume more online education than families with a low socio-economic level (see, for example, Bayrakdar & Guveli, 2020; jaeger & Blaabaek, 2020). The inequality is even more conspicuous when we examine the gaps in education between students who are home schooled and students in the regular educational system. These gaps have widened considerably since the pandemic began. A gap has been created between students in regular educational frameworks and students whose parents possess pedagogical, didactic and technological abilities, who themselves teach their children in joint and small frameworks ("pandemic pods," "learning pods," microschools"), while the schools are closed.

Solidarity and Justice in Education in Israel during the COVID-19 Era

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the closure of the schools and nursery schools in Israel on March 13th, 2020. After this date, students, theoretically, had the opportunity to participate in online studies, provided by the educational system, via synchronic and a-synchronic lessons taught by the teachers and nursery schoolteachers.

It is possible to learn about the real feasibility of this theoretical possibility by reading the *2018 Yearly Israeli Statistical Report*. According to the report, the possibility of participating in online learning was available mainly for members of the strong socio-economic group (The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018). According to data from the Ministry of Education, it was not

clear at all the number of students from economically disadvantaged populations (low income families, migrant workers, refugees, etc.) who did not participate in online learning, and more specifically, the number of students, who did not have access to the internet, during the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, it is not known if there was any governmental response to the needs of these population (Dahan et al., 2020; Weisblei, 2020).

Equality does not only connect to technology; it is influenced by other factors, such as, the ability of the parents to help, in terms of general education or their command of the Hebrew language. Moreover, the importance that the parents give to their children's studies (religious, cultural, economic or social importance) greatly influences the feasibility of learning during emergency situations. For example, it is logical that Charedi children will have an advantage over other children in exercising their right to education in emergencies. The reason is that, for the Charedi population, attending Torah study institutions, has huge personal, community, national and overall human value. Therefore, cancellation of school and its resulting harm is a very serious decree for this population (Pfeffer, 2020).

Who are the groups with no internet access, that are not part of the strong Israeli populations, and who especially need solidarity during the pandemic?

One group is the Palestinian-Arabs, who are not one homogenous sector, but despite the group's variations, I can generalize and contend that the Palestinian-Arab students faced many difficulties when they were told about the closing of the schools and that there would be a shift to online learning (Hassan, 2020).

Most of the Arab population in Israel does not have computers at home and use of the internet is through smartphones. However, most of the content of the educational materials on the internet have not yet been adapted to the smartphones. Moreover, when the schools were closed, not all the materials had been translated into Arabic, Even not an official portal for the parents. In comparison to the Jewish sector, the physical infrastructure for computers is worse in the Arab sector, especially in the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev, which are lacking the most basic infrastructure, such as, electricity (Hassan, 2020; Mazor & Edres, 2020; Farah, 2020).

Solidarity was also missing when the decision was taken to return to school, without listening to the voices of the parents in the Arab sector. If the cabinet and the head of the educational system had listened and consulted with the Arab parents, these parents might have brought up the special difficulty of returning to school, since many of these schools are very crowded and do not have yards. Or, perhaps, the officials might have heard about the uniqueness of returning to routine studies when the Muslim students were beginning the holy month of Ramadan (Hassan, 2020).

Other special groups, which are not part of strong Israel, belong to the Charedi sector. The concept, "Charedim," or the "Charedi community," includes different religious groups – different orthodox groups, which, at times, are adversaries (Baron, 2015). However, in spite of this, we can aver that many people in the Charedi sector do not use the internet or smartphones at all, due to beliefs and tradition. Therefore, online learning for this group is not possible. Moreover, closing Charedi educational institutions brought the children from the boarding schools back home, and in many of the homes, the families were not prepared to provide all their many children with the possibility of listening to the lessons broadcast on the regular phones (Tucker, 2020).

If this is the case, the Arab public and the Charedi public have not been able to gain solidarity from the educational system and the political system in the country. It can be assumed that had there been solidarity, this would have supported the existence of online educational activities.

The lack of solidarity in the educational system has also characterized the relationship between the parents and the students from other groups that do not belong to the strong, dominant

group. For example, after the decision was taken to return to school with certain limitations, students, who belong to a high-risk health group, or who come from families who are in this high-risk group, had to remain at home and were not provided with any relevant educational solutions (Kadari-Ovadia, 2020). During the COVID-19 era, many of the children of foreign workers and asylum seekers, who receive the services of the public educational system during quiet and routine times, were also neglected (Dahan et al., 2020).

Special education students, who receive help from teachers' aides during routine periods, were also harmed. They were forced to manage at home without teachers' aides when the schools were closed. The plans that were made for the kind of studying that would take place during the new school year, in which part of the time the children would go to school and part of the time they would study online, placed the responsibility of the online learning on the parents of the students in special education. This was because the teachers' aides do not go to the children's homes, due to fear of infection (Hilaie, 2020).

Furthermore, even if the students, parents, and teachers in special education were offered the support of art therapists, after the decision was taken to close the schools, this support was conditioned upon the cooperation of the parents. "There needs to be partnership between the families in the therapeutic activities, according to the judgement of the therapist, the needs of the student and the readiness of the parents" (Mendelson & Marnin-Shacham, 2020). It appears as if the special education staffs would have a harder time helping the weaker parents. It is clear that difficulties would arise when there was a demand to match the technology to the special needs of the children (Dahan et al., 2020), for example, in situations in which there is a need for augmentative and alternative communication for children who have difficulties with written and oral communication. A special difficulty would appear when attempting to help parents of children in special education, who do not have a good command of the Hebrew language, during the crisis, when schools moved to online learning.

Another example of the disappearance of the needed solidarity between the educational system and the weak parents is the closure of the boarding schools and youth villages. These frameworks sent home minors at risk, who are lacking a family home front, without providing a real solution, neither for the continuation of online studies nor for help for the families – the same homes that sent the children away to these frameworks in order to protect them (Ibid.)

To erase any doubt, the lack of solidarity is especially harmful to parents (and, as a result, their children), who belong to the weaker groups in Israeli society. However, the strong groups were also harmed when the system was unprepared to cope with the crisis and were unwilling to consult with the parents and to cooperate with them to find possible solutions. We can learn about the harm from the publication of a position paper of the psychologists' union of Israel. According to this document, the plan for online learning, created by the Ministry of Education for every child in Israel, was not tailored to the abilities of nursery school children. Most of the proposed activities require the ongoing presence of the parents (Schleyer, 2020), which was not fully kept. These examples of the existing condition point to the weakness of the solidarity between the educational system and the students' parents, specifically during a period when there is a greater need for solidarity, mainly with the weaker sectors of society.

Solidarity between the Educational System and the Parents as Foucauldian Pastoral Power

In this section, I propose that the educational system use its power and take responsibility for the development and nurturance of solidarity with the parents of the students. Solidarity is a

pre-condition for coping with crises, in which significant involvement of parents is necessary in educational activities. I base my proposal on Foucault's ideas and even suggest possible directions for implementing this responsibility. It is clear that there is a need for solidarity between parents and the educational system and always desirable, not only during periods of crisis. Therefore, acceptance of the proposal can contribute to educational activity in Israel when quieter days return.

On Foucault and the Concept of Power, On Pastoral Power and On Pastoral Power in Relation to Parents-the State

Foucault's ideas concerning power are often used in criticism or as a call for resistance to power that is used by the State or by the social hegemony against weak or disadvantaged groups in society (see, significant examples in Butler, 2011; Said, 1978). At other times, we find criticism levelled against Foucault's ideas concerning "evil power" and attacks on what the critics see as power that negates, prevents or destroys, and the implications of this harmful and injurious power in real social life (Walzer, 1983).

Indeed, this criticism accuses Foucault of only seeing everywhere oppression, arbitrary violence, imprisonment, exclusion etc. However, critics ignore the importance of the idea that power can create, makes things possible and can be positive (especially in the field of education – Leask, 2012). Due to limitations of space, it is not possible to develop here the entire range of creative uses of power, based on Foucault's ideas. In contrast, I will focus here on ideas, drawn from Foucault, that connect to the creative-constructive possibilities of power, in order to tie these ideas to the attempt to create solidarity between the educational system and the parents, especially during crises.

Power, the central concept in Foucault's theory, is not something that can be divided into those who have power and those who do not, and thus, are subordinate to the power holders. Power is a relation and not a "thing" or an "object," which can be held or owned. It is not like merchandise that is transferred to a merchant, even though it is something that moves. It is operated via social networks and the individuals in these networks accept its authority, operate it, and send it onward. The individual is also influenced by power (and in a certain sense, which I will not be able to detail here, the power is what constituted him/her), and is also relayed to others. According to Foucault, we should not look at the issue of power from up high, but rather from below, from the small units. We need to begin exploring its concrete action, from the level of the family unit (Foucault, 2003). This is what I will do here when I discuss the power of action of the educational system on the family unit.

Foucault pointed to the discovery of different kinds of power in society and he described the actions of three prototypes of power that were developed from one another in a historical way.

A. The first type is sovereign power, which is basically negative power, comprised of limitations and things that are forbidden, which threatens punishment for those who oppose it. This is the power of coercion. The sovereign power worked on a few and in an ostentatious manner, based on the assumption that whoever saw the strength of the harm it could cause, the individual would obey and cooperate with the sovereignty.

B. The second prototype is disciplinary power. It is dispersed power: it reaches everywhere, it is found everywhere and it works on everyone all of the time. People subjected to this type of power feel that they are constantly seen and observed. "The sovereign

power to punish" has changed and became "the power to observe." Disciplinary power aims to shape the subordinates, without them feeling that they are being shaped. If this shaping succeeds, it leads to voluntary acceptance of the disciplinary power on the part of the subordinates and to an unwillingness to rebel against it.

C. The third kind of power, according to Foucault, does not focus only on individuals, but rather focuses on the population. Indeed, Foucault, in his lectures, focused on the appearances of this kind of power, in which the main interest is on the population and control of it:

In the beginning, Foucault presented bio-power and the bio-political technique through which bio-power comes to be expressed. This bio-power is not directed at the individual body of the subject, like in disciplinary power, and it no longer has the right to kill the subject, like the sovereign power had. Rather, it is power that actually aims to safeguard the life of the subject (Gallo, 2017). Afterwards, Foucault changed the concept of bio-power to the concept of governmentality (gouvernementalite), which is more efficient (Niesche & Gowlett, 2019). He also changed the idea of bio-politics to the idea of governmental administrative mechanism of governmentality, which he termed "mechanisms of security" (Foucault, 2007). For these mechanisms of power, the population is both an object and a subject of the governmental administrative mechanism. That is, it is both the object of the power, as well as what carries it.

These are mechanisms relevant for the COVID-19 crisis. This is because, according to Foucault's conceptualization, during a pandemic, this power operates on the general population, and these mechanisms provide answers to the questions that arose for the first time in the nineteenth century and continue to be asked to this day: How many people have been infected? How many were vaccinated? What is the ratio of the dead among us? What is the probability of being infected? These are questions that do not have the goals of exclusion, but rather attempt to stop the pandemic.

Discovering the third kind of power, which is my focus here, is characterized by the fact that it does not change the placement of people and it does not try to draw and rebuild their living space to make it easier for the power to control the population. Instead, the power rests on information from the field and distribution of the population. The mechanism of security attempts to organize the milieu (using Foucault's term) in a multi-value and dynamic network of possible, temporary and unsure events that work within the same given human living space. This space is also used as a means of action that impacts the often dynamic and changing population, and also serves as a mediator through and in which the activity occurs.

Bio-power or governmentality does not relate to the population solely as a collection of subjects, but rather as a natural phenomenon that cannot be easily changed by a sovereignty. According to the logic of this new type of power, it is indeed possible to organize the environment and to undertake a certain change in the population. However, the change cannot take place in an arbitrary or violent manner. The change can only take place via agents of change and enlightened, reflexive, analytic, and calculated techniques of change.

There are biological, social, political and belief connections to the events, the movements, and their dispersal in the milieu. The sovereignty, and in our case, the educational system in its wide sense, needs to become involved and act within this milieu, for the benefit of all citizens. Here, in the discovery of the third kind of power, the mechanisms of security no longer work solely

for the security of the sovereignty, as the mechanisms worked in sovereign power, but rather, first of all, they work for the security of the entire population.

Pastoral Power Creates Solidarity

In order to better understand the actions of the bio-power and the governmentality, there is a need to look closely at the source from which they emerged, according to Foucault. This is the Christian pastor, whose foundation is in Hebrew sources. The abstract concept of the pastor uses the image of the shepherd and the flock and the relations between the two. It points to a relationship with a certain kind of character that exists between the leader and the followers. Within this framework, certain individuals serve others, not as kings or judges, but rather as spiritual shepherds (pastors). Pastoral power is a specific kind of power that aims to supervise people or manage their behavior (Foucault, 2007).

In the transition, from managing a small community to managing a population of a country, pastoral power uses statistical and other methods of organization, which make it possible to direct people. It adopts a goal in which, in the end, people will self-direct their behavior. This is not a one-way power relationship: the pastoral power does not only give commands and demand things. The spiritual shepherd was also willing to sacrifice himself for the lives of his followers. Moreover, the pastoral power cared for the entire community, but was unique in that, simultaneously, he worried about the needs of every individual in the community, in a personal manner, throughout the individual's entire life. This power, in contrast to sovereign power, works from inside the social body and not on the social body, from a distance (Foucault, 1980, p. 38). It works when the power holder understands the desires of the members of his community and knows all of their secrets.

It appears to me that pastoral power is relevant, possible, and required in a multi-cultural society, such as Israeli society. Fretwell (2020) describes the English link workers as present-day examples of educational pastoral power. These workers provide the community of English students' parents with "tailored made" support for their needs. They serve as a bridge that connects the school and the parents. These are people from within the community, who have strong ties in the community. They were trained to serve in this function, and they exercise their pastoral power on parents through friendship, listening, empathy, care and concern, persuasion, and control. They develop these ties from close up, in the community and not with a remote control from the school buildings. In this way, they change the traditional ways of acting in order to manage the parents in relation to the public educational system. They provide the parents with improved tools and abilities to help in the education of their children.

Link workers do not only support the parents, but also stand against inequality in the educational system and try to overcome or to decrease it. They teach the parents learning strategies, they explain to them how to create a supportive, learning environment at home and they develop needed pedagogical behavioral habits.

The link workers do not only work with the very problematic or weak parents, or with parents who need more services. They work with the entire community. In pastoral terms, it can be averred that they work with the entire "flock." In a more human terms, it can be said that they work with the entire ethnic group. The link worker, who stands alongside the "shepherd" in the pastoral power arrangement, cares for each parent in the ethnic group, as well as each individual parent, and s/he does so on a daily basis. S/he gives each parent the sense that s/he is important, has value and can influence others.

In the Israeli educational system, there is partial use of this idea, in helping families of new immigrants. "Multi-cultural Educational Bridge Builders," who speak the language of the immigrants, have been appointed "to help the school staffs, the families and the student immigrants in order to bridge the gap between the culture of school and the customs of the country of origin and the Israeli educational system" (CEO, Ministry of Education, 2020).

The pastoral power works, in these examples, via technology of governance. It does through secondary agents that succeed in managing the parents, even when the central system is physically distant from the milieu and even when each milieu is characterized by cultural-educational, belief system-educational or national-educational uniqueness.

This is a description of possible creative, positive, and constructive actions of power. Through this care and concern for the "flock," the "shepherds" encourage the parents to be reflective and responsible since they are the ones who manage their children's studying at home, as they adopt ideal norms (from the pastor's viewpoint) of parent-educators.

I believe it is possible to satisfy those who wonder about the chances that the "secondary shepherds" will succeed. After all, in order to realize pastoral power, the shepherd needs know his/her "flock" in a full and intimate manner. If this is the case and the "shepherd" receives the blessing of the "flock's" natural or traditional leaders, the probability that s/he will succeed in his/her task increases. According to Foucault, people have no desire to oppose being governed, to give up on all guidance and supervision. The question that the person asks him/herself is not whether to be ruled, but rather who should be his/her ruler. Furthermore, s/he will reject the person that s/he does not want to rule. There is acknowledgement of the necessity that "the community of the flock" will agree and desire to be ruled in a certain way. The good shepherd must win the trust of the flock.

Foucault averred that pastoral power no longer sees its goal as leading the "flock" to salvation in the next world, but rather to care for salvation in the present – welfare, health, security and defense against accidents and unexpected events. According to Foucault, the pastoral power of our time is also used in the institution of the family, as well as among philanthropic bodies and public institutions, in order to implement and actualize the pastoral functions of caring for both the entire population and its individuals, especially in the area of education.

The idea of pastoral power is relevant for the educational situation in Israel, which is characterized by numerous cultures. This is especially true during times of crisis and distress. My normative assertion in this essay is that the state needs to adopt the role of the "link workers" and to expand the approach of the multi-cultural bridge builders as a strategy for the realization of pastoral power as a creative power in Israeli society. As much as possible, the state will award pastoral power to the local authorities, who have economic and administrative abilities to encourage solidarity in their jurisdiction. The "Israeli link workers – bridge builders" will be found from within the community and will be given their blessing to engage in this work. After all, not all of the knowledge, for example, knowledge concerning the appropriate way for parents to act concerning the education of their children, especially when they have to study online from home, is in the hands of the state's authorities.

There are also kinds of knowledge that come "from the bottom," from people on the ground. These are kinds of local, regional knowledge that is not accepted, and does not need to be accepted, by everyone (Foucault, 2003), for example, the knowledge concerning the worthy way to teach Charedi children, and specifically children from Charedi families that belong to a certain stream of Hassidim, during a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of this knowledge is

found in the hands of educators and rabbis from this stream. Furthermore, they have the power to motivate the Hasidim to action.

It is possible to characterize the behavior of the Charedi public (as well) during the pandemic as behavior of people who follow the instructions of its leaders. These are instructions that are transmitted in different and efficient ways to the followers, which place much trust in the leaders, while not placing trust in the states' leadership and instructions. Furthermore, the local community has diverse institutions of mutual aid (Malchi, Malach & Friedman, 2020). Similarly, the knowledge concerning the worthwhile way to cope with the difficulty of educating during the pandemic in Arab society is found within Arab society (Hassan, 2020).

The Responsibility of the State for the Creation of Solidarity

Richard Rorty (1989) rejected the assertion that solidarity is a natural inter-subjective phenomenon that exists between all of us – a phenomenon that needs to be expressed and exposed. For Rorty, solidarity is a human creation of members of a certain group that agree to act in solidarity, in either an explicit or implicit manner, with and toward members of their group.

In other words, solidarity needs to be created, and in order not to leave its success to fate, the state needs to initiate, administer, and budget solidarity between the educational system and the parents.

Ostensibly, the creation of this kind of solidarity, directed by the state, collides head on with the neo-liberal stance, which has been adopted by the Israeli government. According to this, the State needs to interfere as little as possible in the lives of its citizens and to give them the responsibility for their children's education during a crisis, based on the assumption that parents, more than anyone else, want to maximize the good for the children.

However, neo-liberal ideology, which is the prominent ideology among leaders in many countries in the western world, does not necessarily represent the Israeli spirit, which according to sociological research, supports solidarity.

Being Israeli also includes consensus that Israel is a welfare state. All of the sectors of the wide public do not only support a high-level welfare state, but also support a socialist-democratic ideology that opposes a neo-liberal ideology of the elite and the governmental policy that erodes welfare services. (Smooha, 2018, p. 70).

As I proposed above, the state will award local authorities, who have administrative and economic pastoral abilities, the mandate to work for solidarity. They will, furthermore, help them implement the desired solidarity, in terms of budget, legislation and its construction. It will help local authorities develop solidarity and share knowledge to help create this solidarity.

I can summarize and assert that the creation of solidarity between the State and the students' parents is both possible and desirable. Even if the initiative for the creation of solidarity needs to be in the hands of the State, who can initiate such solidarity, this will not be one-directional power, working top down, from the national educational system and directed to the entire country, through the last parent. Even when the pastoral solidarity power that I proposed above, for work with families of parents, is initiated "from above," its existence and length depend on parents' responses to such an action. Its intensity and efficiency depend, as we learned from Foucault, on feedback from "below," from the parents, and on their agreement to simultaneously serve as subjects that transfer power and as objects of power. That is, they need to agree to function as a relay station that constantly receives the power of solidarity, uses it, and transfers it onward to

additional relay stations, while constantly increasing its strength. The importance of the actions of the relay stations will reach a climax during a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Towards an Ethics of Autism: A Philosophical Exploration
By Kristien Hens

Cambridge, England: Open Book Publishers (2021). 206 pp., $25.28

Reviewed by Barry W. Birnbaum, Western Illinois University

Abstract

This work focuses on the dimensions and dynamics of autism. The focus is on Leo Kanner, the one individual known for identifying this disability. The work of Asperger is also discussed. This paper is free from bias as it relates to developmental and applicable characteristics of autism.

Keywords: *Autism, psychiatric interventions, developmental approaches, Kanner*

This manuscript focuses on the dimensions, experiences and dynamics of autism. It covers the origins and nature of diagnoses while focusing on the mind and various cognitive identities. The work explores the DSM-5 criteria as well as psychiatric definitions in a way that supports multi-dimensional aspects of the disability. It is important to note that this book includes interviews with individuals, such as child psychiatrists who are active in the understanding, diagnosis and interventions of children with this condition.

The author brings forth some issues related to the varied definitions and meanings it takes to fully and accurately diagnose autism. She mentions a case where three doctors stood trial for performing euthanasia on a thirty-eight year old woman with severe mental limitations. Although legal in Belgium, euthanasia is not morally accepted in other places. The author looks at three different understandings of the disability, starting with the work of Kanner, psychiatric interpretations and developmental approaches. This approach provides the reader with an important historical perspective of the condition that its taught in college textbooks and the arguments by the author are supported by relevant and current research.

It is mentioned that Kanner's writings are essential reads for a better understanding of autism. He indicates that there are psychological as well as biological causes and that these need to be explained further to better understand its etiology. The author reviews the works of other individuals, such as Asperger, who identified milder forms of the disability. Much work by psychiatrists is used to determine definitions and applications of autism as a form of disability. This is important because it provides the level of function that is found with the varying degrees of autism.

This is an important work because it examines the various aspects of autism. It describes differences as well as disadvantages used by people who know little about the disability. The effects of this ignorance are included as part of a broader area that is investigated. Labels are

discussed as they can impact the function of the person and can lead to societal judgments that are inaccurate and unfair.

This book provides an excellent overview of autism, its history, experiences and dynamics. It is filled with relevant information about persons with autism and how they can be supported in an appropriate and viable manner. The work does an outstanding job of examining individuals with the disability in an objective and non-biased manner.

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