SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATORS' ROAD THROUGH A TRANSFORMATIONAL

EDUCATIONAL PEDAGOGY: WHAT ARE THE LESSONS LEARNED?

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Preparing teachers to work effectively within the classroom is the goal of many teacher education programs. Considering the diversity that is currently forming in American classrooms, many teacher education programs are engaging teachers around issues of justice and citizenship as a form of participatory democracy (Westheimer, 2003). These classroom and program settings are focusing students and faculty on learning to embrace civic action and perhaps develop a social justice disposition. Given the contentious climate around such dispositions, I believe it is important to come to understand what brings these teacher educators to such a disposition. This study explores how teacher educators reflect on developing courses and/or programs that move concerns for justice from the periphery to the center of curriculum and pedagogy by adopting a social justice framework. I investigated the teacher educators' reflection of this transitional process and how they come to be social justice educators. I discuss my findings related to how these educators have come to accept the complexity of the meaning of the term social justice education. I also discuss how these educators foreground social justice education in their work with students and the reconstruction of their own identity, as they are exposed to the language, literature, and philosophy of social justice education. Through this study, I come to understand

that their transformation is more than simply implementing a pedagogy, it is about creating action and integrating social justice practices into their everyday lives. Their identity reconstruction requires two things 1) an experience(s) that shifted their perspective, which I call anchoring experiences, and 2) a meaning making process. Using a postcritical stance, a method of ethnographic interviewing, and grounded theory techniques, I analyze their perspective-shifting and collective meaning making activities. In addition, I discuss some of the barriers that they have encountered when moving through this transition to becoming a social justice educator. My analysis provides a glimpse into the challenges such a pedagogy can encounter and the transitional reflective work that confronted these educators. Lastly, I discuss two major elements: power and community engagement, identified as important to being a social justice educator.

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DEDICATION

To all those families and communities whose voices have been absent from the current system of education in America and to the teachers and teacher educators who work fearlessly to help those voices be heard and celebrated.

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1.0   FOUNDATION OF MY INVESTIGATION

Preparing teachers to work effectively within the classroom is the goal of many teacher education programs. Many programs also prioritize teaching teachers how to be engaged scholars and citizens in a participatory democracy (Westheimer, 2003). Given this desire, universities may want to focus students and faculty on the common good and provide a space where students embrace civic action and perhaps develop a social justice disposition. This project explores how schools of education and, more specifically, how teacher educators within schools of education move toward such a disposition.

Although there are many approaches to utilizing the classroom space, the position I am taking is that educators rehearse democracy through pedagogy. The classroom space can be used to push students to engage in ideas that are contentious and uncomfortable and to participate in the dialogic (Bakhtin, 1981; Sidorkin, 1999; Tomasello, Carpenter, Call, Behne, & Moll, 2004; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) regarding issues concerning justice and democracy as well as their own transformational education. This space can invite students to develop a critical understanding of social equality. As Butler (2000) states, we can help students to see a conflict "between our national aspiration to be a democratic republic and the reality of our being a nation whose commitment to democracy is threatened by racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, excessive materialism, and a peculiar numbness toward the suffering of others" (p. 52).

During the adoption of social justice education, it is important for educators to construct their classrooms as spaces where perspectives and values are contested (Garman, 2004; hooks, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 2001). It can be a space where students develop their educational platform--a space where they construct a lens through which to view, critique, and situate themselves in the educational landscape. Then the teacher education classroom becomes a place where contested ideas emerge and are examined and reexamined; where the dialogic comes to life and the practice of democratic principles are manifested; and where problem-solving extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge into a pedagogy of social justice. In such a classroom, students begin to hear, connect, engage, and perhaps live the various narratives that shape humankind and its potential. It can be an authentic public space (Greene, 1988) because students can participate in public life through a deliberative process, engaging multiple perspectives, and considering the pluralistic ideas that they may encounter. Often called "social justice pedagogy," this approach requires a commitment to social justice education by the faculty, the staff, and the students themselves. The creation and hopefulness of this form of educational environment is at the heart of this study.

I recognize that social justice is a "contested" term and is open to contradictory interpretations. Joe Feagin, the past president of the American Sociological Association, recognized the complexity of social justice when documenting three distinct components of social justice: 1) a legislative or policy component including resource equity, fairness, respect for diversity, and eradication of social oppression; 2) an economic component including the redistribution of resources from those who have unjustly gained them to those that justly deserve them; 3) and an education component including a system to create and ensure the processes of truly democratic participation in decision making (Feagin, 2001). Feagin's description brings up

objections, such as Fukuyama's (1992) argument that modern capitalism is the last and best economic system and that class, gender and racial conflict are in sharp decline in Western societies. Other approaches to understanding social justice include the work of Friedrich Hayek (1978) who argued that social justice becomes an instrument of ideological intimidation for the purpose of gaining the power of legal coercion (Novak 2000). In addition, Hayek maintains that many authors use social justice to designate a virtue, even though, at times, the term denotes a regulative principle of order (Novak 2000). However, for most advocates of social justice, the focus is not virtue but power (Novak 2000). Later, I explore the interpretations of social justice. For now, I believe it is important to explore the diverse context in which the dialogue around this term exists including changing classroom demographics and cultural diversity.

It is important to note that public school classrooms are becoming more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religious affiliation, political ideology, and socioeconomic status than they have ever been (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau (2016) data, 50.4 percent of our nation's population younger than age 5 has racial minority status. This is up from 49.5 percent from the 2010 Census. A population greater than 50 percent minority is considered "majority-minority" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Furthermore, the data suggests that, by the year 2023, Hispanics will make up one-fifth of all preK-12 students. Estimated enrollments reveal that, by 2025, 70 percent of all students in the US enrolled in public schools will be students of color (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016); Morva McDonald (2003) refers to this as the "demographic imperative": "Along with increasing racial and ethnic diversity, the enrollment of students with English as a second language and the number of students living in poverty conditions will also continue to rise" (p. viii). This demographic shift increases the need for all teachers to be

prepared to work with this emerging population of students, regardless of their own racial, class, ideological, or ethnic backgrounds. Finally, there also exist communities that are seemingly monolithic, classrooms that appear to be dominated by one ethnic, racial or cultural background. It is important for students from these environments to understand how to interact with individuals from culturally different communities because they will interact with multicultural, multiracial, multilingual, and multiethnic people in the United States for the remainder of their lives. In like form, students of color will interact with systemically privileged students, and it is essential for all students to develop knowledge, awareness, and understandings of themselves and others in order to live healthy and productive lives (Banks, 1989; Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995). Therefore, schools of education and teacher education programs face a difficult and daunting task in preparing future teachers for a complex milieu.

In the hopes of improving the preparation of teachers to work with students from diverse backgrounds, there are those teacher education programs that expand the traditional approach of multicultural education and attempt to incorporate social justice education into the classroom and program curriculum. For example, some teacher education programs have added courses in multicultural education that require clinical experiences with students from diverse backgrounds. These create opportunities for prospective teachers to evaluate their understanding of students of color and low-income students as discrete elements of a course or program (Banks, 1995; Gay, 1994; Goodwin, 1997; Grant, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Although important, these opportunities often have been scaffold onto the existing structure of teacher education programs and have added little to teachers' understanding of the students they teach (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Grant, 1994; Grant & Secada, 1990). Some programs have aimed to address the shortcomings of these attempts by integrating a vision of teaching and learning focused on social justice

principles in what may be considered a more coherent approach. To help programs better implement social justice education, we need more research on the process of that implementation. Understanding the teacher educators and the barriers to this adoption that they may encounter within teacher education courses and programs is an important part of expanding our understanding of the implementation process.

A few researchers have studied the integration of social justice education across the curriculum; yet, key implementation questions remain unaddressed. Ladson-Billings (1999) used Critical Race Theory to illustrate how individuals and programs more explicitly challenge prospective teachers to address issues of race and inequality. She also pointed to a course taught by Joyce King that uses a Black Studies theoretical perspective to challenge teachers to reconsider their own education and their role as change agents in teaching. A 2003 review of multicultural teacher education mentions two studies (Davis, 1995; Tatto, 1996) as having investigated the inclusion of such issues across entire programs (Cochran-Smith et al., 2003). Tatto (1996) found that although programs subscribed to principles of fairness and social justice, they had weak impacts on teachers' ingrained beliefs. In addition, Ladson-Billings (2001) explored the experiences of prospective teachers in a program explicitly focused on diversity and culturally relevant teaching. McDonald (2005) investigated the structure of two programs' implementation of social justice education and the pre-service teachers' ability to apply this knowledge. Lastly, Tatto (1996) reported weak impacts on teachers but did not illuminate how integration worked. The unanswered questions of integration and implementation by these teacher educators are at the heart of my inquiry.

1.1   BACKGROUND: IMPETUS FOR THIS STUDY

Over the years, the School of Education (SOE) at the University of Pittsburgh has attempted to address the increasingly complex landscape of teacher education. With a need to address concerns of accountability as well as serve the changing populations within the classrooms, the School of Education committed itself to three key areas: improving education for students in urban schools; exploring how public policy influences classroom practice; and understanding the factors that enable classroom success (School of Education, 2005). In fall of 2005, the instructors of the Social Foundations course, a course designed to introduce preservice teachers to the influence of social, historical, cultural and philosophical forces on education, attended several school-wide events, conversations, and workshops focused on the school's strategic plan. So, the Social Foundations instructional team began to ask what it means to teach for social justice and what impacts social justice education can have on education. The Social Foundations course was an undergraduate course designed to expose potential teachers to the cultural, political and historical elements of teaching. This course was positioned as a prerequisite for graduate-level certification. This seemed like a good place to practice social justice pedagogy but questions of implementation became immediately apparent as the instructors considered the mission of the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh and the political and cultural conditions of the surrounding school districts.

Since its inclusion in the School of Education curriculum around 1966 (Hill, 2006), the Social Foundations course has been dedicated to teaching the respect and appreciation of difference within the classroom (Hill, 2006). As a member of the instructional team, I began to question whether such a multicultural approach was meeting the needs of its students and the teacher preparation programs. The Instructional team made up of Teaching Fellows who were

doctoral students within the school and their supervising faculty member, began to discuss this question: "What do we mean by the term diversity and what does it mean for us as the School of Education community to say that we value diversity?" (Gray, meeting notes, 2005, p. 3). From several weeks of deliberation with the instructional team other questions emerged: Does this require a commitment to social justice? And what would that mean? These discussions and the questions that developed from them were during the time when many were outraged with the removal of an obscure reference from the glossary definition of dispositions on page 53 in the 61-page Professional Standards document of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, or NCATE (now the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP]). NCATE claimed that a social justice orientation was implied within standards related to diversity (Alsup & Miller, 2014). The Professional Standards document shaped how teacher education programs frame their curriculum, while many NCATE member organizations refused to question such removal (Heybach, 2009).

During this time, schools and colleges of education at other highly ranked universities expressed a commitment to equity and diversity (McDonald, 2005). Institutions such as Brooklyn College, the teacher education program at Marquette University in Milwaukee, The University of Kansas teacher education school, and Claremont Graduate University in California, all had embraced the concept of social justice education (Stern, 2006). With the shift in the classroom demographics and the increasing gap between minority students and white students, along with the push for increased accountability, universities began restructuring programs to focus on improving the lives of people and making education more equitable, while still maintaining their commitment to preparing highly qualified teachers, researchers and educational leaders (Shields, 2004). With this backdrop, the instructional team began to evaluate the School

of Education's commitment to social justice and look for instances of social justice within the school.

The Pitt School of Education, like so many teacher preparation programs, was undergoing continual revision and realignment in response to changing state standards, new faculty hires, and changing demands on the teaching professions. In 2006, the School of Education's website listed three primary goals of the school. Although these goals were specifically focused on Psychology in Education and Health and Physical Activity, we saw them as an interesting place to begin our inquiry into social justice education within the school.

> The three primary goals of our school are:
> - Improving urban education through both research and the training of teachers and other school professionals;
> - Impacting the factors outside the teacher-student relationship that influence learning (including physical activity, emotional well-being, a head start on the building blocks of school success, experiences that underscore the need for learning, and freedom from fear);
> - Helping to improve regional, national, and international education policies. (University of Pittsburgh, School of Education website, 2012)

The second goal, "Impacting the factors outside the teacher-student relationship that influence learning…" could be read as a commitment to social justice. The team began to consider, if we found some connection between diversity and social justice, might we make a more forthright and public commitment to a justice-oriented mission? We, as the instructional team, saw this as an opportunity to bring this commitment to the surface and to test its saliency among the community.

Motivated by the questions in the previous paragraph the instructional team began a journey of inquiry and investigation as to what it means to teach for social justice and to be scholars and educators with a social justice disposition. For me this led to personal reflection and questioning of the idea of social justice and how it manifests itself not only in my teaching but in

my everyday life as well. Why does this term lead to such contestation and conflict? This study is grounded in this inquiry and attempts to unpack the contested nature of the term "social justice" and to seek a richer understanding from teacher educators about what it means to practice social justice in teacher education.

Thinking specifically about questions around teacher education and its relationship to social justice education, I am of the same opinion as King and Newman (2000) who argue that major pedagogical issues for teacher education are 1) the quality of teaching and 2) the professional development needed to best address "teachers' learning, teachers' practice, and student achievement" (p. 577). Placing social justice education at the core of how teachers experience the teacher education curriculum can increase the quality of teaching and meet students' needs for academic success. As a result, many schools of education have focused on methods and professional development designed to create spaces of equity and equality (Maeroff, Callan & Usdan, 2001).

1.2   PURPOSE STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The educational landscape of teacher educators working for social justice is complex and fluid. Teacher educators looking for an entrance into integrating a social justice approach within a course or program can encounter resistance from institutions and students as well as the educators' own personal bias. This study focuses on the elements of change in practice as they are understood by those who are directly involved in and influenced by the change process in the classroom. Specifically, this study explores how teacher educators reflect on developing courses and/or programs that move concerns for justice from the periphery to the center of curriculum

and pedagogy by adopting a social justice framework. I investigated the teacher educators' reflective point of view of the transitional process. This research was informed by my own experiences as a former Social Foundations instructor attempting to implement social justice education in my course. I explored the following research question: How do educators within teacher education programs within schools of education understand their transition from traditional multicultural/ diversity curriculum to social justice education?

In order to narrow the focus of my study and develop a richer understanding of this issue, I developed the following sub-questions to help guide my investigation:

1. How do teacher educators involved in social justice education define multicultural education?

2. What practices do these educators associate with multicultural educational curriculum?

3. How do these teacher educators define social justice education?

4. What practices do these teacher educators associate with the move to a social justice education?

5. What facilitated the participants in this study to transition from multicultural education to social justice education within the context of the teacher education programs and courses?

6. What do these educators see as the barriers to a successful transition to social justice education?

1.3 OVERVIEW OF INQUIRY

I investigate these research questions through a study of the reflective experiences of social justice educators within teacher education. Using ethnographic interviewing techniques, these teacher educators reflected on their experiences and transition to social justice education within

teacher education programs or courses. While social justice teacher education programs and courses promise to prepare teachers to work with diverse students, there is little known about the transitional process they have undertaken. More specifically there is little known about the transformational experience of the teacher educators who engaged in this transformation. Hearing the voices of the educators who have decided to transform their program curriculum or courses can provide useful insight into the transitional complexities of moving to a social justice curriculum, which may be either an integrated approach or a program-driven approach within a school. Exploring transition points can provide schools' leadership, faculty, and pre-service teachers an opportunity to gaze into moments of evolution within a course. This study can also contribute to the framing of social justice work in teacher education because I use the participants' voices to mediate between competing definitions and reveal practical applications for teacher educators and schools of education.

I examined the reflective perspectives of teacher educators on how teacher education courses and programs are influenced by social justice pedagogy. In addition, I investigated the transitional challenges of integrating social justice as a guide for curriculum. More specifically, I examined how teacher educators see and understand the transition from multicultural education toward social justice pedagogy within a course or program. As my form of inquiry, I utilized interviewing techniques intersecting with an emancipatory theoretical perspective. It is my hope in this study to raise the consciousness of the reader to the larger forces within society that shape systems. As Freire (2006) suggests, this can help individuals become active participants in the creation and development of the society within which they exist, rather than *automatons*, which exist simply to serve within an oppressive society.

This study attempted to address the above questions by utilizing ethnographic interviewing of teacher educators who identified themselves as enacting a social justice frame within teacher education. As members of a community of reflexive educators, a group of educators that are consistently reviewing their own pedagogy for professional and individual growth, the participants in this study are well positioned to provide insight into the transitional process that has occurred within their own experiences. I selected the participants because of their explicit commitment to address issues of social justice and equity but also because of differences in their organizational contexts and history of implementing this commitment. I believe their similarities and differences will prove to be beneficial to developing an understanding of the transitional journey of the implementation of social justice as well as the factors that inform the process.

For this study, I used Grounded Theory analysis techniques (Charmaz, 2006) and a postcritical ethnographic stance (Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004). I explored how these approaches can be used to understand the perspectives of the participants and the significance of their responses (Patton, 2002). Because my focus is on the reflective perception of teacher educators, I needed a research design that looks across multiple understandings and perspectives of members of a community who have transitioned to or are in the process of transitioning to social justice education. This study draws on data collected by adapting postcritical ethnographic techniques in the interviews of the participants (Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004). I shared the interview data with the participants to verify that I had represented their reflection clearly. I then systematically coded descriptive and theoretical categories that were generated by my conceptual framework (see Chapter 3) and those that emerged through the iterative process of data analysis.

It is my hope that this study provides some insight into the transitional complexities of

adopting a social justice disposition. This study is designed to provide the narratives and perspectives of teacher educators and the lessons learned from enacting social justice education within teacher education. The findings in this study may provide teacher educators with a deeper view into the structure and pedagogy needed to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students (Cochran-Smith, 2004; McDonald, 2005, 2007; Zeichner, 2009). A more detailed explanation of my methodology is provided in Chapter 3.

2.0   REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

In order to understand the transitional aspect of integrating social justice into the teacher education curriculum and the transformation experiences of the participants in this study, I draw on 1) the historical nature of multicultural education within the concept of sociocultural theory, 2) the development of social justice education, 3) the theory of curriculum transformation, and 4) more specifically, identity development as the theoretical grounding for my study. Collectively, these theories provide a useful lens for understanding the curriculum, cultural, and ideological shifts that are discussed within the experiences of these teacher educators. In this chapter, I provide the historical and theoretical underpinnings of multicultural education and provide some context for social justice education. I review multicultural education through a sociocultural theory lens and provide insight on its influence on school systems and the challenges of a transforming pedagogy within the educational system. This transition has a direct connection to how teachers and future teachers are taught and what knowledge they find critical for the development of their students as well as how teachers interact with difference within the classroom. I also briefly explore social justice education and its relation to curriculum transformation. Lastly, I review the concept of identity development and how the teacher educators within this study have moved away from doing multicultural education to being social justice educators.

2.1   MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

As Schools of Education begin to transition from multicultural education to a more social justice perspective, I believe it is important for education faculty and policymakers to recognize this evolution. Gorski (2000) states, "As the conceptualizations of multicultural education evolve and diversify; it is important to revisit its historical foundation" (p. 1). This evolution of ideas, structure, and historical context is valuable to the development of a social justice context. He continues with his inquiry:

> What did the earliest forms of multicultural education look like and what social conditions gave rise to them? What educational traditions and philosophies provided the framework for the development of multicultural education? How has multicultural education changed since its earliest conceptualization? (Gorski, 2000, p. 1)

In addition, it is important to consider what contributions, if any, multicultural education has provided for the rise of social justice education. Based on my conversation with these social justice educators, I found that there exist multiple influences by multicultural education on social justice education.

Multicultural education was influenced by the intergroup education movement of the 1940s and 1950s (Banks, 1995; Cook, 1947; Taba & Wilson, 1946). Then it evolved from the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's (Banks, 1989; Davidman & Davidman, 1997). It is also directly linked to the ethnic studies movement which began at the turn of the century and continued to have strong influence up to the late 1970s (Banks, 1995; Brooks, 1990).

Initiated by scholars such as W. E. B. DuBois (1903), Manuel Gamio (1916), George Washington Williams (1882), Charles H. Wesley (1935), and Carter G. Woodson (1933), the main objective of the early ethnic studies movement was to challenge the negative images and stereotypes of ethnic minorities and the prevalent assumptions made in mainstream scholarship

by creating accurate descriptions of the life, history, and contributions of people of color. In his book, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933), Carter G. Woodson challenges Blacks to become autodidacts and to educate themselves regardless of what they were being taught. Woodson (1933) argues, "The mere imparting of information is not education. Above all things, the effort must result in making a man think and do for himself" (p. xii). In the first history of African-Americans, *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880* (1882), George Washington Williams traces the life lived by Blacks in America, from slave to soldier to family intellectual. Years later, Manuel Gamio, considered the father of Mexican Anthropology, penned his canonical work in 1916, *Forjando Patria: pro nacionalismo* (2010). This text was a discourse on the cultural assimilation of indigenous Mexicans into the racially mixed society of the country. These scholars had a personal, professional, and enduring commitment to the advancement of people of color. They believed that creating positive self-efficacy for marginalized groups was essential to their collective advancement and liberation. They also believed that stereotypes and negative beliefs about African Americans and Chicano people could be effectively challenged by objective historical research. This would also transform mainstream academic knowledge (Banks, 1989).

These scholars', educators', and community leaders' works led various historically oppressed groups to challenge discriminatory practices in public institutions. They refused demands by many integrationists to renounce their cultural identity and heritage. Among the many institutions specifically targeted were educational institutions, which many historians believe were among the most oppressive and hostile to the ideals of racial equality (Banks, 1989). Activists, community leaders, parents from the African American community, women's rights organizations, women of color organizations, gay and lesbian groups, the elderly, and

people with disabilities organized visible and powerful thrusts for sociopolitical and human rights. Each called for curricular reform, insisted on a reexamination of hiring practices and income inequities, and pushed for more inclusivity of their histories and experience (Banks, 1989).

The voices of these and other historically marginalized groups encouraged educational institutions and organizations to address their concerns with a host of programs, practices, and policies, mostly focused on changes or additions to traditional curriculum. Together, the separate actions of these various groups along with the resulting reaction of educational institutions during the late 1960s and 1970s defined the earliest conceptualization of multicultural education.

These educators and teacher educators believed it was more important to provide a voice to marginalized groups and therefore refused to allow schools to address the concerns of historically marginalized groups by simply adding token programs and special units on famous women or famous people of color. James Banks (1981) was among the first multicultural education scholars to examine schools as social systems from a multicultural context. He grounded his conceptualization of multicultural education in the idea of "educational equality." According to Banks (1981; 1989), the entire school must be completely scrutinized including policies, teachers' attitudes, instructional materials, assessment methods, counseling, and teaching styles in order to transform itself into a "multicultural school environment".

During the 1970s, several professional organizations–such as the National Council for Social Studies, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education–issued policy statements and publications that encouraged the integration of "ethnic content" into the school and teacher education curriculum. In 1973, the title of the forty-third yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) was

Teaching Ethnic Studies: Concepts and Strategies. NCSS published *Curriculum Guidelines for Multiethnic Education* in 1976, which was revised and reissued in 1992 as *Curriculum Guidelines for Multicultural Education.* A turning point in the development of multicultural education occurred in 1977 when the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) updated its standards for the accreditation of teacher education. "The standards required all NCATE member institutions, which at that time included about 80% of the teacher education programs in the United States, to implement components, courses, and programs in multicultural education" (Banks, 1993, p 21).

Bank's ideas led to the work of a multitude of multicultural scholars such as Carl Grant (1977), Christine Sleeter (1987), Geneva Gay (1978a), and Sonia Nieto (2000b). These scholars established new and richer frames that created the relationship between the transformation of schools and social change. Their ideas emerged from the notion that there should be equal educational opportunity for all. In order to move beyond slight curricular changes, which many argued only further differentiated between the curricular "norm" and the marginalized "other," they built on Banks' work, examining the structural foundations of schools and how these contributed to educational inequities. Tracking, culturally oppressive teaching approaches, standardized tests, school funding discrepancies, classroom climate, discriminatory hiring practices, and other symptoms of an ailing and oppressive education system were exposed, discussed, and criticized; hence, new thoughts based on traditional multicultural education were developed. For example, Christine Sleeter began writing about multicultural education as a form of empowerment through education that is multicultural for and about those of an oppressed class. As she has developed a more nuance praxis of multicultural education, Sleeter and Grant (2006) integrated multicultural education and social reconstructionism into a complete redesign

of an educational program. Separate from simple educational integrations, the notion of reconstructionism draws from Brameld's framework to offer a critique of modern culture (Sleeter & Grant, 2006). Such a redesign recommends addressing issues and concerns that affect students of diverse groups, encouraging students to take an active stance challenging the status quo, and calling on students to collectively speak out and effect change by joining with other groups in examining common or related concerns (Sleeter & Grant, 1987, 2006).

As the twentieth century ended, many multicultural education scholars, like Sleeter and Grant, refocused the struggle on developing new approaches and models of education and learning built on a foundation of social justice, critical thinking, and equal opportunity. Here social justice education was beginning to come together to form a more developed theoretical construct. These actions were a response to the diluting of the multicultural education initiatives originally implemented by DuBois (1903), Gamio (1916), Williams (1882), Wesley (1935), and Woodson (1933). In addition, other educators, researchers, and cultural theorists who approached their deconstruction from different paradigms continued their critique of the traditional models in both the K-12 and higher education arenas from a multicultural disposition. Developing discourse focused on the intersection of larger societal and global dimensions of power, privilege, and economics, an emerging body of critical sociocultural theory of educational institutions began to find traction (Giroux, 2001; McLaren & Ovando, 2000). This new curricular shift became a context for reassessing both education institutions and the communities that house them. This reconsidering derived from a progressive and transformative perspective. Ovando and McLaren (2000) point out

> as long as we continue to operate within the existing capitalist social relations of the larger society, there is good reason to believe that racism and social injustice will continue to pose a serious threat to democracy and that the dream of social equality will remain largely unrealized. (p. xix)

Pauline Lipman (2003) argues that, "to understand the forces behind the rise of systems of accountability that include cities, states, and federal adoption of high-stakes testing, any analysis of education policy needs to be situated within the rise of neoliberal globalism and show how the education policies are part of efforts by the corporate and political elite. Because a neoliberal globalism privileges international finance over labor and promotes individual self-interest pursued through markets in all spheres of economic and social life, education policies employing corporate techniques and rationalities focus on quantitative assessment, choice, markets, and privatization" (p. 23). In addition, Hursh (2003) sees policies like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) "as part of a larger shift from social democratic to neoliberal policies that has been occurring over the past several decades; a shift accompanied by both discursive and structural changes in education and society" (p. 493). He continues,

> When NCLB is seen within a broader context of sociopolitical changes, it becomes apparent that reforming NCLB requires more than voting out those who currently hold political power. Reforming NCLB begins with changing the way in which we conceptualize the purpose of education. (p. 493)

While work continues toward school transformation, the emerging conceptualizations of multicultural education have moved beyond race, class, and gender. These works have contributed to the rise of scholarship that addresses issues of environmental, political, and queer educational injustice. The social justice scholars, such as Gloria Ladson-Billings (1996), Marilyn Cochran-Smith (2001) and bell hooks (1994), understood power relative to the social and political structures that currently control education in the United States, and that both social and political structures are intrinsically linked. hooks (1994) speaks passionately for the creation of communities that work to understand the effects of power, the social construction of knowledge and identity, the meaning of education, and the need for social and cultural change. Ladson-

Billings (1995) argues that, rather than looking at programmatic reform, educational institutions should consider "educational theorizing about teaching itself and proposes a theory of culturally focused pedagogy that might be considered in the reformation of teacher education" (p. 466). Today that linkage has had a profound influence on multicultural education. Contemporary multicultural educators, such as Gay (1994, 2000), Hilliard (1974), Neito (2000a), and Sleeter (1987) have redefined the meaning of multicultural education. These authors reveal battles and accomplishments of educators involved in education that address power, language minorities, racial issues in the classroom, and ways to incorporate critical pedagogy practices in the curriculum. These scholars along with others bring to light issues of equity, access, diversity, gender in education, sexual orientation in classroom spaces, class, English Language Learners (ELL), environmental justice, special education, as well as anti-racist education. Most of all, they provide educators and educators of educators a broader, more complete perspective that leads to significant professional dialogue about social justice and systemic change in our schools.

There exist various models and frameworks for multicultural education. While theory and scholarship have moved from smaller curricular revisions to approaches that call for full changes of self, schools, and society, many implementations of multicultural education still begin with curricular additions of diverse sources. However, I believe that social justice theory, in its determination to address the power relationships and shortcomings of the current education system, can be a starting point to eliminating inequities in schooling and society, which I explain in relationship to curriculum.

2.2   TRANSITIONING THROUGH CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne (1984) proposed a model to explore the idea of curriculum transformation and the various stages that educators may experience as they transition from multicultural education curriculum to social justice education. This model, although focused on a variety of strategies to represent women adequately in college courses, provides a groundbreaking look at the type of experiences and growth educators encounter, along with types of questions that are asked when experiencing curriculum transformation. Creating an understanding of curriculum transformation foregrounds questions of how the curriculum comes to be negotiated as a social process. In addressing this, Goodson's (1983, 1984, & 1988) notion of curriculum provides an important framework for understanding curriculum as socially and culturally established and as a site of contestation and struggle. Goodson also provides a lasting reminder that the process of selecting curriculum content is an inherently political one. In this way, curriculum theory, as it has come to underpin this research, provides both a way of thinking about curriculum and a means of conceptualizing and interrogating the process of curriculum transformation.

2.2.1   What do we mean by curriculum?

Prior to talking about curriculum transformation, it is important to understand the term curriculum and its definitions. As Stenhouse (1975) suggests, offering definitions of the word curriculum does not solve curricular problems "but they do suggest perspectives from which to view them" (p.1). With this perspective in mind, the need to define the term or at least its use as it relates to my study of social justice education integration quickly becomes clear. The difficulty

in doing this however, is that there has long been little consensus as to how best to define curriculum (Barrow, 1984). Indeed, researchers such as Kelly (1982, 1989) were arguing that "curriculum" had become so widely used and complex that the term is best understood within the specific context in which it is being used. That is, if the research is focused on the development of written curriculum, then curriculum refers, in that case, only to the formal written curriculum as contained within a syllabus document or policy. "The problem with such an argument is that we are likely to both become confused when faced with terms such as curriculum theory, curriculum study, and curriculum research and convey the idea that the meaning of the word is understood by experts and assumed to be unproblematic" (Kirk, 1988, p. 9).

With this thinking in mind, I construct a definition for curriculum that encompasses the broad idea that curriculum is in some way a product constructed in a socially and historically constituted written form which notes content to be learned, methods, and rationale. This product is then transformed through the interaction and practices of the classroom. Kirk (1988, interpreting Young [1971]) suggests moving beyond definition and towards identifying the broader features of curriculum. In conceptualizing such a view, Kirk (1988) writes that the term

> conveys the sense of a body of knowledge, information, or content to be communicated; that this communication commonly takes place through the interactions of teachers and learners…and this interaction is commonly located in more or less institutionalized cultural and social contexts. (p.14)

Kirk provides an important starting point. He brings together the written and practiced curriculum and suggests a process of negotiation and interaction. He also demonstrates to us that more than a definition of curriculum, what is required here is a view or theory of curriculum. Such a theory should acknowledge both the written and practiced curriculum and the idea that these are socially and historically constructed. Importantly for the purposes of this research, the view of curriculum adopted needs to provide sufficient space to investigate the role educators,

students, classrooms, and school context play in constructing curriculum but also in changing curriculum, as stakeholders work to make sense of new ideas and discourses in light of existing ones.

The view of curriculum that I use is drawn in large part from the work of Ivor Goodson (1984, 1988). Goodson's work provides an important theoretical underpinning for my study because his view of curriculum is one that conceptualizes curriculum as both socially and culturally constructed (Clark, Milburn & Goodson, 1989). It allows researchers, through its focus on construction at the classroom level, to ask questions related to how educators and students come to understand curriculum transformation. It draws attention to the analysis of the meanings that these groups hold and how these meanings are established over time both inside and outside of the particular environment. Importantly, this affords the space needed to apply a critical lens, interrogating these understandings as they relate to the dominant discourses in teacher education and institutional discourses of schooling.

Although Goodson's (1984, 1988) work focuses on K - 12 institutions, his work on the history of school subjects as specific examples of constructed curriculum is an important contribution to my study. In his study, Goodson stressed two key ideas. First, curriculum and especially school subjects involve a set of selections about what constitutes the official knowledge of the subject (Goodson, 1988), so that part of the task of researching curriculum is asking who decides this content and to what ends (Goodson, 1983, 1984, 1988). Secondly, as the social and cultural context in which the curriculum is embedded changes, so too does what is asked of curriculum and what society constructs subjects to do (Goodson, 1983). In this way, I am reminded that curriculum construction is inherently political (Goodson, 1988; Young, 1971) and, as such, questions of power and resistance must be asked if we are to understand curriculum

change within a wider cultural context. Goodson's work provides a framework for understanding curriculum transformation both at the classroom level with particular attention to educators and students and as it is embedded within the wider social and cultural context.

2.2.2 Curriculum transformation

The purpose, content, and meaning of the teacher education curriculum has been vigorously debated throughout the history of teacher education programs, from the 19th-century debates over the progressive education to the more recent biting critiques leveled against outcomes-based education (Cornbleth, 1986). Teacher education curriculum has served as an historical theater for defining, producing, and legitimating knowledge (Cornbleth, 1986). In the past decade, the teacher education curriculum has been endorsed by a wide range of actors who hold a vital stake in its programmatic structure including academics, policy-makers, students, community members, and representatives of the business community (Conrad, 1989). As Haworth and Conrad (1990) states, "Their perspectives have focused on both a reassertion and a reexamination of the centrality of the teacher education program" (p. 3). This dynamic interplay between traditional and emerging stakeholder voices has shaped curricular transformation in teacher education programs in the United States.

By curricular transformation, I refer to those informal and formal procedures through which knowledge within the curriculum is continually produced, created, and expanded by a wide range of stakeholders acting within a broader social and historical context. The introduction and incorporation of developing methods of examination, perspectives, and educational procedures within the teacher education curriculum suggests that the purpose, content, and meaning of teacher education is undergoing a major shift or transformation (Cochran-Smith,

2005). In their 1984 article, Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne reflect on the body of

knowledge reshaping our understanding of the traditional undergraduate curriculum. Their work

along with other Higher Education scholars work in tandem to frame my conceptualization of

Goodson's ideas on curriculum. As it relates to curriculum transformation, Schuster and

VanDyne (1984) reference the change in the social and family structure as well the demographic

shift of US colleges and universities. In preparing young men and women to live in a

multicultural society, they argue that we need to do more.

> The core curricula and distribution requirements of the past will no longer
> adequately serve the student population we must educate for the twenty-first
> century. Nonetheless, transforming institutional structures in order to incorporate
> scholarship on women and nonwhite cultural groups effectively is a particularly
> difficult task at this historical moment. (p. 414)

Schuster and Van Dyne (1984) highlight the influence of a "substantial body of research done in

women's studies on administrators and educators to incorporate materials on women and

minority groups into traditional courses" (p. 415). In their research, they reflect on the various

forces transforming the undergraduate curriculum as well as the resistance to these forces. They

developed a six-stage framework to understand not only the curriculum transformational process

but the resistance that occurs to this transformation (See Table 1). It is through these fluid

bounded stages that educators transform to represent women and minorities adequately in their

courses.

Table 1 Stages of Curriculum Change

Stage	Questions	Means
Absence of women not noted	Who are the truly great thinkers/ actors in history?	Back to basics
Search for missing women	Who are the great women- the female Shakespeare, Napoleons, Darwin?	Add on to existing data within conventional paradigms
Women as disadvantaged, subordinate group	Why are there so few women leaders? Why are women's roles devalued?	Protest existing paradigms but within perspective of dominant group
Women studied on own terms	What was/is women's experience? What are differences among women? (attention to race, class, cultural difference)	Outside existing paradigms; develop insider's perspective

Table 1 continued

Women as challenge to disciplines	How valid are current definitions of historical periods, greatness, norms, for behavior? How must our questions change to account for women's experience, diversity, difference?	Testing the paradigms Gender as category for analysis
Transformed, "balanced" curriculum	How can women's and men's experience be understood together? How do class and race intersect with gender?	Transform the paradigm

(Schuster & Van Dyne, 1984)

As I discuss later, creating social justice education in teacher education programs is more than simply adding those from underrepresented groups within the curriculum. The model that Schuster and Van Dyne created suggests that educators move through a sequence of stages "trying a variety of strategies in order to represent women and minorities adequately in their courses" (p. 418). As educators who are interested in social justice education, my respondents come to understand social justice education through various approaches and strategies that play out in the classroom as well in their everyday life.

2.3   SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

There existed a powerful connection to historical moments when social inequalities and actions to address these inequalities were mounting. As far back as when the Great Depression had ravaged the nation, teacher preparation was still locked in a social transmission model that Harold Rugg (1952) called "the Conforming Way." Teacher preparation programs were rising to meet the needs of those who were on the periphery. Then in 1978, in partial response to the competency-based movement and partial response to the social and political environment, the American Educational Studies Association (AESA) and the Council of Learned Societies in Education (CLSE) required teacher education programs to include multicultural education as a part of their curriculum, these requirements led to the publishing of the first *Standards for*

Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies.

Some people see social justice as an outgrowth of multicultural education which respects the way multicultural education embraced a theoretical power analysis but social justice can also be defined in ways that are distinct from multicultural education, as various writers address the idea of social justice as it relates to education and schooling (Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2004; North, 2006; Russo, 2004). "Some of these works attempt to marginalize or reject social justice concerns, either because of a skeptical postmodernist denial of the tenability and desirability of universalistic principles or because of an uncritical approach to conceptualizing answers to difficult problems" (Gewirtz, 1998, p. 469). However, there are those scholars who are committed to shining a light on the darkness of inequalities that manifest in education. As I connect the literature regarding social justice to my study, I do not endeavor to construct a definitive conceptualization of social justice; however, I am attempting to utilize the dialogue around the concept to develop an understanding of barriers to adoption and the transformational nature of this pedagogy that the respondents in this study have highlighted. In the following paragraphs, I present a summary of the theoretical conversation that contextualizes the social justice discourse. Within this discourse, I encapsulate the narratives of my respondents as they relate to social justice education as well as the barriers they have encountered.

It is critically important to recognize that several scholars challenge prevailing technical conceptions of teachers' work and learning and urge reform in teacher education. Giroux (1985) makes a case for teachers as transformative intellectuals and Freire (1974) speaks of teachers as cultural workers. Others assert that teaching for social justice should be the core of teachers' work, even if it means teaching "against the grain," and that the most important goals of teacher

education programs are social responsibility, social change and social justice (Cochran-Smith, 1991, 1994; Nieto, 2000a; Zeichner, 1993). They argue that equity needs to be placed at the forefront and center of teacher education, connecting teacher development to the struggle for social justice.

There are various approaches to implementing social justice ideas into teacher education across the globe. As McInerney (2007) explained,

> Mahony and Hextall (1997, 1998) critique the reconstruction of teacher training agencies in the United Kingdom from a social justice perspective, while Lingard, Hayes and Mills (2003) point to the potential of productive pedagogies to further social justice goals of teaching. The Education for Social Justice Project (1994) provides examples on how teachers can engage students in the struggle for social justice. O'Donoghue, Moore, Habel, Crotty, and Crotty (1993) argue for teaching for social justice while Mills (1997) writes on creating spaces for student and teacher resistance to social injustice. Griffiths (1998c) makes a case for educational research for social justice. Anyon (1996) points to the need for educators to form alliances with progressive community groups in their efforts to create more just schooling arrangements (p. 5).

The compelling message across this research is that to add value to teacher education programs and to society teacher education must consider the significance a social justice disposition brings to the curriculum.

Furthering the argument for a social justice disposition, Troyna and Vincent (1995) and Griffiths (1998a, 1998b) examine the way social justice discourse is being conceptualized in the United Kingdom, while Griffiths (1998b) outlines a set of principles to guide socially just curriculum. Walker (2003) discusses a "capabilities" approach to social justice in education. Freire (1985, 1994, 1997) elaborates on theology of liberation in education, cultural action for freedom and critical pedagogy. Gale and Densmore's (2000) book on the cultural politics of schooling addresses the notion of "recognitive justice" and offers practical strategies for schools and teacher educators.

However, for the purposes of my study, Lee Bell's (1997) approach is useful. She defines social justice as being a goal and a process. This idea is one that encapsulates the discourse of social justice.

> The goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs, [while] the process for attaining the goal of social justice…should be democratic and participatory, inclusive and affirming of human agency and human capacities for working collaboratively to create change. (p. 3- 4)

For the purposes of my study, Heather Hackman's (2005) distillation of Bell's goals operationalizes the definition. She concludes that Bell's definition of Social Justice Education:

> Social justice education does not merely examine difference or diversity but pays careful attention to the systems of power and privilege that give rise to social inequality, and encourages students to critically examine oppression on institutional, cultural, and individual levels in search of opportunities for social action in the service of social change. (p. 104)

Although this does not represent an exhaustive or an exclusive definition of social justice education, Hackman's (2005) definition "goes beyond classroom celebrations of diversity, dialogue groups in the classroom, and the existence of democratic processes regarding class goals and procedures" (p. 104). Her definition requires social justice education to examine systems of power and oppression combined with a prolonged emphasis on social change and student agency in and outside of the classroom (Hackman, 2005). It pushes beyond exhortations and instead becomes part of the lived practice in the classroom. This is the entry point of my analysis of the narratives of the teacher educators in this study. How do these teacher educators explore their own understanding and transformation within their conceptualization and practices of social justice education? It is here where I enter a conversation with them about social justice education.

2.3.1   An applied explanation

After several decades, there still exist variations in the understanding and application of the principles of social justice in teacher education programs. "Some programs emphasize teachers' beliefs and identity, others focus on democratic education, and many others concentrate on multicultural issues" (Cochran-Smith, 2010, p. 445). There are programs focused on civic engagement or other essential advances (e.g., Murrell, 2006; Quartz, 2003; Seidl & Friend, 2002), others concentrate on changing course requirements or other aspects of curriculum within traditional programs (Zeichner, 2006). Those critics of teacher education for social justice assert that conceptually the term is ambiguous and possesses multiple embodiments and conflicting theoretical frames (Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, Lahann, Shakman, & Terrell, 2009; Crowe, 2008; Damon, 2005; Zeichner, 2006). Further, as Cochran-Smith (2010) notes, "only a few of those who write about teacher education and social justice are explicit about the philosophical and political roots of social justice education (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009; North, 2006), which increases the likelihood that it exists in name only (Grant & Agosto, 2008) or that it is diluted, trivialized or co-opted" (p. 445). For these reasons and countless others, it is important to help teacher educators operationalize social justice education and understand how such a transformation develops.

What I believe has been most useful is Cochran-Smith's theory of teacher education for social justice (Conchran-Smith, 2010). In her article "Toward a Theory of Teacher Education for Social Justice," Cochran-Smith (2010) proposes ideas toward a contemporary theory of teacher education for social justice. Her theory is relevant to my study due to its focus on three aspects:

1) *A theory of justice* that makes explicit its ultimate goals and considers the relationships of competing conceptions of justice;

2) *A theory of practice* that characterizes the relationship of teaching and learning, the

   nature of teachers' work, and the knowledge, strategies, and values that inform teachers'

   efforts for social justice; and

3) *A theory of teacher preparation* that focuses on how teachers learn to teach for justice,

   the structures that support their learning over time, and the outcomes that are appropriate

   for preparation programs with social justice goals. (p. 446)
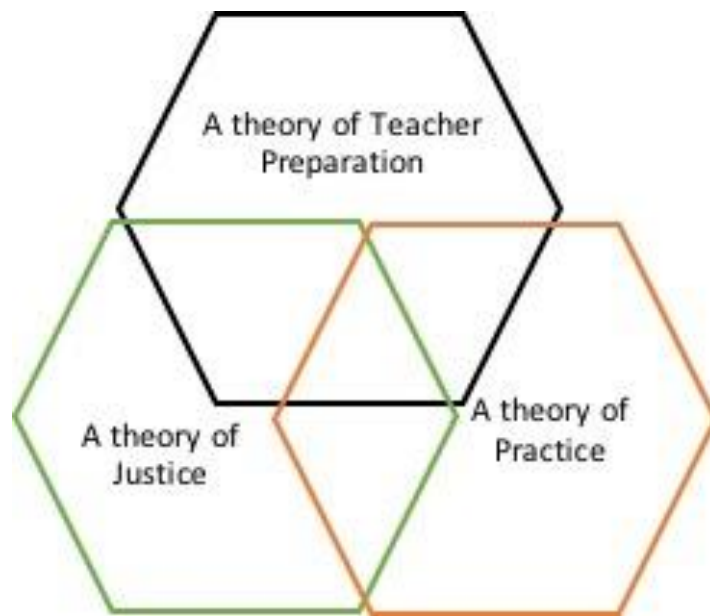
Figure 1. A theory of teacher education for social justice

The grounding for this theory is based upon three arguments that Cochran-Smith (2010)

constructs:

1. Equity of learning opportunity - promoting equity in learning opportunities and
    outcomes for all students, who are regarded as future autonomous participants in a
    democratic society, and simultaneously challenging classroom (and societal)
    practices, policies, labels, and assumptions that reinforce inequities;
2. Respect for social groups: recognizing and respecting all social/racial/cultural
    groups by actively working against the assumptions and arrangements of
    schooling (and society) that reinforce inequities, disrespect, and oppression of
    these groups and actively working for effective use in classrooms and schools of
    the knowledge traditions and ways of knowing of marginalized groups;
3. Acknowledging and dealing with tensions: directly acknowledging the tensions
    and contradictions that emerge from competing ideas about the nature of justice
    and managing these in knowingly imperfect, but concrete ways. (p. 453-454)

Based on her experience and the experiences of colleagues in communities, the areas of education, pedagogy, schools, as well as teacher education, professional development, and teacher quality, Cochran-Smith (2010) argues that,

> teaching and teacher education for social justice are fundamental to the learning and life chances of all teachers and pupils who are current and future participants in a diverse democratic nation and who are able to both imagine and work toward a more just society. Without the perspectives inherent in social justice goals, the understandings and opportunities of all teachers and students are attenuated. (p. 448)

This very idea led many of the teacher educators in my study to argue for teacher education for social justice. Like many of the educators that Cochran-Smith (2010) spent time with, the teacher educators in my study have spent years in research and practice with the belief that "conceptualizing learning to teach for social justice can be a legitimate and measurable outcome of teacher education" (p. 448).

There exist various definitions of social justice education (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997; Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998) that have influenced teacher education for social justice. It is my belief that the Cochran-Smith theory for teacher education for social justice is a useful lens to view the meanings and approaches the teacher educators in this study utilize and come to operationalize for themselves and their students. Cochran-Smith's (2010) theory of teacher education for social justice provides three overarching theoretical questions: 1) How should we conceptualize justice in relation to teacher education? 2) How can we conceptualize teaching and learning practice in a way that enhances justice? and 3) How can we conceptualize teacher preparation intended to prepare teachers to engage in practice that enhances justice? These three questions helped me to focus the research questions of this study as well as assisted in guiding my conversations with the teacher educators.

Social justice education examines power and oppression as well as creates change and agency for students, which can be applied to curriculum. What has emerged through the prudent discourse of "social justice" is the theme of social justice weaving its way through the practice and research in teacher education.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF IDENTITY

As many researchers can attest a frequent idea in the field of teacher education is the "teacher-self" (Cooper & Olson, 1996; Vinz, 1996; Knowles, 1992; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). This construct is often connected with several other concepts such as identity, individualism, and self-realization. One premise essential in the conversation of teacher-self, as far as the United States context is concerned, is that the teacher is a self-directed individual, constantly moving between the need to connect with other colleagues and the need to maintain a sense of individuality (Smith, 1997). In this formulation, the teacher-self is "coherent, bounded, individualized, intentional, the locus of thought, action, and belief, the origin of its own actions, the beneficiary of a unique biography" (Rose, 1998, p. 3) – "she is assumed to possess a consistent identity (a "teacher identity") that serves as the repository of particular experiences in classrooms and schools, the site of thoughts, attitudes, emotions, beliefs, and values" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 23).

In order to understand the relational and positional conditions of the respondents in this study, I utilize the idea of "figured worlds". Holland, Lachicotte Jr., Skinner, and Cain (1998) introduced the concept of figured world as ''a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to

certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others'' (p. 52). The social justice educators in this study shared a myriad of experiences including personal, indirect, and professional experiences that influenced their relationship to social justice. Personal experiences, negative and positive, included influences from family members, friends, peers and their own reflections on their race, class, gender, and sexual orientation (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). In the next two sections, I will briefly discuss the concept of teacher identity and how this concept will be used to frame my conversations with the teacher educators in my study. I will then explore how these teacher-selves have been constituted using the concept of figured worlds.

2.4.1 Teacher identity

There are those who have developed alternative ways of seeing the teacher-self. Zembylas (2003) contends, that "postmodernist and poststructuralist views problematize the teacher-self by reconceptualizing the self as a form of working subjectivity" (p. 107). He continues, "drawing upon such views, one can formulate a teacher-self that is diverse and a polysemic product of experiences, a product of practices that constitute this self in response to multiple meanings that need not converge upon a stable, unified identity" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 107). Various methods of research have guided in educators' exploration of teacher identity formation through talk, social interaction, and self-presentation (Carter, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "Such research highlights the situatedness of self. Personal narratives develop through communication in response to situations, practices, and available resources" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 107).

"This constant construction, destruction, and repair of boundaries around the constitution of the self is fraught" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 108) with struggle. This struggle is part of the very

fabric constituting the self, but it is also socially organized and managed through "social conventions, community scrutiny, legal norms, familial obligations and religious injunctions" (Rose, 1999, p. 1). Thus, relational and positional conditions are at the center of understanding self-formation.

Much of the research done on teacher-self is either in the preK- 12 setting or the student teacher education environment (Cooper & Olson, 1996; Vinz, 1996; Knowles, 1992; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). There are those who have come to understand the teacher educator through the knowledge of who they are as educators, through looking at teacher-self (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014; Romaine, 2013). There exist considerable similarities with the development of teacher identity between the teacher and teacher educator. In each there subsists a process that is continuous and dynamic. As Cooper and Olson (1996) suggest, "teacher identity is continually being informed, formed, and reformed as individuals develop over time and through interaction with others" (p. 80). Scholars such as Vinz (1996), Knowles (1992), and Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991) among others "identify multiple influences that shape teacher identity, ranging from personal experience to media images to pedagogical beliefs supported by instruction" (Franzak, 2002, p. 258). Knowles (1992), for example, recognizes four sources which impact the preservice teacher's self-conception: "(1) role models, especially positive ones; (2) previous teaching experiences; (3) significantly positive or negative education classes; and (4) remembered childhood experiences about learning and family activities" (p. 106). The teacher educators in this study experienced these influences and many others. The balance of these multiple influences, for these teacher educators, guided the construction and reconstruction of the self as educator.

This construction and reconstruction is why identity research itself is a complex undertaking that spans several disciplines – anthropology, philosophy, sociology, linguistics as well as cultural studies. With the methodologies of examining identity undergoing various transformation, it is important to understand the concept of identity itself have been formed and reformed. Therefore, it is important to provide a general analysis of the concept of identity.

Early on, researchers took the perspective that identity was immovable, a crucial conception that was known and can be referred to without question. However, later theories problematized this position, by observing that identity was in fact a fluid and complex structure, negotiated by an individual as she moved through society. The fluidity of identity leads to these various meanings; however, these various meanings continue to establish that identity is not a fixed attribute of a person but a relational phenomenon. Identity development as described by Beijaard et al. (2004) "occurs in an inter-subjective space, and can be best characterized as an ongoing process, a process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context (Gee, 2001)" (p. 108).

Given this, "the literature on teaching and teacher education reveals a common notion that identity is flexible, and that an educators' identity shifts over time under the influence of a range of factors both internal to the individual, such as emotion (Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Van Veen & Sleegers, 2006; Zembylas, 2003), and external to the individual, such as work and life experiences, in a particular context (Flores & Day, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Sachs, 2005)" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177). Therefore, the solidification of a clear definition of identity is quite challenging.

As Beijaard et al. (2004) indicated in a study of the research on teacher professional identity there lacks a clear definition. The result of their investigation regarding teacher identity

produced four features of professional identity: 1) an ongoing process, and therefore that identity is dynamic rather than stable, a constantly evolving phenomenon; 2) involves both a person and a context; 3) there exist sub-identities, which may be central to the overall identity and must be balanced to avoid conflict across them; and 4) professional identity involves the active pursuit of professional development and learning (Beijaard et al, 2004). These authors establish that there is a connection between identity and self and that the personal and professional aspects of identity aren't clearly distinct. Given this, as Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) explains, "Indeed it appears that a clear definition of identity is not easily reached, but that there is general acknowledgement of its multi-faceted and dynamic nature" (p. 177).

However, Gee (2001) recognizes that identity suggests a 'kind of person' within a particular context. He states, "When any human being acts and interacts in a given context, others recognize that person as acting and interacting as a certain 'kind of person' or even as several different 'kinds' at once…" (p. 99). This places a person's self within a given framework, one that is constructed by the person and is viewed and interpreted by others. More specifically, a person's self is connected to where and who they may be within society within a given frame. However, this does not alter who one is or the authentic self, core identity, they possess. Gee (2001) sketches out four ways to view identity: Nature-identity, Institution-identity, Discourse-identity, and Affinity-identity. Within these perspectives, Gee (2001) along with Beauchamp et al. (2009) "emphasizes on the multifaceted nature of identity and its changing shape in terms of external influences" (p. 177).

There exists a common understanding that identity is socially constructed (Gergen, 1991). Meaning that "one's sense of self and beliefs about one's own social group…are constructed through interactions with the broader social context in which dominant values dictate

norms and expectations" (Torres, Jones, & Renn, p. 577). In other words, identity can be understood within a sociocultural perspective (Olsen, 2008; Sfard & Prusak, 2005).

As I came to understand the experiences of the educators in this study, Olsen's (2008) explanation proved useful. He explains that identity, as a label,

> …is, really, for the collection of influences and effects from immediate contexts, prior constructs of self, social positioning, and meaning systems (each itself a fluid influence and all together an ever-changing construct) that become intertwined inside the flow of activity as a teacher simultaneously reacts to and negotiates given contexts and human relationships at given moments. (p. 139)

Similarly, identity relates to "how collective discourses shape personal worlds and how individual voices combine into the voice of a community" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 15).

I use Sachs' (2005) paradigm about teacher as professional to frame the teacher educators within this study. In her piece, *Teacher education and the development of professional identity: Learning to be a teacher* (2005), she demonstrates the significance of the notion for teaching and indicates the enthusiasm essential in it. She writes,

> Teacher professional identity then stands at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society. Importantly, teacher identity is not something that is fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience. (p. 15)

This framed the fluid construction of self that the educators in this study speak about. It also identifies the external and internal negotiation of self that takes place for teachers as they develop their professional selves through their experiences. For this study, it places experiences and the interpretation of those experiences by the teacher at the center of identity and identity formation.

2.4.2 Figured world

For my study, a useful concept is that of "figured worlds". This concept will help to frame sites of identity discussed by these teacher educators. This notion of figured worlds was first introduced by Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) in their pivotal book *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*. I recognize that the theory of figured worlds is not an independent concept but is a part of Holland et al.'s (1998) larger theory of self and identity. Nevertheless, it assisted in framing the conversations with my participants. The conceptualization of figured worlds considers both the internal interactions of their members, and the individual's experiences that each group member carries with them to the figured world, one's "history-in-person" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 18) as well as the relationships between members of the group and those outside the group. These actions act as an internal and external analytic tool; an investigation of a figured world should include both lived experiences in which the figured world is situated and the original influencing action that occurs within them (Urrieta, 2007).

Holland et al. (1998) describe figured worlds as "as if" worlds. They argue that these worlds are imagined communities that operate dialectically and dialogically to form individuals' identity. "These figured worlds are both social realities defined by power dynamics and spaces of agency" (Chang, 2014, p. 6). As Chang et al. (2013) states, these worlds "are defined by the ways in which individuals participate in and with these figured worlds on a daily basis" (p. 99). Holland et al. explain that figured worlds are "socially and culturally constructed realm[s] of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others" (p. 52). Holland et al.'s (1998) theory of identity production is unique because it conceptualizes the role of agency.

As discussed in Erickson (1950) and other identity development theorists (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2013) remind us that identity and self are shaped by numerous external experiences. These are concepts that people place on themselves and others, especially in educational settings. "Identity is also very much about how people come to understand themselves, how they come to figure who they are, through the worlds that they participate in and how they relate to others within and outside of these worlds" (Urrieta, 2007, p. 107). This is valuable to my study because in my discussions with the social justice educators they made clear the importance of their experiences with others including those within the field of education, outside of education, within the area of social justice and outside, and those communities with whom they have an affiliated group membership. For the teacher educators in this study their figured world is the academe where agency is authorized in often indirect but vital ways.

2.5   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides a brief overview of the history and development of multicultural education and its impact on teacher education. It provides a look at multicultural inception and how it has transformed and been implemented. In this chapter, I depict multicultural education and its history through a sociocultural theoretical lens. The chapter discusses the theory of social justice education and its implementation into teacher education. The chapter also provides a theory of curriculum transformation utilizing the ideas developed by Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne (1984). The chapter explores the definition of curriculum and connects that definition to curriculum transformation overall. Lastly, this chapter explores the useful concepts of identity development and teacher identity as well as the concept of figured words.

3.0   METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

As I began to imagine my conversations with these teacher educators, I believed a natural fit for these conversations was in qualitative research. According to Merriam (2002), "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meanings people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (p. 5). More specifically, I take a postcritical stance, using the primary method of ethnographic interviewing and grounded theory techniques to analyze my data (Charmaz, 2006; Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004).

I chose these methods because postcritical ethnographic interviewing framework allowed me to give voice to these teacher educators, recognize their agency as educators, disclose their power as a social justice educator, provide space for critique without exploitation of our conversation, and provide me as well as the respondents with the space to be self-reflective (Gunzenhauser, 2004). In addition, the grounded theory ethnography "gives priority to the studied phenomenon or process" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 22). The process under study here is the teacher educators' transition to social justice pedagogy. As I was interested in understanding how these teacher educators came to see themselves as social justice educators and the meaning of social justice education, using a grounded theory postcritical ethnographic approach was useful.

This study is clearly not an ethnography of the actual transition of a course or curriculum but of the reflective observations of the respondents on their transition to becoming a social

justice educator. Therefore, the naturalistic data collected includes ethnographic interviewing; however, a careful use of descriptions of the respondents' reflection of people, places, conversations, and course/ curriculum context along with additional academic and personal documents shared by the respondents allowed me to better understand the respondents' personal perspecdtives and growth as an educator. The items where used to provide background knowledge on the respondents that shared them. I believe the questions of my study lend themselves to ethnographic interviewing because ethnographic interviewing allows the participants to utilize their cultural language in their responses and allows me to provide space for the respondents to elaborate on their responses to descriptive questions (Spradley, 1979). The elements of postcritical ethnography also enhanced my study because postcritical ethnography takes seriously the fact that social life is constructed in contexts of power. This helped address my positionality in the research and enable me to embrace the conflict of writing against oneself as I find myself grappling with the complications of my position as a proponent of teacher education for social justice, an educator, doctoral student, and member of the School of Education community as well as other identity memberships (Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004).

Also, useful for this study is the notion of grounded theory ethnography (Charmaz, 2006). I used this notion to structure my analysis as I examined the various reflective perspectives of my respondents. The concept of transition is the phenomenon/ process under study but my analysis is also focused on the reflective actions and lived experiences of my respondents. As my respondents see it, their experiences are what contribute to their journey as they become social justice educators. The growth and evolution of their identity is cultivated over these lived experiences. As I moved from subject to subject, using grounded theory, a richer view of becoming a social justice educator took shape.

As a qualitative study, my research questions are descriptive, open ended, and non-directional. They evolved as I considered and reconsidered the themes of my study (Patton, 2002). Additionally, in my study, as in other qualitative research projects, my primary or central question was broad and was followed by a series of sub-questions that provided focus for design, collection, and analysis. These questions became central to my exploration. They revealed other questions and provided guidance for a richer understanding of my respondents' reflections (Patton, 2002).

As the researcher, I was aware of the challenges that exist when researching a community in which I am a member as a proponent of social justice education. In addition, at one point, I was an instructor within a School of Education as a member of a Social Foundations of Education instructional team. In 2006, I left my instructor role to take a fulltime staff position but stayed connected to educators in the field of Teacher Education and educators striving for social justice dispositions within teacher educations. In this study, as the principle investigator, I could draw on my experience as a participant observer who made firsthand observations of activities and interactions and sometimes personally engaged in the activities that attempted to transition a course within a school of education to a social justice disposition (Patton, 2002). In 2011, I took a position away from the University and away from Pittsburgh, which helped give me some space from the participant role and helped develop my objectivity. There exists a retrospective analysis by the research participants as they recalled their experiences regarding their respective transitions. Like myself, they have had time to be reflexive about their experiences and to evolve in an understanding of the ideas under study. I acknowledge the influence of this retrospective analysis and feel that it strengthens the study because I am interested in the process through which social justice educators make meaning of their experiences.

In this chapter, I provide a description of this study's participants, as well as a discussion of the methods of data collection and data analysis. The focus of this study was on how teacher educators come to transition from multicultural education to social justice education pedagogy. However, my discussions with the participants moved the study in a slightly different direction. As my study evolved, the data led me to compelling concepts that circle back to my initial questions yet evoked a nuanced understanding of the transitional nature of these teacher educators.

3.1   GROUNDED THEORY

My purpose in using grounded theory was "to generate emerging theories from the data that account for the data" (Charmaz, 2008a, p. 157). I use the grounded theory approach because such an approach employs a systematic process that enabled me to "develop an inductively derived theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 24). As Charmaz (2006) described the aim of a grounded theory study is to produce new theory that is grounded in data collected directly from participants based on their lived experiences. Moreover, Glaser (1992) stated, "Grounded theory renders as faithfully as possible a theory discovered in the data which explains the subjects' main concerns and how they are processed" (p. 14). This allowed me to generate theoretical notions about the process of transition by the teacher educators in my study that were created from their own reflections on their experiences.

Keeping in the spirit of Charmaz (2006), I approach grounded theory with flexibility and nuance. As she states, "I view grounded theory method as a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions or packages" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 9). Therefore, my approach to grounded theory

utilizes the concept of figured worlds to frame data collection and analysis, as well as allowing my data to naturally guide me in my analysis and direct me for further data collection. Since the original goal of grounded theory was to "discover theory as a process" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 9), I believe it is a good fit to better understand the meaning making process of teacher educators' reflection on becoming a social justice educator.

3.2   ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWING

In addition to grounded theory, I utilized ethnographic interviewing to attempt to understand the ideas under study. Spradley (1979) stated that an ethnographic interview is a friendly conversation "into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants" (p. 464). This process highlights the natural conversational ethnographic interviewing possess, which is descriptive in nature. It becomes more structured through the iterative process. In addition, "ethnographic interviewing operates under the assumption that the questions asked and the answers provided are a single element in human thinking" (Spradley, 1979, p. 48). Put more succinctly, the role of the researcher "is to discover questions that seek the relationship among entities that are conceptually meaningful to the people under investigation" (Black & Metzger, 1965, p. 144). Spradley (1979) argues that descriptive interviews have the same purpose as descriptive observations, being used to elicit broad categories of information as provided by members of the cultural community under study from their own perspective. This detailed descriptive process allowed the teacher educators the opportunity to be as specific as possible. It also allowed me to ask for more clarity around and idea or topic.

In his 1979 text on ethnographic interviewing, Spradley argues "ethnographic interviewing involves two distinct but complementary processes: developing rapport and eliciting information" (p. 44). He posits that rapport encourages informants to talk about their culture and eliciting information fosters the development of rapport (Spradley, 1979). In my study, ethnographic interviewing provided me a way to speak with my respondents about their life experiences with social justice and education, their visions of self as educators, and their visions of particular features of the social world. It allowed me to identify the various language (terms, usage, etc.) used by my respondents. Most importantly, this method afforded me the opportunity to identify how participants interpret their experience and make decisions about their social behavior (Spradley, 1997).

3.3   POSTCRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

In my dissertation, I relied on postcritical ethnography as a method of investigation. As Noblit, Flores, and Murillo (2004) explained, critical ethnography assumes that social existence is constructed in contexts of power. With that being said, the narratives that are presented in this dissertation must be understood as the social construction of the narrator. Although my study is not an ethnographic study, the issues that postcritical ethnographers consider were advantageous to my study; therefore, I framed this study as a postcritical case, utilizing the techniques of postcritical ethnography.

In this study, which is a part of a larger critical dialogue of positioning social justice in education (Anderson, 1989), I drew on what Noblit, Flores, and Murillo (2004) see as "the issues that need to be considered in conducting postcritical ethnographies" (p. 21): positionality,

reflexivity, objectivity, and representation. Although these are not the only issues I considered in my study, these are the most salient. Therefore, I will speak to these concepts in relation to my study.

3.3.1   Researcher positionality

As a former instructor and member of the community of proponents for social justice education in teacher education, I was a participant in the development of a course designed around social justice principles. Additionally, as a researcher in this study, I was witness to and participated in various dialogues around social justice education and its impact on and in teacher education. This puts me in the valuable position similar to a participant observer (Spradley, 1980), which allowed me an ideal opportunity to examine this case from multiple perspectives. As a participant observer, I can view these transitions from the inside (as a participant) and from the outside (as an investigator). However, I am also cognizant of the necessity of researchers to be sensitive to the inherent biases in this type of research (Merriam, 1998).

As a proponent of social justice education in teacher education, I am aware that my voice and all aspects of my identity influencing that voice will be heard throughout this study. As mentioned above, the questions of my study lend themselves more to postcritical ethnographic techniques in part because of the qualitative genre's capacity to engage first person voice and to embrace the conflict of writing against oneself. This method helped me navigate the complications of my position as a former instructor, a proponent, and a researcher. The postcritical ethnography approach linked to the grounded theory methodology provides an analytical lens through which we can better understand the curriculum but it also helps construct the research experience as an engagement with others and allows the experiences of those in this

context to generate new directions. This echoes the dynamics of a social justice classroom where identify, interaction, and social structure are continuously reflected upon in order to develop new pedagogy responsive to the needs of the community. Therefore, the othering of the researcher or research subject is not unique to the research context; it is in line with the othering of concepts/pedagogy that occurs when social justice pedagogy moves teacher education outside of the privileged dominate classroom discourse.

My positionality allowed me to recognize the lens through which I interpret the social world. As Maher and Tetreault (2001) explain, "knowledge [is] valid when it takes into account the knower's specific position in any context, a position always defined by gender, race, class and other socially significant dimensions" (p. 22). In addition, Mehra (2002) explains,

> Scheurich (1994) remarks that one's historical position, one's class (which may or may not include changes over the course of a lifetime), one's race, one's gender, one's religion, and so on - all of these interact and influence, limit and constrain production of knowledge. (p 17)

I am aware that important aspects of my identity are markers of relational positions rather than essential qualities. Who I am as researcher, male, African American, feminist, social justice proponent, graduate student, and the various other pieces of who I am can influence my analysis and interpretation of my data. The effects of these aspects and their implications change according to the context. It is important for me to acknowledge the various positionalities that can influence how I engage with my research participants and complete this study.

3.3.2   Reflexivity

It is my belief that the concept of reflexivity is often misunderstood. Many see it as the occasional thinking of oneself, "mere navel gazing," and even "narcissistic and egoistic," (Okely,

1992); "the implication being that the researcher let the veil of objectivist neutrality slip" for no analytical purpose (England, 1994, p. 244). In other words, reflexivity is often narrowly viewed as the fleeting attention to the researcher's role in qualitative research, as posited by Gouldner (1971). I accept Marcus's (1995) position as he states, "reflexivity is about redesigning the observed" (p. 111) and about "redesigning the observer" (p. 114). The purpose of this redesign is to improve the quality of the research by ensuring that the researcher's positionality is visible and to use the questions raised by an examination of that positionality to guide the gathering of additional data.

Therefore, I believe reflexivity is critical to how I conducted my fieldwork; it induces self-discovery and leads to insights and new conjectures about my research questions. My approach to this study was to allow reflexivity to guide me. I aimed to recognize and adjust to the limitations of my research. As I moved through the interview process, aware of my own agenda as researcher and aware of the meaning making that I and my respondents were engaged in, I allowed my previous conversations to inform my next interview. This made me more open to challenges to my theoretical position raised during my fieldwork. As I engaged in my research, I recognized the critical importance of the process of examining both myself as researcher and as a proponent of social justice education in teacher education, as well as my relationship with the people and ideas under study. As I was directly involved with the development of some of the ideas and materials for a course with social justice principles, it was important for me to engage in a reflexive process which entailed examining my "conceptual baggage", which are my suppositions and biases, and how these impacted my research choices, specifically the selection and phrasing of questions (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). Reflecting on the research relationship involved examining my relationship to the respondents and how

relationship dynamics affected responses to questions. This reflexive position required me to carefully consider the consequences of the interactions I had with those being investigated. Knowing that "the reflexive 'I' of the researcher dismisses the observational distance of neopositivism and subverts the idea of the observer as an impersonal machine" (England, 1994, p 81). I worked to position myself within the research by writing in first person as a final way to be sure the role of the researcher is clear (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1988; Okely, 1992; Opie, 1992).

3.3.3   Objectivity

In positivist research, the idea of objectivity accepts that a truth or independent reality exists outside of any examination or observation. It is the researchers' task to uncover this reality without contaminating what they unveil. In other words, the researcher can observe or uncover phenomena without affecting them. Postcritical ethnography rejects this notion. As Gerstl-Pepin and Gunzenhauser (2002) state,

> interpretive understanding in research is not a process of seeking objective "Truth.'' For an ethnographic researcher …, the goal of theorizing about research is not to find the clearest route to objectivity. Rather, the goal is understanding the process of research. (p. 137-138)

In my study, I attempt to trouble the notion of objectivity with the understanding that research captures only a moment in time. As I reflect on the narratives of the teacher educators' in this study, I understand that these narratives are transient and varied. By recording these representations, researchers partially capture as well as recreate what is being studied and fix their observations in time. This enables analysis but suggests a more stable objective reality than is really representative of the phenomena under study.

Therefore, I take issue with the argument of positivism that a phenomenon can be represented with objectivity and neutrality, in other words that objectivity can be fully escaped or avoided. As Noblit, Flores, and Murillo (2004) argued, "The act of writing inscribes a critical interpretation that exists beyond the intentions of the author to de-objectify, dereify, or demystify what is studied" (p. 67). Furthermore, McCadden (1999) argued that reconsidering objectivity goes beyond writing: "Theorizing postcritical ethnography of education should be represented in the same tone as its writing - balancing tentativeness and surety and evoking a sense of temporality" (p. 33).

As I mentioned earlier, the interpretations of the research phenomena "are ephemeral and multiple while our interpretations are always partial and positional" (Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004, p. 22). Postcritical ethnographies work through the dilemma of objectivity. To address this dilemma, for my study, I utilized Lather's (1986) reconceptualization of validity.

> Once we recognize that just as there is no neutral education there is no neutral research, we no longer need to apologize for unabashedly ideological research and its open commitment to using research to criticize and change the status quo. The development of data credibility checks to protect our research and theory construction from our enthusiasms, however, is essential in our efforts to create a self-reflexive human science. To guard against researcher biases distorting the logic of evidence within openly ideological research. (p. 67)

She offers four standards for the enhancement of validity in what she frames as "open ideological research" (p. 67): 1) triangulation of methods, data sources and theoretical schemes; 2) construct validity achieved by systematic reflection revealing altering perspectives during the research; 3) face validity through member check; and 4) catalytic validity achieved by seeking evidence of the extent to which participants have been reoriented and motivated by the research project. For the purposes of my study, I found that triangulation of methods of data sources and catalytic validity were useful tools. I utilized these elements as I utilized the postcritical

ethnographies concept to structure my conversations with the teacher educators as well as how I analyze and present their responses to my questions. I used articles, syllabi and journals provided by my respondents to provide scope, framing, and background of my conversations with the social justice educators in this study. This allowed me to clarify and verify various ideas and experiences that were discussed during the interviews. Also, in speaking with my respondents about their transformation, they recalled, what I call *anchoring experiences* that they believe led to their exposure to social justice ideas and were valuable to the work they are currently engaged in.

Lastly, I acknowledge the interconnectedness of objectivity and positionality. As a researcher, I am always positioned. As I mentioned earlier, my positionality includes my socially constructed attributes such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ideology, which are fixed or culturally ascribed. These positionalities should be disclosed when they influence the data, which they always do to some extent. Attempting to ignore these positions in my research approach and writing could distort my data. Without having awareness of the relationship between objectivity and positionality, I would have lost many important insights about my respondents, the environment, and my interaction with both. This would have limited the kinds of questions asked, the design used to answer the questions, and how I reported my findings. Such a research paradigm does not welcome dialogic or discursive reflections about either the process or product of my research.

3.3.4 Representation

Representation refers not only the issues that are involved in how the study is being developed but also about what voices are being represented in the study and what voices are being left out.

Representation of postcritical ethnography can take various forms, influencing the genre (Glesne. 1997; Van Maanen, 1988), tropes (Geertz, 1988), metaphors, literary devices (Noblit, 1999), and/or imagery involved in an ethnographic text. As Noblit, Flores, and Murillo (2004) state, "postcritical ethnographies may also be represented as performances, videos, and montages, among other ways" (Diaspora Productions, 1997, p. 22).

I acknowledge the "uncertainty about adequate means of describing social reality" (Marcus & Fisher, 1986, p. 8) embedded in the representation of my study. Also, I acknowledge the multiple voices that I have come across in my research process and those voices that may be absent. Also, I understand these voices may disagree and that at times my own voice as researcher may be the most prevalent. Using first person language helps identify when that is the case. The ultimate purpose is to gain greater understanding of the phenomena under study by acknowledging these many voices and using their agreement and disagreements to guide data analysis.

The aim of this study was to generate insight into the impact, if any, social justice education has on teacher educators; and to explain what meanings are made of social justice, diversity, and multicultural education by teacher educators. My hope was to better understand how these actors constructed social reality and provide insights regarding the implementation of social justice education within teacher education.

3.4   RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

To recruit participants for this study, I utilized a combination of purposive and snowball sampling from various professional and educational settings. The participants are members of

various diverse teacher education communities, have self-identified and have been identified by colleagues as proponents for social justice education, and have attempted to implement social justice within a course or educational program. The participants are members of professional organizations of which I am a member and, broadly speaking, they are my colleagues within the teacher education profession. My advisor and I developed the initial list of potential participants based upon the above criteria. I began with ten respondents and increased the respondent size to 15 as I moved through the data collection process.

In order to create a manageable study, I utilized a purposeful sampling approach. A purposeful sample is a representative subcategory of some larger population, and is created to aid a very specific purpose in order collect rich data. My participants are a smaller sample of the larger population of teacher educators adopting social justice education (Patton, 2002). My approach is a form of criterion sampling: this involves searching for cases or individuals who meet a certain criterion (Palys & Atchison, 2008; Stake, 2005). Each research participant who met these criteria were constructed as a case and acted as an informant regarding the phenomena understudy. In this way, during my conversations with the participants I identified events and people that contributed to the experiences of each participant. Therefore, I relied on my initial respondents to connect me with others who may meet my criteria in a form of snowballing. This reliance on my initial set of research participants was indirect in the sense that these original sources mostly supplied information about how to locate others like themselves; that is, where such people are likely to congregate, how to recognize them, and so on. These respondents served not only as informants about the research topic but also about other potential participants. This process led me to five additional participants for my study.

Although my sample size may appear to be smaller than some scholars suggest for sufficient saturation of data (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007), Edwards (2007) identified five grounded theory studies with small samples (from nine to thirteen participants) that yielded rich data and theoretical saturation. My initial group of participants led me to additional respondents or as Charmaz (2006) noted, "Initial sampling in grounded theory is where you start, whereas theoretical sampling directs you where to go" (p. 100). Each of these fifteen teacher educators were what Morse (2010) called "an excellent participant for grounded theory," and were the experts about their own experiences (p. 231). That is, each participant "has been through, or observed, the experience under investigation" (p. 231). More specifically:

> Participants must therefore be experts in the experience or the phenomena under investigation; they must be willing to participate, and have the time to share the necessary information; and they must be reflective, willing, and able to speak articulately about the experience. (p. 231)

The fifteen teacher educators in my study, represented in Table 2, embodied a broad range of socially constructed identities and represent a wide range of geographic origins, ages and experiences. Each respondent was provided with a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Table 2 highlights the socially constructed identities as well self-identifying markers of each participant using the descriptors they identified with during the interviews. Below, I will provide a summary of the experiences of the research participants. Providing too much specific details about each individual participant could possible identify a particular participant. Therefore, this summary will provide the reader with an idea of the types of backgrounds and experiences that these teacher educators have had and where their ideology may originate from without providing exact details. This brief summary includes information about where each grew up, early experiences with diversity, and the reasons they gave for adopting a social justice paradigm.

Table 2 Participants' Social Identities

Participant	Race	Gender	Sexual Orientation	SES/Class (class grew up)	Years as educator at the time of the interview
Amber Ann	White	Female	Lesbian		9
Walter Aya	Asian American	Male	Unknown	Middle-class	8
Sally Freemason Bell	African American	Female	Straight	Middle-class	10
Debbie Hall	African American - biracial	Female	Straight	Middle-class	9
Barbara Ham	White	Female	Straight	Poor Working-class	12
Robert Harris	African American	Male	Straight	Middle class	18
Pricilla Hat	African American	Female	Straight	Unknown	8
Harry Kath	African American	Male	Gay	Unknown	8
Matt McCain	White	Male	Straight	Poor	10
Jose Miguel	Puerto Rican	Male	Straight	Working-poor	7
Ashley Penn	White – Italian American	Female	Straight	Working-class	15
Dennise Ross	African American	Female	Straight	Working-middle class	10
Martha Soto	Latina	Female	Straight	Middle-class	3
Jackie Haword Verpo	White	Female	Straight	Upper-middle class	3
Janet Veruso	White	Female	Lesbian	Working-class	29

The participants in this study come from various upbringings and social economic statuses. There educational experiences in preK–12 also range from the west coast to the east coast, the Midwest, and the deep south. Three of the participants had gone to private or parochial schools while twelve of the respondents attended public schools. The college and graduate schooling is just as varied, ranging from small liberal arts colleges to research one level universities. Some of these teacher educators reported having experiences outside of the classroom that led to their participation in community activism while others were influenced by complications in their personal lives, such as early childbirth or working at an early age to help support family members. These teacher educators also possess a range of teaching experiences from high school through graduate schools. All of them currently work with an educational setting; however, a few

have decided to leave full time teaching to work for educational policy and community organizations while continuing to teach classes at a local college or university. Some have developed a robust publishing portfolio while others decided not to participate so vigorously in that area of their professional lives. For them, the classroom space is where they focus their energies. Although all of them came to value, promote, and prioritize social justice education, as we will see in the next chapter, they all have approached this concept in different ways and have expressed their "coming to be" in diverse ways.

3.5   DATA COLLECTION

Data collection occurred during the spring and summer of 2015. All data gathered from participants and any resources were collected with explicit permission from the participants and in full compliance with the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

In accordance with qualitative research tradition (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003), I collected multiple data sources. Data used in this dissertation was organized into three sets: the primary set is made up of interview data, which comprised approximately two one-hour semi-structured interviews with each participant. This interview data is complemented by participant artifacts (course readings, syllabi, personal writings, and journal articles) and field notes of what I observed as I interviewed the teacher educators. The second set of data were pieces of data that were used to determine if a teacher educator would qualify to participate in the study. This data included articles or public writings completed by teacher educators. In addition, I read other data, such as journal articles or syllabi, if the respondents would refer to them during my conversation with them. These data served as

elements of background and support to undergird the conversations or to add depth to the interviews. The last piece of data used were my field notes. These

The interaction between researcher and participant through the ethnographic interviewing is, "the establishment of human-to-human relation with the respondent and the desire to understand rather than to explain" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 366). Interviews with the participants were semi-structured; this provided for consistent investigation of ideas around the concept of self as it relates to social justice education and multicultural education. I asked basic introductory questions that provided some background information but I also afforded flexibility to engage in natural conversation that provided deeper insight.

> This makes the interview more honest, morally sound, and reliable, because it treats the respondent as an equal, allows him or her to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more "realistic" picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview methods. (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 371)

Moreover, Merriam (1998) notes that highly structured interviews do not afford a true participant perspective; they simply, "get reactions to the investigator's preconceived notions of the world" (p. 74). Also, emphasized by Fontana and Frey (1994), it is important that the researcher and participant fully understand each other and the particulars of the conversation. Focusing on these two elements contributes to the richness and integrity of the exchange.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed and were provided to the participants for review and member checking. Member checking is generally considered an important method for verifying and validating information observed and/or transcribed by the researcher (Merriam, 1998; Mertens, 1998; Stake, 1995). It is meant as a check and critique of the data. Member checking also provides material for further investigation and triangulation, "They [the participants] also help triangulate the researcher's observations and interpretations… The actor [participant] is asked to review the material for accuracy and palatability" (Stake, 1995, p. 115). I

continue further discussion of this process in my data analysis section. In addition, I took handwritten notes during the interviews to help me develop follow up questions and as my personal notes for further reflection after the interview. The interviews were conducted via phone, Facetime, and Skype. These mediums helped to accommodate the research participants' schedules.

Artifact collection was a less intrusive method of collecting data and provided insight and evidence of corroboration and/ or contradiction to stories provided by the research participants (Merriam, 1998), however I was mindful of Yin's (2003) caution that artifacts are collected for purposes other than research and so we must carefully consider the implications this has for the research study. Given this, the various artifacts my respondents shared with me or I collected on my own, such as a list of course readings, syllabi, resources from personal writings, and journal articles, were used as grounding or balance to the conversations I had with the teacher educators. I focused on the documents that were most pertinent to their transition into social justice education (Linders, 2008). These included reflection papers, writing assignments given in class, and influential readings that were identified by participants as having significant impact on their development. These items were useful in providing context to the experiences described by these teacher educators.

The interview protocols (see Appendix A), observations, and artifact collection enabled me to investigate the central research questions and explore issues raised in the literature.

3.6   DATA ANALYSIS

For my dissertation, I addressed the transitional nature of and barriers present in adopting social justice education within teacher education. Data analysis for my study was ongoing and iterative. The appropriate lens to filter my analysis through was a critical social theory perspective (CST), "which is a multidisciplinary framework with the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge" (Leonardo, 2004, p. 11). For the purpose of my dissertation, I utilized CST's usefulness to "promote a language of transcendence that complements a language of critique in order to forge alternative and less oppressive social arrangements" (Leonardo, 2004, p. 11). In my analysis of the teacher educators' transitional process toward social justice education, I utilized participant artifacts (classroom materials, personal reflection pieces, and other documents), my personal field notes, teacher educator interviews, syllabi, coursework materials; and personal journals records/ articles to provide background and support for the teacher educator responses.

Along with the concepts found in CST, I took advantage of the constructive process of Grounded Theory for data analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory inductively develops a substantive theory by coding individual utterances, actions, and events into conceptual categories that can lead to new theory development (Harry, Sturges, & Klingner, 2005). Terms for data analysis used throughout this study include coding, naming, and memoing. Coding is the process of "systematically assembling, assessing and analyzing data" (Glaser, 1992, p. 101). Naming is the labeling of specific codes or categories of data. Memoing is the analytical process of recording written reflections about the data.

As stated in Charmaz (2006), grounded theory approaches utilize at least two coding phases: "an initial phase involving the naming of each line of data, followed by a focused,

selective phase that uses the most significant or frequent earlier codes to sort, synthesize, and organize large amounts of data" (p. 46). In line with Charmaz (2006), I conducted data analysis in multiple phases. Initially, I collected general information found in the public sphere about each of the participants in this study. Along with this I collected articles and literature written by my respondents. The initial data analysis focused on course/ program transformation. This coding led me to formulate a loose concept of the curriculum transformational process that helped guide my conversations with the teacher educators participating in the study. As I entered into conversation with the teacher educators, my analysis began to lead me to focus on the identity work that these teacher educators were doing in this transitional process. I began to look at identity frameworks, which would allow me to consider identity construction as a complex and ongoing phenomenon. I utilized open, focused, and theoretical coding procedures to examine relationships among ideas and to generate connections of ideas and concepts to development of theory.

Open coding was my first level of coding. In grounded theory analysis "data are transcribed and broken down into units of meaning" (Fassinger, 2005, p. 160). Therefore, I began the theory building process during open coding by labeling and assigning units of meaning to incidents, actions, and events provided by the teacher educators. This allowed the data to be compared incident to incident and incident to concept, leading to the development of categories and themes, which I integrated into my emergent theory (Charmaz 2006). For example, I coded participants' moments of reflection that included some self-reflective experiences or an interrogation of self as *self-reflection* which I integrated into an emerging theory about transitional instants. I grouped the codes under the concept of *externalizing or internal influences to transition*. Open coding continues until the selective or theoretical code phase is reached.

As I transitioned into focused coding, my coding involved the examination of concepts emerging from the data. Focused coding is more selective and conceptual than open coding (Charmaz, 2006). "Focused coding means using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). In focused coding, I sought to identify the elements that later became the larger themes used in my study.

Here I would like to mention the use of axial coding. Although, I do not use axial coding the way Strauss and Corbin (1998) do, I did create subcategories in the manner that Charmaz (2006) does. This allowed me to create links between the ideas created in my open coding process through the ideas developed in my focus coding. These links were utilized all the way through my theoretical coding.

As I moved to the final phase of data analysis, theoretical coding, I created substantive theoretical ideas, for example "connecting to community." In this stage, I inductively examined relationships and connections among ideas and concepts generated by my categories. The process of theoretical coding revealed relationships between categories and subcategories leading to the development of conditional hypotheses or emergent thematic ideas. The purpose of these codes is to help me tell the "analytic story" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63) of these teacher educators transitional experience to social justice education.

To reflect and engage in inductive thinking, I employed the process of memoing. Memoing is a reflexive process of data analysis that encourages reflection and provided me the opportunity to engage with the data. Also, it allowed me to capture additional descriptive and reflective perceptions. My early memos consisted of notes generated from reading articles or interviews done by the participants in my study. As my analysis progressed, my memos took on the form of richer analyses of the interviews that I conducted as well as additional documents

provided by the teacher educators. These memos allowed me to push the analysis forward and allowed me to improve my theoretical ideas and link these ideas back to the data.

Lastly, I relied on previous literature to help guide this study. The use of "received theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978) is a heavily contested idea within the grounded theory community. Some grounded theorist encourage postponing the use of external literature until the final stage of data analysis to avoid imposing preconceived ideas on the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). Others (Blumer, 1979; Dey, 1999, Charmaz, 2006) see the use of existing theory as a tool researchers can use to compare data early on. For this study, I conducted a preliminary review of the literature to provide an orientation to the concept of multicultural education, social justice education, and curriculum transformation and to establish a point of entry into the data. Later, I used the data to direct me to additional literature on teacher identity and the concept of figured worlds. In this way, existing theory, data, and new theoretical concepts were woven together.

3.7   QUESTIONS OF "VALIDITY"

In search of empirical rigor, I was guided by Lather's quest for a new paradigm regarding the trustworthiness of data (1986). In her postpositivist check on empirical rigor, she seeks "a reconceptualization of validity appropriate for research that is openly committed to a more just social order" (Lather, 1986, p. 66). Specifically, Lather focuses her discussion on triangulation, construct validity, face validity, and catalytic validity (p. 67). As I mentioned above the two areas of Lather's paradigm, triangulation and catalytic validity, were very useful to my study.

Triangulation goes beyond "the psychometric definition of multiple measures" (Lather, 1986, p. 67) but expands to include multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes. My use of teacher educator interviews and additional artifacts such as school documents, policy documents, personal journals, and additional intellectual papers fulfill the elements for this method.

Catalytic validity "refers to the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses, and energizes participants… to gain self-understanding and, ideally, self-determination" (p. 67) through their research participation. For my study, I invited participants to re-imagine the classroom space as a space where the pedagogy of social justice can be realized and students can begin to hear, connect, engage, and perhaps live the various narratives that shape humankind and its potential. Also, I invite my research participants to reflect on their implantation process of social justice education, this also provided them the opportunity to interrogate the ways they function within their communities and to see if they are living social justice lives and if not to develop ways they could. These two elements, triangulation and catalytic validity was useful tools in engaging with my research participants as well as deconstructing the rich data they provided.

3.8   LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF STUDY

As previously mentioned, my goal was to study how educators transition from doing multicultural education to doing social justice education. The teacher educators in this study helped me develop a nuanced understanding of the transition process that made distinction between action and identity formation. Discussions of identity were a common theme although

the teacher educators in this study have varied perceptions of education. In the practice of social justice education, there exist a complex diversity of perspectives so my aim was to illustrate some examples of teacher educators' experiences transitioning to social justice so that others can begin to imagine the possibilities of such a transition, ultimately altering the educational systems to create educational equity for all.

As the researcher, I am aware and understand this study may have certain restrictions. Based on what Locke et al. (2007) has suggests, I considered the potential limitations of this study here. Because this is only a sample of fifteen teacher educators who have self-identified as proponents of social justice education, there exist limitations in scope and my ability to generalize to the larger social justice educator population. These teacher educators had much to say and their stories offered very rich data from which to draw powerful conclusions. However, as future research directions are developed, I hope to include more social justice educators' stories to help round out the data and provide the reader with even more powerful recommendations for policy, curriculum, and practice. In addition, the selection of the participants was based upon the criteria set above. I used these criteria because it provided me with a diverse group of educators as well as educators closer to the transitional experience. Future studies may want to look at a different subset of teacher educators perhaps those less involved with national organization and active social justice curriculums.

This study is a study of the retrospection of these social justice educators. I am aware that the memories discussed by my research participants may contain some form of unintentional bias, meaning these teacher educators may have selected experiences that fit an idea of who they have become as an educator. Also, these research participants could have attributed positive events and outcomes to one's own agency but attributed negative events and outcomes to

external forces. They may not fully know or understand the forces that helped them transition into social justice. I used archival data sources provided by the social justice educations to check for change overtime or factors that were written about in the past yet went unmentioned in the interviews but did not have enough archival data to truly correct for the limitations of a dataset so dependent on retrospective accounts.

As a proponent of social justice education in teacher education, I am aware that my voice and all aspects of my identity influencing that voice may potentially bias my viewpoint. This can be true throughout the process of developing and carrying out a research study. I am aware that important aspects of my identity are markers of relational positions rather than essential qualities and, as such, can be identified and examined. That is, I am not inherently limited by these positions but they do influence how I approach my research. To mitigate this, I acknowledge my various positionalities when speaking to my participants and when writing about my research. I continuously checked my own thinking for possible bias, used member checking of my interview data, and differentiate between my views and the views of my participants when writing about my findings. Whenever possible, I provided raw data in my writing so that readers can come to their own conclusions about the meaning of the data.

It is my hope that the following chapters, the narratives, analysis and conclusions, will provide my readers with a deeper understanding of the shifts and ideas created by the social justice educators within this study and the great impacted their work has had not only our schools, classrooms, and teachers, but our society as a whole.

4.0   COMPLEXITY REVEALED: A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF THESE EDUCATORS

Originally, I intended to study how educators transition from doing multicultural education to doing social justice education. The data suggests that this question fails to capture the more nuanced aspects of transition, which is from doing multicultural education to being a social justice educator. The distinction here is one of action versus identity. In the practice of social justice education, there exist a complex diversity of perspectives and an ever growing and unsolidified construct of the social justice professional identity. This variability around social justice as an ideological construct and as an identity often leads toward a reluctance to define social justice education as well as an *appreciative reluctance* toward accepting the role as a social justice educator.

The respondents in this study recalled the act of "doing" multicultural education, which required a narrow definition of the term and an understanding of the practices that take place in this pedagogy. These educational actions were about meeting standards and discussing, at a cursory level, difference across culture: the food, folks, and festivals associated with underrepresented groups. The most well intentioned teacher educator practicing multicultural education would achieve what may be described as "critical multicultural education".

> critical multicultural education wants to take a look at the system and what we value and sort of revise our thinking about what's important and what's necessary for people to have. (Ashley)

However, the process of becoming a social justice educator, as my respondents in this study described, is about transformation. This transformation is what I call an appreciative reluctant one. This *appreciative reluctance* is not one of fear or resistance to the idea of becoming a social justice educator; nor, is it reluctance toward working for social justice outcomes within education. It is more of a response to the recognition that the term social justice is unsolidified and contested and that the discourse around the phrase "social justice education" as well as "social justice educator" is consistently being examined and reexamined. As Walter, one of the teacher educators in the study, stated

> I recognize that social justice in education in particular is very much a sliding signifier. It means a lot of different things to a lot of different folks.

In this chapter, I discuss my findings related to how the educators in my study have come to accept the complexity of the meaning of the term social justice education. I also discuss how these educators foreground social justice education in their work with students and the reconstruction of their own identity, as they are exposed to the language, literature, and philosophy of social justice education, from doing multicultural education to being a social justice educator. This transformation is more than simply implementing a pedagogy, it is about creating action and integrating social justice practices and actions into their everyday lives. For these educators, this identity reconstruction requires two things 1) an experience(s) that shifted their perspective, which I call *anchoring experie*nces, and 2) a meaning making process. I will provide examples of these perspective-shifting anchoring experiences and the collective meaning making activities in which they engaged to turn these experiences into transformational moments that lead to an identity shift as an educator.

This complex identity development process encompasses a rich perspective of the meaning of social justice education as well as an intentional reflective process to link specific

anchoring experiences with current pedagogical actions and community engagements. Moreover, discussed in this chapter are some of the barriers that these educators have encountered when moving through this transformation. My analysis provides a glimpse into the challenges such a pedagogy can encounter and the transformational reflective work that may confront educators who take on such a pedagogy. Lastly, I discuss two major elements, power and community engagement, identified by these social justice educators as important to being a social justice educator.

4.1   IDENTITY AND SELF-CONCEPT: RECONSTRUCTION OF SELF

For these social justice educators, the transition from doing multicultural education to being a social justice educator is a matter of a transformational process and identity work. This identity reconstruction is a shift in their concept of self. As educators doing multicultural education they saw themselves as instruments of the multicultural education system, education that covered only the rudimentary and surface elements of culture, implementing the mandates created and enforced by some external element.

> …if you look at Bank's model of multicultural education, there is multicultural education that is basic, that often reproduces stereotypes that teachers are expected to do it this way...a lot of schools approach it like through a food, fun and festival approach and I talk about the consequences of that. (Barbara)

> I am just going to provide people with all these opportunities to learn about difference. So, it was; we would read something that a nonwhite person wrote or I would talk about different cultures in my classroom. So, it was pretty surface level…; actually, my biggest concern right now is that we are just training teachers to just comply. It is a man-made system and it can be unmade. As I always tell my students. (Jackie)

For these educators, there also exist a missing piece in the way in which teachers and teacher education had implemented multicultural education. The practicing of multicultural education ignores the concepts of power and oppression. As Harry put it, "We do multicultural education lite". He continued,

> Well multicultural education, the way I think about it, well let's just say the way in which people practice it. Because I think there are different kinds of ways in which we can theorize about it; but the way it's practiced is that one problem for me is that it tends to be focused on "culture". Usually by culture people really mean race and ethnicity; and, the way I talk about oppression and the manifestation of oppression, I'm talking about race, class, gender, sex all of that kind of stuff. So, that's one of the problems with multicultural education. The second is the tired old saying, people just talk about food, folklore, and festivals, right? 'Multiculturalism.' Then the third, I think multicultural education has been coopted in a way that keeps you from talking about power; that keeps you from talking about privilege…the idea that power and privilege and all of these issues, there's little room for that in the way in which we practice multicultural education. Now I'm saying practice because I think the theorizing about it often is not necessarily the practice.

When provided the opportunity to learn about power and oppression, as it relates to education and communities, and connecting these ideas to their own pedagogy, these teacher educators developed what I call a social justice disposition. That is, they developed another way of being in the world. For many of these educators, the shift to becoming a social justice educator is a process that is still evolving and growing. Their experiences with social justice work continue to inform their pedagogy and their lives.

> The work that I do in the classroom connects directly to my investigation of the reality of the world around me and unveils the manipulation that is shaping people into a belief system against their own interests. It provides a framework for my own understanding and reflection about paths that I may be directed to. Social justice education provides me knowledge and skills so that I can transform my own life and my own communities and make a contribution to changing the world into a more respectful place. (Janet)

This reconstruction of self while becoming a social justice educator required some self-reflection to consider where they sit in social justice work and what work they would perhaps need to do on themselves before and while working with students.

> Being a social justice educator means that I have the responsibility for making students aware of instances of injustices as I see them and for making myself aware of them as well. Though, the first thing that I need to do is to identify the areas of my own privilege, which can blind me to injustice as I see it. I also have a responsibility to criticize my own field and my own actions and to accept that and solicit criticism from my own students… (Ashley)

The action of a social justice educator is first an act of self-reflection and interpersonal interrogation of the self, recognizing personal privilege and oppressive actions that connect to cause injustice. This requires a pulling apart of moments of resistance and of privilege. This critical reflection acts as a catalyst for critical action. The social justice educator needs to begin the nuanced criticism of her field of study; however, this unpacking is done so that the social justice educator can begin to take up social justice action.

> …we talked about issues [of] sexuality and homophobia, what I began to see was the critique I had in terms of the discourse on race I was reproducing myself in terms of homophobic discourses. So, I would get uncomfortable in class during certain conversations. I would have to take moments to understand, to really unpack what is it about these conversations that are making me uncomfortable? And that is this notion of transformation that I was talking about in terms that I was really beginning to unpack some of the ugliness that I wasn't wanting to explore in terms of my own reproduction of these inequities and then taking that action myself and seeing what areas I had to address. Not that you become this perfect individual that embodies social justice all the time in terms of equity, but understanding those moments when you can check yourself and see when you are in fact benefiting from the notion of power… (Jose)

Becoming a social justice educator is not so much a destination but a process. This process is iterative: "one of the things that we say, 'We are all works in progress.' So, I think we need to say, 'I'm a social justice educator and I'm a work in progress'" (Harry). For these

educators, this process of identity reconstruction contains two elements, an experience and a meaning making process.

Early identity is shaped by numerous external experiences (Erickson, 1950; Schwartz et al., 2013). It is a concept that people place on themselves and others, especially in educational settings. Holland et al. (1998) explain that "identity is also very much about how people come to understand themselves, how they come to 'figure' who they are, through the 'worlds' that they participate in and how they relate to others within and outside of these worlds" (p. 63). These social justice educators explained that they have been influenced by a myriad of experiences including personal experiences, indirect experiences, and professional experiences. Personal experiences, negative and positive, included influences from family members, friends, peers and their own reflection on their race, class, gender, and sexual orientation and group memberships. The indirect experiences related to moments that on the surface appear to be disconnected to the work they will eventually do; however, later that moment is advantageous to who they are becoming. Lastly, their professional experiences are connected to how they have come to "be" in their professional world. The following sections will speak to the experiences of these educators and how these experiences contributed to becoming a social justice educator.

4.1.1 The worlds that made me: Experiences that lead to transformation

The transformation to becoming a social justice educator for many of my respondents is rooted in their experiences during compulsory education as well as undergraduate education. Many of these educators developed an understanding of moments that affix them to their worldview and social justice work. Therefore, I call these moments, anchoring experiences. My respondents see these anchoring experiences as experiences that have influenced their trajectories toward social

justice work in their lives. They include positive childhood experiences, challenges or opportunities in college, or moments early in their adult lives. The common thread in their stories center around injustice and how it impacted the ways others viewed them as well as how they viewed themselves. One that stood out for me the most was Pricilla's reflection of why she does the work she does.

> I think a fundamental question that should be asked of me is, why did I come to education anyway? What was some of those experiences that brought me to the field of education? Cause there was absolutely nothing in my history that would have told me that I would have been a teacher; and, so being in this place seems, now in hindsight it seems very natural because, I am a product of, I am from Kentucky, so I'm a product of the Brown vs. Board. Not in terms of the advocacy and the fight we struggle for but my generation was the generation that was sent out to integrate schools; and so, if you know anything historically about bussing or desegregation, then of course you know Boston and Kentucky were some of the most contentious sights! So, they sent us to these places. We were taken from our communities and we were bused. Cause I had always gone to a community school, in which I did very well.

Pricilla grounds her experiences in a historical context. It is through reflection that she comes to understand that the bases of her current professional and personal actions stem from the impact this moment in time had on her growth as a person and as an educator. She then begins to connect this historical moment to her educational experience:

> My grandmother's generation certainly viewed integration and desegregation very differently than let's say my aunt who was 14 years older than I was. Because, of course we know what integration did for many black communities or what desegregation did. Let me say that, not integration, because I don't think we have achieved that; but, so me and my friends and the people in my community were bused and we had to travel about 50 to 60 minutes on a bus, which made it longer, depending on traffic, every morning to get to school. Mine was my high school experience and I remember when we went there, we saw them burning cars; and, we can see where the looting and protests and anger and mobs had just destroyed the town and this was in Okolona in Kentucky, which was a predominantly white community that we were going to. And I remember when we went into the schools, we were all lined up against the wall. As we were lined up against the wall, they were really telling us what they expected of us and you know, "You will do this! You will not do that! You'll do this!" It was demeaning. I could really relate that to a type of prison posturing, the way they were interacting with

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us was certainly demeaning. I didn't have the language to call it demeaning because there were two things that were happening. Here I am being demeaned in school, this doesn't feel good as Gloria Ladson-Billings said, was this supposed to be empowering? Because in the community they were telling me, "You guys are going to get access to a better education. You're going to get access to a better facility. You're going to get access!" But it didn't feel like anything about that experience was a good thing.

Pricilla continues to frame her reflection on this experience as "not feeling good." She recognized even at that time that there was something wrong with what was happening. She compares the fear endured by busing to the warmth of her community school. She describes the juxtaposition of the community expectation to what her reality was. From this experience, she weaves her continued educational journey:

> So, when I graduated from high school, I went through high school pretty much asleep. Literally, I turned off all those things, accomplishments that I had had in elementary school and even some in junior high school. Pretty much I had just shut down to get through the everyday of high school…I still had my family, who was saying that I was going to go to school. Not only was I going to go to a post-secondary for a post-secondary degree, I was going to go to an HBCU. So, I had that but I was doing absolutely nothing in high school to make that happen because I was absolutely turned off. I remember very little about that experience; I do know there was nothing about it that I appreciated and if I ever saw those people again it would be too soon.

Here Priscilla makes clear that there was something wrong with this experience. This was not what it should be. Even amid this uncomfortable and unjust experience, she recognized her support and direction. This direction was leading her to an environment of refuge. This refuge provided voices that she could latch onto.

> So, I remember though that I did take the ACT and I did go to Fisk and I did of course finally finish and get my bachelor's degree: but, I had my son who was a little black boy, who had some major issues in kindergarten as it relates to race also as it relates to class, because I was a 19-year-old mother when I had him and so of course there was definitely some class issues that were, even though race is classed, they work in cohort. So, I had to learn; and, I was introduced to, because I was finishing up working on my bachelor's degree, and thank God, I had some folks who did, introduce me to a counter voice, a counter narrative that I had experienced at Fisk but certainly didn't internalize it until I had my son.

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The path of 19-year-old mother working on her bachelor's degree fighting through class and race was one of struggle, humility, and determination. Here Pricilla begins to enhance her understanding of what is just and unjust and, through the guidance of others, her advocacy for herself, her son, and for her community begins to take shape. These guiding hands in Pricilla's life were instrumental in framing how she would come to understand and how she would become a social justice educator.

The use of an influential conduit to these principles and the reliance on a guiding hand was helpful to Pricilla. Although coming from a very different and privilege existence, Jackie like Pricilla had a guide to the work she is currently doing:

> I went to a Catholic High School that had, at the time, a pretty liberal priest in charge of it who was very much, he would not define himself as an activist, but, he certainly was active in the community around issues. And the school had a bunch of service requirements that we had to participate in at the time. I mean I think I've always had an interest in others. I don't know the initial point where that began but I do have this one memory where we were driving. We had to go to a soup kitchen, so I am in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, which are pretty white, middleclass, upper middle class and we, a bunch of privileged kids, pour into the bus and we drove to the city and we had to spend the evening. We had to cook and we had to sit and eat with the people that come to the soup kitchen and we had to clean up. So, we had this 'real', somewhat contrived, experience and I remember being struck that the people who are coming to the soup kitchen, who in my head where going to be like the pictures I saw on the news or movies at the time, and instead they were people that some looked like me, some didn't, but they had on work uniforms, so it shattered my image of who doesn't have enough money to eat. So, the bus ride down was ridiculously loud and obnoxious and the bus ride home was almost dead silence because I remember there just being this sort of realization that I did not verbalize then but thinking, 'that is messed up'. Why are people having to go to a soup kitchen? And getting to talk to them, it just, having a real experience with people who I had otherwise just thought were kind of over there and they did not have to impact me, I think, helped. (Jackie)

For Jackie, the priest in her high school was an invaluable actor for framing the concept of community activism. Her reflection begins with the thought of a critical example of a social justice activist and the work he did and the doors he opened for her and her

classmates. She saw this experience as a moment of clarity as an understanding of need or perhaps hunger. She reflects that this experience provided a perspective that was unknown prior to having it and that it provided a glimpse into the world of groups that she had identified as the other. This experience was a collective experience shared with her classmates who may have understood the experience differently from her; nevertheless, it was something that she believed had an impact on them all because they all fell silent on the bus afterward. For Jackie, this moment was a reflexive anchoring experience that stood out. Anchoring experiences require reflexivity because, while all the students shared the experience, not all would find the experience instrumental to their future work. Jackie's reflections on her experience advanced her identity development and provided a foundation on which she rested her future work.

Like Jackie, Dennise called upon her educational experiences for a source of relevancy to her current work. In her reflection of her time in elementary school, these experiences presented themselves in a new and unique way. In reflection, these experiences are reimagined.

> I am African American. My elementary school was on the campus of a university, so, it was an early childhood center that was model/ clinical center for the university and they implemented great professional practice with regard to early childhood education. So in the broad sense, I think that was probably indicative of social justice education even though we were all black, you know, its race not necessarily just culture but, I think it represented that because they were making sure that these black kids who could potentially all have been disenfranchised and many of whom were from lower social economic background, they were making sure that they had access to, you know, materials, the right kind of curriculum, that they were teaching them about the rest of the world. So, it certainly wasn't just focused on, [ideas and curriculum focused solely on "black" things in the United States] There was this entire, kind of, inclusive curriculum and it was an amazing experience. I still remember a lot about preschool, actually. (Dennise)

Dennise recalls this as a foundational experience that also connects to who she is as an

African American. We can assume that she was not doing such a full analysis of the early childhood center while a student there. Her current reproduction of this is reflexive and is a way she can anchor her current identity and work in an experience of her past. Her understanding of that experience has become more nuanced over time and relevant to her current work as a social justice educator.

Although, these educators may have not been keenly connected to what these experiences would mean at the time, they believe these anchoring experiences constructed a solid reflection point to their pedagogy and interaction with their students. Barbara recognizes this correlation.

> I grew up white, working class, low income. The students that I worked with at my previous university where majority poor and white. I felt like I can really connect with many of those students and some of my experiences, growing up poor in particular, did shape my understanding of what's fair in the world; especially how I got treated and how I started understanding wealth inequalities, as I got older, even my own understanding of white privilege versus class privilege and how that changed. It's interesting to think about. (Barbara)

Barbara sees that the work she currently is engaged in with students as a social justice educator is influenced by her historical socially constructed identity positionality; "white, working class, low income." It is this historical positionality that allows her to connect with students. This positionality also helps her understand what injustice is in various capacities and perhaps how to address it.

For some social justice educators, their exposure to social justice ideas was not only experienced in the classroom. Several of these educators make a connection between their out-of-the-classroom experiences to their work as a social justice educator. Amber believed that the strength of her co-curricular work as an undergraduate was instrumental to her current professional identity; and, she would like to provide that type of experience for her students.

So, I am 51. I would say in my k-12 education, I had a 9th grade World Cultures class. (laughing) So that would be the only possible space. I would even say in my undergraduate education, I don't even think that the language had any currency at that point. However, there was moments that appeared to be about differences. So that was the early '80s. I am just trying to, yeah, I think where I saw attention to this was in co-curricular circles. In terms of, so I did residential life, we had trainings around responding to all students and issues of sexuality and so I guess I was introduced to it co-curricularly far long before curricularly. Those are the moments that I want for my students to make those connections inside and outside the classroom. (Amber)

This experience was also true for Dennise:

So, what I learned…as an undergrad was, the social activist piece that I engaged in outside of the classroom was far greater of a learning experience then what I encountered in the classroom. So, I learned about all kinds of different people, what their various sundry issues were with regard to their identity and their relationship to the word; and, we learned how to build solidarity across groups. We learned that, that was actually stronger than, you know, I just stayed with the black student movement; and, I don't ever go to any other group and try to fight for a common cause. So, we learned how to strategically plan and fight for things together, no matter what. And that I think was a much more powerful lesson than, you know, what I learned in Econ…so that, in theory, outside of the classroom at my undergraduate institution push me toward this particular interest, I would say. (Dennise)

By saying these experiences influenced her "in theory" Dennise highlights the importance of

reflexivity to the anchoring experience. While those experiences did not have to become

foundational, she has given them meaning that enabled them to anchor her later social justice

work and continuous identity development. In addition to co-curricular experiences, these

educators connected their experiences beyond the space of the United States milieu. For instance,

Barbara connected her international experiences to her transition into a social justice educator.

She also reinforced that, for her, there is a rich connection to her course work abroad as well as

in the United States and her path as a social justice educator.

I studied abroad in Australia and so definitely the Study Abroad kinds of stuff were treated at more surface level. But, the interesting thing is that I took classes on Aboriginal history while I was there and that's where I first learned about how

American Indians were treated in the US. So that's the kind of ironic piece of it. I would say that was more of a social justice piece that came out of that. (Barbara)

Barbara is quite direct in linking these experiences to her current identity in her current work as a social justice educator. Her experiences show that anchoring experience can be jarring and uncomfortable, such as when she was exposed to the US treatment of Native Americas, or somewhat mundane, such as when she took and a sociology course as an undergraduate. Barbara recounts these events as fundamental to shaping her perspective, focus, and identity.

As we can see, the role educational experiences can play in the transformational identity development of a social justice educator is vital. These educators, as a reflective act, give great relevancy to these moments in their past. They recognized these events as part of their transformational journey. In reflection, they see these education institutional moments as inexplicitly linked to the work they are currently doing as social justice educators and so these moments anchor their current work within education in their past personal experiences in educational settings. However, this is only part of their story.

As a social justice educator, the transformational experiences outside of the school setting also demonstrated a significant impact on the trajectory of these social justice educators. Through incidents with parents, family members, friends and partners, their view of social justice education continued to take shape. These personal experiences helped lay an emerging foundation toward social justice pedagogy. For many of my respondents, family, broadly defined, contributed to their work of acting against injustice.

> My husband at the time was deployed to Iraq and so I had the two-year-old. And then we were doing what we supposed to do: we bought a house and we were having kids and suddenly he was going to fight in a war we totally politically disagreed with and oh the anger! Which was a nice way to put it, I think. I had never, I had never been completely disempowered. I always, I could figure a way out of everything. I always had agency and that was a moment, where, I had no agency. You just had to do it, obviously. So, we had to, you know, sit and take it.

This was a personal experience that anchored her future work in social justice. In this personal experience, she could identify feelings of disempowerment that later shaped her pedagogical practice. Interestingly, in Jackie's case, some reflection on this personal experience occurred in an educational setting:

> I told this story once in a grad class. One the guys looked at me and my friend and was like, "Girl you were black for a year!" (Laughing) And, I remember it was a very powerful moment because I was like, yeah, you're right but for a year. Right, that's the point. I still only have a fraction of perspective. So that really set me on this issue. And I happen to take a class, so my first class back… I saw a poster for a class: Social Justice in Education. And the description of what we were going to talk about, the war, the war in Iraq. So, that was really my entry point back to grad school…I think my disequilibrium in that I was having this experience…It was the beginning. (Jackie)

This moment of reflection shows the importance of classroom based reflection to the development of social justice identity. But in this case, the personal experience is also key. "And then put what you have already starting with…" Jackie not only saw this moment as a challenge to perhaps her family and her "doing what we supposed to do" as a citizen, as an American but perhaps also to her whiteness. That the feeling of powerlessness to a condition that she could not change and did not possess agency over provided insight, however brief, into the lived experiences of marginalized groups. She "was black for a year." This circumstance opened a gateway to injustice around the war, which opened the door to social justice education.

For the social justice educators in my study, their reflection on certain defining moments and their framing of these moments created anchoring experiences on which they could build their understanding of their educational pedagogy. The gave meaning to the educational and personal experiences that impacted their views of the world and used this while creating a social justice educator identity.

4.1.2 Social Justice not separate from who I am

For my respondents who greatly identify with a socially constructed position such as race, gender, or sexuality, their identity development around social justice is a product of who they are. They came to understand themselves through these positions and they believe that their positionalities influenced the way they had seen and understood the world. We already saw glimpses of this in stories that tied an educational experience to race or class, such as Pricilla's story of being bussed to a newly integrated public school. Race and other social locations did not always require a specific incident, or anchoring experience, in order to shape respondents' social justice identity. For social justice educators like Jose, Pricilla, and Robert, their racial position in society was a strong influencing element to do the work that they do and to becoming social justice educators. This socially constructed positionality also provided a lived experiential body of knowledge which provided them grounding on becoming a social justice educator.

> I had a social justice frame by virtue of my own kind of rearing and issues around [community] service as a young black male growing up in the United States. So, my experiences, themselves, rendered themselves to what we call social justice education but my formal education training where there was a specific course and specific direction only came at my Master's level (Robert)

Robert frames his engagement with social justice work as a product of his lived experiences as a "black male growing up in the United States." For Robert, there is a separate educational experience between the classroom and his lived social location. Jose also constructs the link between his social location and his current work; however, he dives deeper into his responsibility.

> I have no choice in doing it because these are not dialogues, I actually live these dialogues. So, that's the work that I must do, I mean given that I have three small kids, who are going to grow up in a society as young men and women of color, I have no choice but to do this work to create an experience for them that is more equitable than I had coming up. And so, I don't think there is any choice. (Jose)

Jose establishes a strong relationship between his social location and his work as a social justice educator by underscoring that there is no choice for him. By the very nature of his racial and ethnic position in society and by his parental status, he feels responsible for creating a more fair, equitable, and just world for his children. This deep responsibility is not only for his children but for all children of color.

> I wanted to go into a grad program where I can become a professor/ faculty and come out the other side where I can broker those conversations… I realized how many Latinos, African American or Puerto Ricans, especially Puerto Ricans from the Bronx, went through the same stuff I did and hit these challenges but didn't have the support network to get backed up. I want to provide that link for these kids, to provide them with a voice in these conversations. (Jose)

For Jose, being a faculty member of color can help provide representation when conversations of oppression and access are happening. His racial position is essential to his ability to engage in these conversations for the good of kids like him. The same is echoed by Pricilla. Pricilla reiterates that her racial positionality prevents her from disconnecting her social position from her academic experiences.

> To be frank, the nature of my racial lived experiences does not afford me the opportunity to separate, if you will, my academic or identity from my lived experiences. So, I am not only a social justice educator, I am a person who in my everyday life works to end oppression and to prepare people to struggle against injustices. (Pricilla)

For Pricilla, there is an inescapable relationship between the work she does as an educator and her life as a person of color. She makes it clear that it is her "racial lived experiences" that she is focused on as an influence. For Pricilla, her racial identity is more salient and has a richer impact on the work she does as an educator. This element of her identity provides a reference point for her work as a social justice educator. She is the work and the work is a product of her lived experiences. For most of the social justice educators in my study, their socially constructed

position of race had a significant impact on their work as a social justice educator. Yet white/ majority respondents were more frequently compelled by other social constructed identity positions.

For Janet, the most salient perspective in her work as a social justice educator is class. Janet has been working on issues of class and education for several decades and is dedicated to social mobility through education. Although she recognizes that her gender and sexual orientation positionality shape her worldview, she is very clear that her social class positionality has had the strongest impact on her work as a social justice educator.

> I explore political and pedagogical issues in teaching the thousands of teacher education students, who are the first in their families to attend college, about social class. This began from my start in a course in social stratification in the sociology department. This thinking fascinated me. This work was connecting to my own background as a working-class student and a first-generation college student…Although I am influenced by gender as well as my sexual orientation as a lesbian woman, it is social class that I connect my work to. (Janet)

While she is still very aware of her other social constructed identities, class is where she most connects with her students and her work in communities.

The sense of value that Janet has toward students from poor communities is the same critical focus that Matt possesses. He sees himself understanding these students because he sees them as similar to himself.

> I came through as a poor student, as an outsider, as somebody who was in trouble a lot and experienced the power of certain teachers who had an ethic of care and the power of teachers who were very institutionalize, And I realized as a fairly young child which teachers were there for me and which teachers were there for the process and the program. So, even though this was like much more intuitive on my part as I started out as a teacher, I was always referenced as a teacher and my first principle said even from my first year, I was adept at finding those students who were in the crack and in danger of falling through because that's where my focus was because I had a background. So where that wound me up was an ethic of identifying and being aware of the marginalized students and trying to validate their struggles and helping teachers and preservice teachers

recapture the emotional components of what drew them in to teaching to begin with. (Matt)

This led Matt to do the work that he believed was not done for him effectively. He understood the context of the students who were struggling which led to him advocating for them, which led to, as he puts it, "a more radical approach to education".

The social justice educators in my study reflected on their own socially constructed identity and its impact on the work they currently do. They recognized that the people that do this work do it because they want to make an impact in the world and in the lives of students. They want the world to be more equitable. They want students to be more engaged; and, they want those who sit on the outside of power or have no voice in their own educational formation and future to be provided with a voice.

4.2   MEANING MAKING OF SOCIAL JUSITCE

As mentioned earlier the meaning and understanding of social justice is based upon one's perspective of what is unjust. Therefore, there exist various discourses that teacher educators draw upon to orient themselves to social justice ideas. "These include democratic education, critical pedagogy, multiculturalism, poststructuralism, feminism, queer theory, anti-oppressive education, cultural studies, postcolonialism, globalization, and critical race theory" (Hytten & Bettez, 2011, p. 8-9), just to name a few. Often in context, these ideas possess overlapping and intertwined discourses; yet at times these discourses can be at odds with one another. For these social justice educators, the manifestation and meaning of social justice is a product of these various discourses as understood through in the context of their social positions and anchoring

experiences. Although grounded in experiences from the past, the meaning making process for the social justice educators in this study is transformative and ongoing. They have come to tease out more clearly what it means to claim a social justice disposition, especially so that they can find places to connect with others and to develop tools to address issues of power. Coming to understand what is meant by social justice education allows them to operationalize this term for their students and the work they do in and out of classroom. In the following section, I explain what social justice means to these teacher educators and I demonstrate how they come to operationalize the term for themselves and their students, in a later section I discuss the elements these social justice educators believe are critical to their work and identity as being a social justice educator. For now, for these social justice educators, the meaning of social justice education was concentrated around these most salient themes that manifested themselves across interviews: social justice education is freedom; social justice education is action; social justice education is awareness; and social justice education addresses power. Although these themes present themselves in complex and overlapping ways and are quite messy in practice, I present these elements as distinct entities of social justice education. The teacher educators in my study acknowledged the complexity and messiness of this process – they see social justice education as multi-dimensional and multifaceted with intersecting and interweaving elements. Figure 2 shows how social justice educators in this study come to discuss the messiness of social justice in the context of meaning of social justice for themselves and their students. The messiness of the meaning making process contributes to the appreciative reluctance of accepting the term of social justice educator.
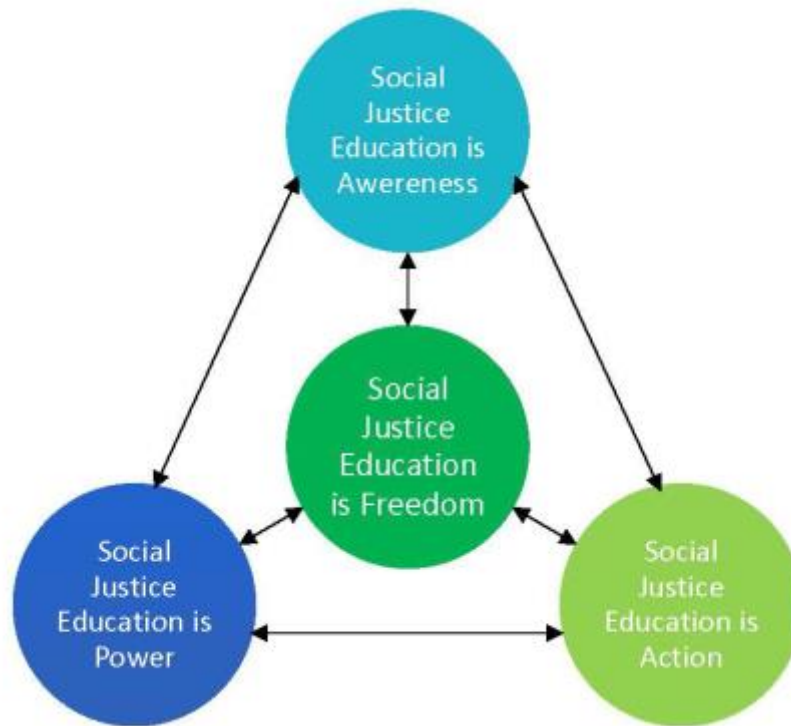
Figure 2 Meaning making of social justice

4.2.1 Social justice education is freedom

While coming to an understanding of social justice education, these teacher educators engaged in a struggle to normalize and accept a definition of social justice. Their struggle is with the lucidity of a meaning and theory of social justice; however, there exist an appreciation with the uncertainty and ambiguity of the term.

> I think, I struggled…when I first came into the world of foundations of education, which is my background; I wanted one answer, right, I wanted there to be one definition. I think I have come to realize I am ok with it being a little ambiguous. (Jackie)

The ambiguity of social justice education poses many challenges but it also provides freedom. Social justice education provides educators with the freedom to teach on their own terms to utilize whatever tools that would enhance the learning of their students. The social justice space

is where students can ask big philosophic questions and the belief that schools and teachers should be doing this type of work. These teachers are in a unique position to ask profound questions of students instead of simply assaulting them with content.

> So, for me it is based in a lot of big philosophic questions and believing in that schools and teachers should be doing that work…I think teachers are in unique position to actually ask profound questions of students instead of just jamming content… (Jackie)

For many of these social justice educators, social justice education affords them the freedom to encourage their students to ask and investigate critical questions and to discover complex solutions, the freedom to prepare students to fully participate in deliberation and decision making of norms or laws in a democratic society. These teacher educators want their students to understand the fluidity of issues and of what is just in society.

> …I want it (social justice education) to remain complex and I want it to be able shift and move, but, generally, I think it asks questions related to power; questions and issues surrounding what is good; what is just; what is freedom. (Jackie)

Jackie not only wants her students to appreciate that the interpretation of "good" is depended upon context; but, that her students recognize the role that "power" plays in their lives and the lives of their students. She like many of my respondents value the complexity of social justice education because of its fluidity. It opens the door for various reflection points for students, teachers and community members. Social justice education provides teachers the opportunity to propose problems to students to engage critical thinking and to investigate what they are being taught through a critical lens and establish their own thoughts and beliefs. As Freire (2006) stated, "The teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-considers her earlier considerations as the students express their own" (p. 81).

Social justice education provides these educators the freedom to engage in the classroom in different ways. These educators can engage with their students through a variety of mediums and practices and create and establish education in their own way.

> When I got certified to teach yoga to kids and to teach yoga tools to teachers and to teach yoga to adults, I said 'now I can be a social justice educator on my own terms', which means helping people to know their minds and their bodies and how they work. And, I think that that's one of the, one of the foundations of freedom. Right, of physical freedom, there's political freedom and social freedom and things like that, but, that's what I am focused on. (Ashley)

This freedom allows Ashley to create ways of being in the classroom and in the community, to not only liberate the mind but the body as well. As Ayers (2004) puts it, to teach is to "help human beings reach the full measure of their humanity" (p. 1). Social justice education provides these educators the freedom to offer students the opportunity to become more powerful, more conscious, and more enlightened citizens.

The social justice space offers teachers the independence to care for the students' wellbeing beyond the academic, to know and understand the student, and to know the context of the student's life. With this knowledge, the educator can operate from a place of support for the students' education and perhaps personal journey.

> Social justice education allows you to look at, on a very local level, the individual and not worry so much about how this kid slots somewhere but what the actual issues are in terms of this kid's welfare and then respond appropriately. It's less of a filter or framing and more of an advocacy and intervention piece. (Matt)

Matt sees social justice education as a way to reach students, not just to help them with mastery of the content in the curriculum. It serves as conduit to address issues both academic and personal.

In addition to care for students, social justice education is freedom to add unknown and uncommon voices to the discourse within the classroom. For most of these teacher educators there was an understanding that much of the traditional literature in teacher education is male

and white and does not offer other perspectives within the classroom. Social justice education

grants the freedom to include other perspectives. It offers educators the opportunity to bring in

voices from various scholars to perhaps push back on the traditional discourse.

> So, for me, teaching for social justice also involves insuring that multiple voices
> are reflected in those perspectives and that there's a counter narrative to the
> majoritarian narrative about the way the world works and why things are the way
> they are. (Debbie)

This is not only about the literature for these teacher educators. It is also about the lives and

experiences of the students within the walls of the education institution.

> My concern, I believe, has always been to provide, to disrupt, to go into the
> academy and disrupt that "within the matrix of domination" its hegemony, the
> rhetoric of hegemony by bringing with me the voices of children who not only
> look like me but whose experiences I think mirror mine to a great degree.
> (Pricilla)

For Pricilla, it is valuable to bring the voices of students of marginalized groups into the

classroom so that her students can value them. For her, these voices push back on the oppressive

narrative found in educational literature and thinking. As she suggests, these voices "counter the

rhetoric of hegemony". The freedom to add these voices to the classroom and systems of

educational knowledge construction to help students envision something different.

Lastly, social justice education is also the freedom to see through a different lens, to

shape the language of how to frame social justice within education.

> This is difficult because I don't necessarily use that term, social justice education.
> I think of education that promotes social justice. Education that promotes social
> justice is a different term to me then social justice education. I mean, I may be just
> spinning here but education that promotes social justice is one that is really based
> on the idea of what is in the best interest or what promotes a democratic society."
> (Sally)

Sally constructs social justice as Amy Gutman (2003) frames it. Social justice is about social

reproduction being a necessary component of democratic education (Gutman, 2003). Gutman

argues that people must promulgate some basic assertions in a democratic society and one of those basic assertions is that fairness and justice is for everyone; and, so we must constrain a person's freedom if that freedom interferes in a harmful way the freedom of someone else.

The freedom that social justice education provides is about the creation of space for critical thinking, multiple voices, creative teaching, and even the freedom to reframe the construction of social justice within the context of education. These teacher educators all recognize that in addition to this freedom, there is action that is required. "That social justice education is not just an ideology it's a way of living and so when I think of social justice education it in terms of how it is enacted one must move, there is a requirement to do something, to act on behalf of something, an action for change" (Barbara).

4.2.2 Social justice education is action

For these teacher educators, action is a necessary component of social justice education. Action is what is needed to address injustice. As Ashley states, "Social justice has the required action piece". The concept of action in social justice education is about practice. What are the practices that these teacher educators view as important to advancing social justice? These practices can take on various forms. To help frame these teacher educators' perspectives on action I use Nelson, Laird, Engberg, and Hurtado's (2005) description of social action engagement. Although their ideas are centered around students, it is helpful to see these teacher educators' expectations through this lens. As Nelson et al. (2005) argue that social action engagement is students' willingness to "take actions in their communities and relationships in order to end social injustice" (p. 468).

For many of these teacher educators the concept of action starts first with self-reflection and critical self-evaluation. The action begins with self. This prepares an educator to evaluate and understand where they may contribute to injustice and how they can begin to combat it.

> Some people look at social justice education and they have to know where the action's happening. To me self-knowledge and criticism is action. It's necessary pre-action for anything you are going to take on in the world. And, action you take on yourself to change yourself is absolutely a prerequisite action before you see action in the world. (Ashley)

This preliminary action is about self-awareness. This self-awareness is the consciousness of our personal qualities that inform our practices and values, cultures, biases, and perspectives. It is necessary to develop and improve our ability to understand who we are and what we bring to our teaching and experiences.

> Ok, when I think about social justice education… I think that it is focused really on helping students to understand the multiple lenses through which they view the world and bringing to that understanding a critical lens that is focused on equity across different populations. (Debbie)

For Debbie, this understanding is an awareness of social identities and cultural influences and how they intersect as well as what prejudices, stereotypes, and biases exist within. This allows people to come to be aware of how we have "internalized, often unconsciously, notions of the superiority of our dominant/privilege social identity groups and the inferiority of our subordinated/marginalized social identity groups" (Bell, 1997, p. 9).

As a prerequisite, self-reflection and self-knowledge are necessary for the formation of a social justice educator identity and they are also necessary for action. It is an educator's responsibility to project that critical lens on society, to evaluate where people sit in the world, to not only consider your privilege but others' marginalization. Then they must take action.

> I think it [social justice education] is multi-dimensional, so in a broad sense we are asking students to look at various identities in society and how those identities have been erased, ignored or privileged in many ways; but, in more specific and

concrete ways, we are asking in social justice education for students to look at what people have actually done in response to these injustices. So, once you become aware of something that might be unfair or unjust then how do you respond; how do people respond. (Dennise)

This action is not only in discussed in their teaching but it is demonstrated in their policy implementation and in their communities. Social justice education is a response, an active participation. It answers the question, now that I know, now what? "What do you do once you figure out all these various people have been oppressed?" (Dennise)

Social justice education is also about people, the identities they bring, as well as being about the responses that we have to each other and to the world. The social justice educators in my study seek to help examine the issues of equity, oppression, and identity associated with injustice and in some way, develop teaching and curriculum about action.

Social justice education is teaching my students more about, not just the issues, not just the identities, but it has to be about collective action … it means that certainly in my classes where I think there is a strong focus on social justice. They're actually going to do something. They're actually going to take it out into the community and do something. (Janet)

It is not simply a critical perspective or a critical orientation on educational practices and policies that challenge our commitment to equity; but, it is a willingness to do something. "In my mind, it is not only an activist component to it, there's an action component to it." (Amber). There exists an obligation to respond, to engage, to make a commitment, and to act in the face of injustice.

4.2.3 Social justice education is awareness

To help their students in a social justice classroom, these teacher educators provide information to help their students understand the larger socio-political and historical context of which they

are a part. They provide information to help them grasp the diverse forms of privilege and oppression and how they affect people's experiences, opportunities, and access to social power.

> I am teaching them to actually bring them to a different level of consciousness and that means that they are at least more aware of what equity might look like or what inequity might look like for people other than themselves. (Dennise)

These teacher educators help their students appreciate the interlocking nature of different types of inequality and how they intersect in people's lived experiences.

> So, I see my job as casting a different perspective, trying to cast some different perspectives on the lived experiences of others. Often students' perceptions of people from marginalized groups in educational settings, especially environments of those they haven't been in, they may not use the language of "low performing" but they're not good schools. They're not good teachers... There is some uncertainty around socio-economic [status], so my primary goal is perspective taking and saying, have you considered this or have you considered that? (Amber)

Providing students with this perspective offers them the opportunity to think critically for themselves. To evaluate not only the information, they are receiving but the context in which it is situated. It allows them to think for themselves and come to an informed place.

> …I do not teach my students what they are to do; but instead I help to raise questions, providing them with a range of philosophical, moral, and ethical viewpoints, with which they can weigh and consider the social conditions and then develop a philosophical view. It's conceivable that someone in my class might not think of educational opportunity the way that I do by the time the semester is over but that student will be very clear on arguments in favor of all the different legislation, pedagogies, instructional strategies, and even data that would support affording equal educational opportunities. (Sally)

This is a process that allows the social justice educator to present knowledge of the history, ideology, and current manifestations of systemic inequalities and how they reinforce each other. This provides these teacher educators the space to demonstrate how different forms of oppression operate on interpersonal, cultural, institutional, and structural levels. It provides the social justice educator the opportunity to share with their students the impact of societal inequalities on their own and others' experiences and lived realities.

One of the core elements of social justice education is to provide students with content and knowledge around injustice in society and its institutions. For many of these social justice educators, the challenge in awakening students' understanding of larger institutional constraints on justice is often met with a recentering the dialogue on individual responsibility. The difficulty some students have accepting the content of injustice in society and its institutions is one that these social justice educators try to understand. The practice of confronting this resistance in the classroom can and is a challenging proposition for many of these social justice educators. However, they understand that content alone is insufficient in preparing students to be active social justice educators themselves. These teacher educators help students become critical consumers of information. Students are provided the opportunity to experience, evaluate, and dialogue around the issues surrounding justice and power. This classroom and curriculum freedom and openness to interrogation is valuable to social justice education.

4.2.4 Social justice education addresses power

As discussed above, social justice education necessitates a personal connection in all teaching and learning, allowing for continuing dialogue, questioning, discussion, and even conflict. For these teacher educators, a primary focus within the given context of social justice education is to ultimately dismantle oppression.

> I think social justice education is teaching and learning that promotes, supports and maintains practices, policies, and structures that address manifestations of oppression or what we called inequality in classrooms and schools. (Harry)

Imbedded in oppression is the notion of power (Bell, 1997). Understanding that much in society and in the institution of education serves the status quo and those in power, these social justice educators are committed to paying attention to issues of power, subverting oppression, and

utilizing social justice education as an entry way in doing that. "For me social justice education is about, it's about addressing power dynamics that are asymmetrical" (Jackie). Social justice education compels teacher education to create a more critical social critique around issues of multiculturalism, diversity, language, and ethnicity (Gay, 2001).

For these social justice educators, social justice education involves a rethinking of curriculum instruction and a transformation of schooling (hooks, 1994) to empower students, teachers, administrators, and community members to push back on curriculum that has been male, white, privileged, in power, and sustained a lack of choice.

> I think the first thing we must do is help people recognize it [oppression]. What's interesting in this is US framing of this, but, what's interesting is that we don't often talk about power or we don't talk about it in ways that are explicit. So, I think it's helpful to understand what we mean by power and helping communities and students to begin to unpack that; and, I would say the same thing about privilege... (Deanna)

Through this transformation process, these social justice educators, educate for a critical consciousness. Providing their students access, perspectives, and information that has the potential to be liberating in how they think about the world and about power. It influences how they think about structures and transforming those structures.

Social justice education is about coopting the narrative around education. Taking the power of education from those in power. "So now what I want to do is to begin to impact and prepare people who will struggle. Who will struggle against, be prepared to work for, have a working knowledge of oppression and begin to push back on power structures" (Janet). This provides these social justice educators the power to take back the narrative. They can help students, teachers, and communities design education that works for the whole of society. The power to create/recreate their own destiny. Social justice education is viewed as a process by which these teacher educators can help students decipher the primary stories within education,

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which are stories of assimilation, pluralism, and expulsion. Then the teacher has the power to identify how these mechanisms develop and unfold in the classroom and their role in maintaining or dismantling them.

For these teacher educators, social justice education is a complex and evolving concept and, even with its continuing evolution. these social justice educators find it a useful and operationalized construct for the work they do in their classrooms and in the community. As mentioned, the social justice educators in this study have come to focus its meaning around four themes. Social justice education is freedom: a liberating experience that provides them with the freedom to engage students around topics that push back on normative curriculum. This freedom allows them to create spaces of contestation that may be uncomfortable for both them as educators and students. However, this space allows them both to interrogate lived experiences, theirs and others, and to develop a critical perspective. The second theme discussed is social justice education is action. This action is taken on one's self and in the community. This action is about commitment to do something to improve the lives of others. The third theme discussed is social justice education is awareness. For these social justice educators, this is not only about content and knowledge but about a critical analysis of the information that is provided in order to be a conscious citizen. Lastly, these social justice educators believed that social justice education addresses power. This meaning making action is about dismantling oppression in all its forms and empowering students to think critically about structures and systems and to reimagine education that works for everyone. This meaning making is not only relevant for the work they do with others but how they have come to see their own identity within social justice education.

4.3   COLLECTIVE MEANING MAKING

The act of co-creating meaning defines collective meaning making. For the social justice educators in my study, their participation in creating meaning that connects to their experiences as social justice educators is vital to their identity construction and to the work they do as social justice educators. It is important first to understand what is meant by meaning-making. The concept is broad and draws on multiple traditions in sociology, anthropology, and other social sciences. Research studies stress the importance of meaning making in the classroom, institutional communities, and between cultures and individuals (Blee, 2007; Conle, 2004; Conle et al., 2006; Garmston & Wellman, 1998; Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2005; Nagda & Gurin, 2007). At its root is the proposition that humans constantly seek to understand the world around them and that the imposition of meaning on the world is a goal unto itself, a stimulus to action, and a site of contestation. As Kurzman (2004) states,

> Meaning includes principled understandings of right and wrong, cognitive understandings of true and false, perceptual understandings of like and unlike, social understandings of identity and difference, aesthetic understandings of attractive and repulsive, and any other understandings that we may choose to identify through our own academic processes of meaning-making. (p112)

Meaning making might be conceptualized in two distinctive and complementary theoretical frames. The individualistic refers to human perception and response. Humans may identify, appraise, and engage with identical conditions in quite different ways, depending on the meanings that they associate with a circumstance. A certain situation may evoke various responses from various people depending on the meanings that a person places on the aspects of the context of a specific situation. Meaning making, in this regard, is the mental processing that makes logic out of the senses. It is both personal to each individual and each moment and, at the same time, patterned across ever-changing sets of populations and instances. For the collective,

by contrast, meaning making refers to a combined understanding over interpretation. Institutions, groups, and "rituals offer a set of readymade, though often contradictory, interpretations that allow people to assimilate information into established categories of understanding" (Kurtzman, 1998, p. 6). In this case, the collective understanding of an instance creates a shared interpretation that may or may not lead to a collective action, which may take on various forms, depending on the shared meanings associated with the phenomenon (Hardy & Carlo, 2005).

At the heart of collective meaning making is its role in questioning and reinventing the status quo. For these teacher educators, to participate in the collective meaning making process around social justice education is to consider particular aspects of their social "being" (Byrne, 1998) inclusive of: participation rights and practices, critical dialogue, lived experiences, interpretation, reflective inquiry, personal and professional identity, and sharing practices. For these social justice educators, during the collective meaning making process in the environment of education, it is crucial that they establish a dialogue between their personal truths and the grand narrative of truths around education and social justice to create a more complete understanding of what world they have figured to be a part.

The concept of collective meaning making around social justice ideas comes to the foreground for these social justice educators in this study through their lived experiences. As one of my respondents indicated "…to be frank the nature of my lived experiences does not afford me the opportunity to separate, if you will, my academic or identity from my lived experiences" (Pricilla). Because of who she is and her personal as well as educational experiences the act of working for justice as an educator, academic, and a human that lives in the world cannot be disconnected. As Barbara states,

> I felt like I can really connect with many of those students and some of my
> experiences growing up poor in particular did shape my understanding of what's

fair in the world a little bit; especially how I got treated and started understanding wealth inequalities as I got older, even my own understanding of white privilege versus class privilege and how that changed.

These lived experiences connect to all aspects of their socially constructed identity. Yet, we know that not all people with a lived experience of poverty become social justice educators. Not even all educators who have lived with inequality in their personal lives chose to allow those experiences to shape their pedagogy. In order to link lived experience to social justice work, they must make meaning of these experiences. Their understanding of the meaning of social justice is in dialogue with not only their sense of justice but others' experiences as well in an active meaning making process.

Perhaps, the importance of collective meaning making around social justice can best be clarified through the practices of an individual meaning making experience.

> I would like to think that I've become more reflective about it, you know. I mean I think most people who do this work do it because they want to make a change in the world. They want the world to be fairer. They want the world to be a better place, right; and so, they have a conception about what that looks like and they teach from that place. I believe that sense requires us to be reflective. I think the danger is in not being reflective about that place. So, I would like to think that I've become more reflective about my own values and beliefs even guide the work that I do and I'd like to think that I've become more reflective about what other people bring to my own values and ideas. (Debbie)

Here Debbie's reflection on her experiences contribute to her understanding of the work she does and how she transmits those ideas in the classroom. Her reflective actions not only shape her classroom work, it shapes the way she communicates her ideas to the world. Like Debbie, Jose makes this link between social justice education and the reflection on his lived experiences, "I now see these moments as quintessential to my writings around education and justice in education."

This meaning making process is also about constructing spaces to dialogue around the issues of social justice education. In this way, meaning making goes from being an individual process of personal reflection to a shared process. "And so, what does transformation look like and how are we going to navigate that? I begin to structure it in the classroom and shift that dialogue to social justice" (Janet). As a social justice educator, they push the dialog in and out of the classroom for individuals to understand and think about issues of fairness, equality, and equity. As Sally states,

> Social justice education, in my view, takes a slightly different approach. It begins with democracy first of all, and asking students, what does that mean to them. By considering some of the major theorists who have composed understandings of democracy and then weighing ways in which we are conforming to those frameworks or ways in which those frameworks might be under duress in these current social and political milieu or environment. So, to me the theoretical impetus for each one is different.

It also is an investigate awareness around race, class, gender and sexual orientation.

> Social justice education I think is a process by which you help students decipher the primary stories within education, which I think are assimilation, pluralism, and expulsion. Then you help them identify how these develop and unfold in the classroom and their role in it. It's a process of being that problem poser that Freire talks about towards conscientizing future teachers who have had for the most part very narrow experiences, very limited experiences with children who live in poverty, with racialized populations, with students who are being tracked and identified from very early in their life in school. (Martha)

This exposure and awareness building can develop new understandings that can address the unconscious oppressions of others and of our individual selves that we may possess.

Ultimately, the hope of the collective meaning making is to help others create action around the idea of social justice. This tie back to their conceptualization of social justice as action. As mentioned above, these social justice educators' hope is to help students do more than simply connect their experiences with the experience of others but to construct ways to motivate and instate change.

> The whole thing is around liberatory education; helping and enabling people to become subjects in their own lives, not objects, not acted upon but actually taking action. And so that is another critical aspect where I see critical consciousness at the base of my framing around social justice... It's understanding yourself, understanding others, understanding society, and making sense of how you got there and why. What is the condition of your life and the condition of the lives of others? And based on that thinking about what needs to be changed and can you be the person to make that change. (Walter)

These social justice educators, in this meaning making process, come to understand. They come to understand themselves, society, and others. The coming to understand is not static. There exists a connection through self, society, and others. It is dynamic and collective. They understand that this meaning is shifting as others enter and exit the dialogue.

4.4   EXPERIENCE WITH IMPLEMENTATION

Currently, there exist no real guidelines or rules to implementing social justice education in the classroom. Instead classroom pedagogy is made with their and with others' various aesthetic experiences, experiences that are qualitatively different from everyday experiences and like other exceptional states of mind (Marković, 2012, p. 1). These experiences are moments that are reflective experiences framed by the individual; they can be educational (curricular and co-curricular), training, personal, and professional (classroom, outside of classroom, projects). These experiences lead to new practices and frames within social justice education as well as new and unique implementation strategies. This pedagogy is also informed by scholars and educators who are working to advance social justice principles and empower other educators (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997; Allen, 1999; Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Goodman, 2001; Griffiths, 2003; Makler & Hubbard, 2000;

Vincent, 2003). These scholars/educators advance arguments promoting social justice and democratic schools; address issues related to teacher education; and provide exemplars of democratic classrooms and social justice oriented classroom practices. Therefore, the implementation of the pedagogy can vary from one person to another.

These variations in pedagogy have led to contention and criticism that can create barriers to successful implementation. The social justice educators in this study recognize that there is an assortment of challenges that need to be overcome and these challenges differ based upon the context of the educational environment. The very process of self-reflection that is inherent in the transformational practice can function as a barrier for educators who are interested in becoming a social justice educator. "The action one takes on oneself can be difficult. It requires an honesty and criticism that can be very hard to do; however, it is necessary to do this work" (Ashley). However, the barriers for the social justice educators in this study also come from external circumstances. These external barriers are focused around three fundamental areas of resistance: classroom space, institutional structure, and professional peers.

4.4.1   Classroom space of resistance

Several authors have explored the idea of resistance in the classroom space (Cochran-Smith, 2004, Ladson-Billing, 1996; Nieto, 2000b; Ukpokodu, 2003). These authors indicate that student resistance in the classroom space can be a powerful obstacle for enacting a liberating curriculum. Like these scholars, the social justice educators in my study have encountered student resistance in the classroom space and have developed successful approaches to overcome this resistance. Shoshana Felman (1982), explains that resistance to learning and knowing is a "refusal to know"

that involves "not so much [a] lack of knowledge [or]…simple lack of information but the incapacity — or refusal — to acknowledge one's own implication in the information" (p. 30).

In exploring resistance, I use Felman's (1982) construction to frame the experiences of these social justice educators. The disagreement to learning and knowing, as Felman (1982) discusses, is what these teacher educators are facing in their courses. Resistance is not simply a student's disagreement with the classroom design or pedagogy. A student can participate with the course material and disagree with what is being presented. This resistance involves premature disengagement and refusal to engage. "We have a hard time with student resistance. They say things like 'why do we have to talk about this stuff, you hate men. You are trying to make me gay. You are trying to make me go against the way I was brought up.'" (Ashley). These accusations reveal the student's premature belief that these ideas are here to change them in some way or attack their preexisting ideals. It is this premise that inhibits the students to step into the dialogical space. The student then establishes a defensive posture around issues of social justice.

The unique challenges that these educators encounter regarding engaging students around issues of social justice can only be understood within the context and complexities of this unique type of student disengagement. These challenges come from students who may not have experienced systemic oppression and are systemically privileged students. Because they do not experience systemic oppression and because the frameworks through which they interpret their experience support their beliefs, these students often enter such courses with resentment and resistance.

> We just need good teachers… My teaching cohort is mostly white, mostly middle class. And again, that doesn't make them bad folks. I like my students. They're good people. I am not being judgmental but, what that means is that, when this is my population, there is a higher likelihood that I am getting students who don't

get the cultural stuff. They have a harder time seeing the value behind social justice teaching. So, I spend more time pushing back against their resistances, like that becomes the focus of my work, instead of really having more expansive conversations and curriculum about what it means to be a social justice educator. (Walter)

As Walter indicates, student resistance in the classroom space affects the classroom discourse and impedes the development of a more nuanced understanding and dialog around issues impacting education. This resistance suppresses the growth of the students in the classroom. In addition, the social justice classroom requires the engagement with uncomfortable content. Student resistance blocks social justice education by attempting to remove the educator's freedom to discuss certain issues and ask certain questions. The students are effectively saying "no, you can't" which becomes a barrier to social justice as freedom. Similarly, it is a refusal to become more aware, which, as established above, is a prerequisite for social justice as action. Therefore, student resistance in the classroom space is a more serious concern for social justice educators than it might be for instructors working with more traditional content.

Another type of resistance takes the form of believing that oppression is an artifact of the past. Here students argue that society has evolved and oppression and all other "isms" have been dismantled and they, the student, are also developed and those past issues no longer exist for their generation. This is the claim of being "post racial".

I think, one of my students really said it. She said, I mean when she said this I realized what the problem was. She said, 'I don't know why we have to talk about this. We are not your generation! We were raised with diversity and we are going to be better teachers than you were on these issues.' And it just hit me that this idea of the post-racial had somehow already been embraced by certain generation of students who have, of course, never even lived in "the racial", right! (Martha)

Yet, they maintain a deficit narrative of communities of marginalized people.

It was really stunning to hear, you know, to hear this from a 19-year-old. Also, hearing a 19-year-old say, 'You know the parents don't read to them. The kids there and nobody is teaching them anything.' Just realizing how much privilege

they had, right! How much, that at 19, they could make these very broad declarations about communities, families, and about themselves, about their capacities and their competencies. (Martha)

In avoiding the reality of systemic oppression, the student can then blame the marginalized community and families within the community. Their blame on the community protects them from confronting their own systemic privileged and helps them believe that any advantage they possess is merited or normal. This is a particularly troubling barrier for social justice educators because it prevents them from accomplishing the goal of social justice as awareness.

The resistance of students not only plays out in the classroom but can influence the operation of the institution and how faculty teach. For many of these social justice educators, the effects of possible litigation can discourage their method to social justice. In terms of race, for instance, students often resist interrogating what it means to be a part of a privileged group and have acted on faculty who even discuss the topic of privilege.

> …increasingly, there's a fear that we will get sued by people for just using the word privilege. So, I've had several colleagues who have been involved with lawsuits from students who felt as if they were discriminated against because someone talked about white privilege for example. And it's a fascinating discussion to me because we've talking about gender privilege forever so, you know, I don't know where these more recent lawsuits are headed and what it means for us on a more global scale or national scale but I think that's one fear my colleagues have. (Dennise)

The concern that their pedagogy is under legal scrutiny and that a social justice disposition can create such resistance as to be subject to legal action is a real fear of these social justice educators. This concern can be stifling to social justice work and can create hesitation by others who are thinking about adopting a social justice disposition. If social justice educators can be forced to change their pedagogy by legal action, they are unable to enact social justice as addressing power.

For the social justice educators of color their own body can be a space of resistance for students. In her study, Juanita McGowan (2000) found that faculty of color indicated that, when their instructors were from minority racial groups, White students were more likely to critique their classroom effectiveness, challenge their authority, have a lower level of respect, and report their concerns and critiques to department chairs. For these social justice educators of color, student racial bias can play out in their classrooms in various ways. For Jose, his race can mark his discussion around social justice issues as anger or hostility for students.

> In terms of social justice work, I was the only voice in the classroom and so, for white students, who get uncomfortable it then becomes interpreted as the angry Puerto Rican professor and so they are resistant to any conversation that pushes them to reflect on their own practices of how they benefit from white privilege. And so it's a very resistant space in there.

For Robert, his race can be a distraction to the dialogue in the classroom and has placed students on the defensive which has caused them to question much of the instruction in his course.

> There's often students, at least one in the class, who always wants to challenge me… This term, there was a [white male] student who was very resistant. I think he didn't trust me enough to go where I was going to go in the course. And so, I realized that it wasn't about maybe my knowledge, right? He wasn't questioning the level of my knowledge. He didn't trust me as a person to guide him through the course.

As Robert experienced, this student's challenges had nothing to do with his knowledge of the course material. Instead, it had everything to do with the student's perception that he couldn't trust Robert since he was a faculty member of color. As a result, for Robert, this student did not trust his ability to teach him. The intersection of the social constructed identities of faculty members of color and the content of social justice education can create a site of resistance by students.

It is important to note that not all students of privilege resist. Some might resist at first but then welcome dialogue and become willing to explore the sources of systemic oppression even when this means they must consider their own accountability and complicity.

> I may be in predominately white institutions. A lot of my classes are diverse in terms of racial demographic… For white students, it's the first time where they are not the dominate voice. They're in a position where it's time for them to listen. It's been successful, I've had white males in my class who at a critical point in the semester when I would ask them what are their thoughts on whatever topic we're discussing. I remember one white guy saying, "You know what, this is not the time for me talk; this a time where I need to listen and understand what this experience is and so I will remain silent." And so, I think that was a critical learning point for that white student and I think that's social justice work. (Jose)

Jose recalls a moment where a student who has been historically privileged took the time to hear and learn about the experiences of those from marginalized communities. This student was willing to be open to listen and be a part of the dialogue around social justice idea. As Wayne states, "…I have some really radical white students who really get it, who are on board, and they're awesome. I can't wait for them to be teachers…" The experiences of some historically privileged students to understand and embrace social justice pedagogy can and do happen in the classroom.

Even with these encouraging experiences, the social justice educators in this study have encountered more resistance from students to this curriculum than acceptance. As Janet explains, "Yet students are so certain that their perspective is correct and are so convinced of their own moral innocence and lack of privilege, that they are reluctant to even consider a critical exploration of the viewpoints they have been raised to believe." While this may be true of students in other types of courses, it is particularly troubling in social justice oriented courses because student resistance in the classroom space runs counter to the goals of social justice as freedom, as awareness, as action, and as an examination of power.

4.4.1.1 Strategies to address student resistance in the classroom space

For these social justice educators, dealing with classroom dynamics is part of the course content. They interact with a diverse student population which requires attention to classroom interactions and strategies that provide students with the pedagogical comfort and safety to engage respectfully and fully. These social justice educators understand that their classrooms are part of the larger social world, thus structural inequalities in the larger society are reproduced in the classroom in terms of power and privilege. Over time they have adopted and revised strategies to create challenging and safe classroom spaces that encourage students to examine and bring to awareness the power dynamics supporting systems of oppression and privilege.

One strategy these educators use is incorporating writings from a range of scholars. They tend to shy away from textbooks and expose students directly to the work of social justice scholars, especially scholars from less dominant groups. Pricilla explains,

> So, I like to use in my course, I stand by the use of scholars who provide a counter narrative to schooling which creates also cognitive dissidence because most teachers go into schools because they had a great experience and they can't image that anybody else didn't have a great experience.

By incorporating the voices of many scholars, she can demonstrate that experiences of exclusion aren't isolated but that many have had these experiences. Giving students a range of reading materials also increases the chance that a student will find one reading that resonates with them and acts as an entry point into the conversation.

Another strategy used by social justice educators is individualizing instruction. These educators have to react to the unpredictable and ever-changing dynamic in the classroom to keep students engaged despite their resistance. This requires a willingness to introduce new material and disseminate material in a range of ways so as to meet the needs of particular students. Dennise explains how she individualized her instruction:

> I deal with it by being very purposeful; and, individualizing instruction as much as I can. So, when students are in the classroom and they make a comment, that may on the surface sound like they are just being resistant to the subject, I will always try to offer another reading, another text; or, I will pull up another video clip. …to try to reach that particular person with that issue at that point in time wherever they are. And I might not do it in class; but I'll send it to the student individually or I'll post it in Blackboard, so if anybody else wants to look at it, they can.

Here an open dialog is created around the various narratives that arise in the classroom. The voices of the students become a part of the curriculum in an individualized way. The social justice educator does not shut down opposing narratives but provides counter narratives that ask students to question their own perspectives. They add material they hadn't planned to use if a student seems to need it. In this way, these social justice educators confront narratives of resistance in subtle yet impactful ways that make sense for the students and are not designed to alienate any one student.

Another strategy that these social justice educators have adopted is the approach of one-on-one meetings. These meetings are designed to provide the students with the opportunity to voice their concerns with the curriculum and perhaps understand concepts they are struggling with.

> One other approach I have taken; but, it's a little bit different. When I have students, who are pretty outspoken and resistant, I've learned over time just to schedule a meeting with them right away and talk with them. I found that that does a lot of good. (Barbara)

This approach also works for Amber,

> Well, I think there's probably a couple of things. First is just dealing with individual student resistance and sometimes you can meet one-on-one with students and work through it and hear what their concerns are and talk to them…

These social justice educators recognize that no one strategy is going to have an impact on all students; however, a combination of approaches can greatly influence the way students

engage within the social justice classroom. By bringing in a range of voices through course readings, individualizing instruction, and holding one-on-one meetings, the social justice educator can help students tentatively suspend their beliefs and ideologies and stay engaged in the discussion. Also, these strategies convey to the student that resistance will not derail learning and is welcome. That any form of resistance will be a part of the learning experience.

4.4.2   Institutional resistance

Another form of resistance these educators have described can be classified as institutional resistance. This resistance combines the departmental/school structure, college/university structure and/or state/federal government policy structure. Each of these operate individually as a barrier; however, collectively they can create large systemic blockades to the implementation and transformation of social justice education.

The idea of institutional resistance to transformative pedagogies is no secret (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Juárez et al., 2008). For many social justice educators in this study, the institutional resistance that emerged can be categorized under two subthemes: ideological resistance and philosophical resistance. These two subthemes interestingly manifest themselves within all structures that impact teacher education.

As described above the identity work that these social justice educators have done on becoming a social justice educator required a critical evaluation of personal ideologies and individual perspectives. This work also should be done at an institutional level, according to these social justice educators, "Schools of education must look at their values and missions to engage with this type of work [social justice]. We have to engage with the communities we serve

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and we have to do some self-reflective work to see what type of institution we want to be" (Janet).

Many of the social justice educators in this study believe that although there are some welcoming spaces within their department or school, there is still a lack of will to take a stance within the full teacher education curriculum. Some of the social justice educators voiced their concerns about a lack of integration of social justice ideas across their discipline. Martha shared, ''Once students take the one required course, they are done, and no other courses support or connect to what we teach [social justice education].'' Others found their departments or institutions hostile to social justice education. ''One of the biggest challenges…'' explained Debbie, ''…is adequate support from the department, which does not value social justice education and is outright hegemonic in its philosophy and practices.'' Ashley adds,

> Cause nobody else wants to do anything with social justice work! The Social Foundations folks are filling in the gaps in our program. It's just like when you look at an alternative school that does behavior support. They have the students who have the highest needs, they are usually 100% Black or Latino, right? High poverty kids. People say "oh you want to do that type of work there? Oh good, good for you. You can have whatever program you want to have, just keep them away. We don't want them." And it's the same in regard to our content. People are like, "ok, you handle that!" So, I guess, yeah, there is some, we're marginalized in that way that it's kind of like, here is teacher education and here is what we have to do according to the state; and, then you people you do your social justice thing.

Several of the social justice educators indicated this notion of marginalization.

> What tends to happen is that the discourse in our department begins to avoid or isolate the voices of social justice educators. Within departmental meetings we are overlooked. We become lepers in our institution. The untouchables. (Matt)

> …even though I think that most people will say that they value social educators or people who educate for social justice, I also think that when it comes right down to it, those scholars get pigeonholed; they get marginalized and in many ways, it becomes something that may be positioning them in a particular way within an institution…can result in them not getting tenure for example. It may be part of what is a challenge to your tenure. (Debbie)

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Also, each of the social justice educators believe that there exists a sequestering of social justice educators from the general population of teacher education. The ideological differences are perceived as so great that there does not appear to be any value of the work they do beyond their own classroom.

> It [social justice education] doesn't have cultural capital. It violates the crappy hidden narrative that makes our society the way it is. It creates resentment when we bring those inequities to light. It violates the will, it often violates the will of the people in charge. Not always. There are social justice people all the way up the ladder. If you can get under them, your path is much much much easier; because then you receive support and understanding around the work. (Matt)

It is not simply a lack of departmental or institutional support, that can harm the work of a social justice educator. It is the lack of administrative guidance and vision across the institution. An institutional devaluing of the work can create a hostile environment that creates resistance by peers within the department.

The other type of institutional resistance is more philosophical. This philosophical resistance operates on a sociopolitical level. This includes neoliberal state and federal mandates that impact teacher education and the conservative call of accountability and control found in the educational milieu today.

One of the biggest concerns that many of these social justice educators are facing is the implementation of standardized testing, such as the edTPA, formally called the TPA (Teaching Performance Assessment), to make teacher education "more professional". It operates like a national Bar Exam for teachers. Social justice educators' concerns about this approach to teacher preparation are numerous; however, one of their many issues is the lack of effort teachers need to apply to understanding the circumstance of a student's life.

> …the only thing that the Foundations folks have to do with the edTPA is making sure that the students [preservice teachers] can write a background of the student

[within their classroom]. The edTPA does not require them to go into such background that they can do like a critical sociologic analysis of the kid; but, they do want the student to be aware of racial and ethnic background, languages, class and ability and stuff like that; but, it's hardly anything… (Ashley)

Walter adds,

The edTPA is complicated, I am very critical of it. I always try to buttress my critique with an understanding that there are people out to kill Teacher Education; and, I see edTPA as an attempt by some good folks trying to stop that, trying to professionalize teaching in way and create potentially a teaching Bar Exam. That's what the edTPA is. The faculty here are really progressive; we all teach this stuff [social justice education] in our classes. It's all there; but, then you look at our students edTPA and it [social justice education disposition] doesn't come out. There is no social justice; there's no talk about culturally relevant pedagogy, it's just not there! So, for our students the edTPA feels like, for some of our students at least, it's not an accurate reflection of who they are as teachers because we have a lot of our students who want to be social justice educators and they can't expect that on the edTPA.

For Walter, there is a relationship between the edTPA implementation and the policy initiatives that are impacting public schools.

…I believe this is ultimately related to the actual context of what's happening in public schools right now, in terms of educational reform, in terms of high stakes testing, in terms of value added measurements for teacher evaluations, all this really junky reform that's killing teaching; killing curriculum. It's killing social justice and a space for social justice in the actual classrooms. (Walter)

For many of the social justice educators like Walter, it is these philosophical ideas that are creating resistance to social justice education within both preK-12 settings as well as teacher education programs. This type of resistance requires a pushing back from social justice educators. "I think our audit culture is the biggest barrier in K-12 and teacher preparation programs…I think unless and until we successfully push back at accountability as currently practiced, we're hamstrung…" (Amber)

Another idea that can be categorized as a part of the institutional resistance is the structure of the institution itself. The ways in which faculty members are evaluated as well as the

requirements needed to be considered a faculty member function as a form of resistance. Not all of the social justice educators in this study brought this idea to surface of the conversation; however, it did manifest itself in several ways.

The question of accountability is not only for teachers in preK − 12. It is a very powerful truth that faculty members receive feedback from their students in the form of student evaluations. Barbara Ham raises the question of the value of teacher evaluation for social justice educators.

> The other piece is at my institution right now there is this heavy emphasis on the student evaluation. You know when you are teaching class like this you're creating, you want, you should be, if you're teaching these classes well, you should be creating cognitive dissonance for your students. Where they are hearing things, they hadn't heard before. Thinking about things. Being pushed in how they understand and think about the way the world works. And some of that cognitive dissonance should be showing up in your teacher evaluations. If all your teaching evaluations are 100% positive, you have to wonder, are you pushing students as much as you should be. (Barbara)

As a social justice educator, they are creating spaces where students are questioning and engaging with diverse perspectives and where these perspectives run into conflict with that they have been taught in other settings. This can be uncomfortable and disconcerting. The resentment to this uncomfortability can and have manifested itself in poor teacher evaluations, which can impact the social justice educator's standing at the institution.

Another form of resistance can be the entry process in becoming a faculty member within the academy. Jose explains,

> In terms of the institutional space, you have places that claim to have a social justice framework and to focus on issues of equity but then they still reproduce the same systemic white supremacy framework on what an academic or intellectual is. Like, for example, I've seen positions open that will say. 'Hey, we're looking for scholars who have a social justice framework, who are dedicated to issues of equity' yet, it becomes all about the productions of the academic; 'well let me see your publications; let me see your conference presentations; let me see your scholarship'…

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Jose recognizes the inconsistent nature of social justice disposition and academic requirements. He continues,

> I think that becomes an interesting tension that exists there. The institutions talk about wanting folks who have a social justice framework; yet, they have folks that talk about social justice but don't understand what that means. I believe that it is bout connecting within the community spaces.

For Jose, the evaluation process for institutions that claim to want educators with a disposition is unbalanced. The argument of an evaluation simply on scholarly work without community work is seen as a structural resistance for social justice educators because it is not in keeping with the goals of social justice as action.

4.4.2.1 Strategies addressing institutional resistance

For these social justice educators, the strategies for addressing institutional resistance are complex and varied. One of the main spaces in which these social justice educators confront this type of resistance is within their role as a faculty member. As Walter discusses,

> I also, as a part of my vision of social justice education, I see myself, and this is also wrapped up in my identity of what folks sometimes call being "academic activist" or/and "educational activist", right, I take very seriously the fact that I have a PhD which grants me a certain amount of privilege and so I need to use that privilege to help essentially advance a politic of social justice publicly. And so my work talking with teachers and parents is part of it. I feel very committed to essentially translating research for public audiences. So when there was a big fight about charter schools here in [in my state] a couple of years ago, I wrote an op-ed that basically explained a lot of the basics of research around charter schools just pushing back against the claims that proponents of charters schools were putting out there very publicly. (Walter)

Walter's use of his doctorate and his position as an educator provides him the authority to push back on these ideas that confront social justice educators. There is also action taken by others in moving a social justice agenda. "When there are educational policy issues out and around that are really impacting the public; that are being promoted. I think I see my job to help promote an

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evaluation of those policies for my colleagues, students and the community" (Robert). Public application of research findings can fulfill the goals of social justice as action and count as academic activity which meets the more conventional expectations of the institution.

An additional strategy is of promotion. Matt believes advancing in the profession where decisions can be made by you as a social justice educator is a way to change policy.

> When I was hired here as a program director, which pretty much provided me absolute control over those choices. So, I, my agency had changed but my core concepts of social justice had not. I'm continually developing awareness of other ways in which I can disassemble the hierarchy and make the work relevant in terms of the teacher experience. (Matt)

For Matt, this allowed him to construct the narrative he wanted around social justice ideals and to provide him with the authority to grow his department. It made use of the hierarchical structure of higher education institutions toward social justice goals.

4.4.3   Peer/ colleagues resistance

The final barrier for these social justice educators came from peers. These are typically co-workers and other faculty members within the program, school, or departments. For the social justice educators within this study, the balance between maintaining your scholarship and identity as a social justice educator and creating collegial relationships is a challenging one. As Jackie explained,

> So, I think, you know, depending on what side of the profession, is it on the inside working with collogues versus working with my students, I think in some way I have to wear a little bit of two different hats because it is pretty easy to piss off collogues around some of these issues. A lot of them are very conservative and so…I learned to pick and choose and try to work on the issues that I know there will be some traction.

Jackie works to balance her integrity as a social justice educator and her peer relationships. She realizes that there exists a conflict between her values as an educator and her building relationships with her colleagues. Jackie's, as well as many of the other social justice educators', colleagues react to social justice pedagogy in the same way as many of their students. Pricilla explains,

> …many of my colleagues, they have the same issues as my students. I would expect because people have doctorates that you would think that they would know a little better; but they don't. They function in the same kinds of ways, particularly in the areas of whiteness and hega-normativity, homophobia, all of those kinds of things.

Barbara, like many of the other social justice educators of color, feels the sting of this push back, not only as a praxis but to her identity as a complete educator.

> But to get administration and other faculty who don't teach those classes to understand that can be challenging and it can create a lot of problems, especially for faculty of color teaching about these topics. Because, it is especially difficult for faculty of color to teach about these topics, because white faculty and students in particular will automatically view them as biased, just because they're not white.

Priscilla goes further by explaining,

> Where it impacts me outside of the classroom is having micro-aggressions, I really don't like the word micro-aggression; because they don't feel like micro at all. It feels like a full-frontal assault sometimes. For me micro minimizes, you know. I do understand that they are little bites all over the place that I experience not only in the classroom but outside of the classroom with my colleagues. Because it is your areas of research to bring up these kinds of issues, you're not a team player; you're not a part of the community. I just wrote a piece on community and developing community and this whole very Eurocentric way of understanding community, where you play nice and you're not really nice at all. So those kinds of issues have impact. All the literature that talks about faculty of color and their experiences of isolation, which mirrors the experiences of black students, for me, these are all the impact. If you are always talking about social justice, you know, people get tired of it, they really do. They don't want to hear all that stuff all the time, you know. (Priscilla)

The decentering or more specifically the delegitimizing of the social justice education along with the social justice educator creates a space of tension and contestation. The demeaning of the contributions of social education to the department as well as the student learning is an experience that many of these educators confront.

> I think couple things happen. You are either labeled as, you know, being ideological, you know, kind of a bully or lately I feel like I get cast as the women who is really into current events and is seen as a 'light weight', you know. We were having a recent faculty meeting and I said something, because we exit interview our students, and they were saying, 'Students aren't remembering the concepts and we need more', I mean literally, someone was arguing for more multiple-choice exams. And then said, 'Too bad we can't add corporal punishment.' But he was joking, but it was not funny, right? And I said, you know, well when I exited interviewed my students they remembered everything that I had attached to something that was either visual or a video, something that was concreate, so maybe they need the concrete in order to have the abstract conversation. So later in the discussion, he looks at me and was like, 'Maybe I didn't use enough pictures!' and sort of gestured to me like, 'You lady with the pictures'. (Jackie)

This dismissal becomes about not only the faculty member but about the rigor of the work and research being conducted.

> I think there's a perception that it [social justice education] is too political. I think there is fear that the conventional wisdom around promotion and tenure at [my institution] is that student course evaluations, the three questions that matter are the ones that ask about rigor: quality of course, difficulty of course, and, complexity of thinking or something. So, what counts is this rigor piece, narrowly defined. There's nowhere in the promotion and tenure materials do they ask you to state or identify a statement on teaching or a statement on research. That's not what is asked for, nor, is it seemingly rewarded…but that's the perception, that somehow entering into social justice language risks diminishing the academic rigor of the institution or of the liberal arts education. (Amber)

The social justice educators in this study face the question of rigor as it relates to their work in social justice education. The balance of asking questions and engaging in deliberative process to unpack issues of justice, power, and oppression often face questions of rigor, in a culture of standardization. For those in the academe who root themselves in this disposition, social justice

education may not measure up to the typical construct of education. They may see social justice education as a praxis that "just upsets people or having an agenda to convince them all to be good communists" (Debbie).

With the rise of policies, including high stakes testing, curricular standardization and market-driven competition, which thrive on what Freire (2006) referred to as "banking concepts" of education, for some social justice educators what may rise to the surface is a concern that explicit pedagogy about social justice is dangerous to their career and can be interpreted as a challenge to the institution.

> I think here, increasingly, there's a fear that we will get sued by people for just using the word privilege. So, I've had several colleagues who have been involved with lawsuits from students who felt as if they were discriminated against because someone talked about white privilege for example. … I don't know where these more recent lawsuits are headed and what it means for us on a more global scale or national scale but I think that's one fear my colleagues have. (Dennise)

This fear of the possible pushback that may arise in broaching topics such as power, equity, inequity and privilege, can make colleagues within the department uncomfortable and less likely to support this approach to curriculum. For others, it is not simply about the preserving safe space of academic freedom, it is more ideological. "They just don't want to move from their own perspective on the world. They have benefited from certain privileges and just can't come to shine a light on them." (Walter)

The social justice educators have come to recognize that the implementation of social justice education is challenging and exhausting work.

> And then the stress, you know it causes a lot of stress where it can really wear on your soul after a while because you get beat up in the classes and some students really don't like you! That's not the situation I want to create but they don't and it can really wear on you after time…So, I think there is the workplace issue and how you are evaluated, your colleagues not understanding the stress of it, and how do you work with students who are really resistant to the topic. (Barbara)

Also, there can exist retribution for doing social justice work.

> I used to think, well I had hoped that my colleagues were different; but, when I became faculty, I was like, oh, these are the same kinds of things. Except for these people, one group has control over of course they pay you back in the student evaluation; the faculty pay you back in DFSC [Department Faculty Status Committee] so it's consistent. When you certainly walk, talk and breath social justice, you will be isolated. You know, folk will get tired of you; you will be identified as a hell raiser, be under surveillance all those kinds of things. (Pricilla)

This retribution can come because, as a social justice educator, they bring to light the issues of inequality within education. They can arise because of suggestions to colleagues' curriculum to include more people of color into the readings. A dedication to social justice education can also have an influence on future research and funding.

> It's a contrarian approach that can be met with hostility and fear and the trick is more than in the approach, it's in how do you create a path for yourself that allows you to do what needs to be done while taking away your access to the environment where you can do it, which is basically your classroom or your school. I think anytime you go toward social justice you're going to run into either philosophical issues or financial issues because certainly money doesn't flow, funding doesn't flow according to social justice lines. (Matt)

Whatever the case, these social justice educators understand the difficult dynamic in which they operate; yet, they continue to do this work. They make the commitment as Jose explains, "After understanding that these are real lives and this was not just work. There became a different level of investment for me. This is just not a dialogue that I turn off when I go home. I have to live through these same dialogues daily."

4.4.3.1 Strategies addressing peer resistance

When encountering resistance from colleagues, these social justice educators have taken approaches that empower them and, at the same time, challenge the status quo ideology of their peers. Although they do understand this is a narrow tightrope, it is one they are wholeheartedly willing to traverse.

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The social justice educators in this study recognize that their colleagues are victims of a hegemonic system that reinforces the status quo of privilege; and, they also recognize that the work to overcome these forces take time, effort, and compassion, "It's really hard to unlearn what you have been learning. There's a loss, you know and people need time to grieve over that" (Ashley). Pricilla explains further,

> So, you have all those issues working, my black body, having education, having counter narratives, speaking about the educational experiences, in addition to these folks in my class, these teachers who have never, who have had very little meaningful experiences with people of color because they've grown up in these isolated segregated silos, weather they are rural or suburban. They've been indoctrinated with the rhetoric of white supremacy; but, they may not even be aware of…

In order to facilitate the growth of others, specifically their peers, these social justice educators have adopted one or all of these three approaches to perhaps overcome or maybe subvert this resistance. The approaches are direct action, participatory action, and avoidance.

In addressing their resistance, some of these social justice educators employ direct action to confront the resistance to social justice education by their peers. "I try for my colleagues to really put it into some kind of context, understanding that everything I taught is valid. Everything I taught is legitimate knowledge. The research I and others do impact the lives of students. We are promoting equitable justice for all. There is nothing subversive or terroristic about that." (Harry) The direct action approach is to confront the resistance head on. To address the quality and rigor of the social justice educator and to bring those who are resisting into a dialogue around social justice even if this creates an uncomfortable context. As Jose states,

> So, in terms of social justice work I root it in that I am part of this long history, a lineage of civil rights movements. I think back Bayard Rustin, the Young Lords, to the Ghetto Brothas, all these different people and individuals and groups that fought for civil rights for marginalized and exploited communities and see the sacrifice and the resistance that they had. By me remaining silent, for me what that means is that their work was done in vain. So that pushes me to use my voice

and agency regardless of those who I make uncomfortable whether it's institutions, faculty or students. I use my voice and enter the conversation. It does put me in awkward positions sometimes, because you have to learn how to negotiate it terms of pushing forward that social justice work…

For them direct action is about getting your voice heard and pushing back to the resistance of social justice education, recognizing that there may be a cost.

Another strategy that these social justice educators have employed is participatory action. This strategy is about including the resisters in the action of social justice work. Here the social justice educators want to connect with peers in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to students and the institution. The aim is to be collaborative and reflective.

> Well, it's hard to tell, first there are some people who don't want us to mess up what they have to do. You know they're pressed…people get protective, they get stressed out and they are just racing to comply and they are not really thinking about what's important; they are just doing what they have to do. And so any suggestion that they do something that they don't have to do is blocked. But we want to be collaborative with them. We are supposed to look at the content of the each other's classes and make suggestions, our suggestions aren't often welcomed, I guess that is a draw back. (Ashley)

Debbie best describes it this way,

> I think first is the will, my colleagues must for have the will to want to be open to enter the dialogue for this type of work…The second thing, I think you have to be ready to develop the skills…you have to be able to develop those skills in such a way that people are willing to go there with you and if you're not skilled or if you're not constantly developing those skills you can end up, I think, doing more harm than you do good. I also think you also must have the support. So, to work collaboratively around these ideas and issues, you must have an administration that understands that the work is hard. It's hard work and people don't always like to do the kind of work that you are asking them to do. And I think that it really takes a commitment. You and your peers must be willing to take the stand that this is who you are going to be. That no matter the challenges we are going to take up these issues.

This action requires self-discipline and focus on the part of the group. The challenges that are encountered may not be easy to overcome; however, the focus is the justice work. The goal is

about collaborating and engaging peers to advance social justice issues. To create dialogue and develop strategies to address issues of injustice.

The final strategy, avoidance, is one that is adopted as a last resort. Although several of the social justice educators were reluctant to utilize this strategy initially, they recognize its usefulness in their social justice work. In some contexts, the use of this strategy can be the most appropriate approach. Avoidance is not simply to run away from the issue. It is an attempt to read the current conditions and disengage to protect the integrity of the group or to reorganize to engage at a later moment. It is also to recognize where the patterns of power exist and to find their locus of control. Harry explains this idea,

> …one of the things I have a responsibility to teach students about oppression in such a way he or she can keep his or her job. Because when you go into school systems, very often you don't have social justice administrators…you have to have this conversation and provide the students with strategies…you have to at least make them aware that not everyone thinks this way and if they don't you have to help them ask, what are the possibilities and what are the limitations and what can they do to continue in social justice work? We have these conversations and that's the topic I usually end the course with, putting it into some kind of context…Making it clear that they will be in the world of work and not everyone will think from a social justice framework and some things that we do, we have to do on a micro level and that micro level is our classroom. We won't be able to influence what's happening at the larger level; but, we can have some kind of influence…and this has been important even for me. Even as a professor, I may not stand up in the faculty meeting with everybody on campus in one room and voice my opinion for a lot of good reasons, especially if you're untenured, right? That's called like sabotage…; but, what I can do; I can find spheres of influence...I can work in different ways to influence policies and practices. You got to understand that; well that's understanding power and power relations. (Harry)

As Harry sees it, it is critical to prepare future teachers who are interested in doing social justice work to address resistance. He speaks to future teachers not from a theoretical level but from a practical stance, one that understands the pros and cons of the implementation of this strategy.

The strategy of avoidance can create a complicated conflict. One of the roles of the social justice educator is as a voice for the marginalized; however, as a marginalized community within education at times the social justice voice is silent or at best redirected to an untouchable space, the classroom. For some of the social justice educators in this study the classroom is the locus of control. A space where faculty can "do their thing" as Jackie tells her students.

> I think this has been why, probably, I adopted a quiet voice within at least my institution. I think the faculty that really know me or know my students, know my aim; but, I don't, at this point in my career, at least feel out spoken enough to say, hey this is what I am doing. I try to walk that political line because each institution has a different feel…but for me, I am seen as the outlier…You end up doing what you tell your students not to do, which is go in the classroom, close the door and do your thing. Of course, that seems to negate everything else I teach them about collaboration…so I think it is complicated. (Jackie)

For Jackie in her current context and in her current professional state, she sees no benefit in engaging with her peers around issues of social justice. Her current focus is engaging with her students, to provide them with the information they need to be transformative educators. In her use of an avoidance strategy she is aware of the power structure and the cultural context in which she works. Aware of her position as "outlier," she is recognizing that what is more important is the work with the students. Jackie is also aware that she has allies in her current role.

Avoidance can be a very empowering and useful tactic in the social justice educators approach in dealing with resistance. This approach can provide the illusion that the social justice educator is putting off any conflict to resistance or perhaps the social justice educator has no power, but this is not the case. This allows social justice educators to re-center themselves and develop appropriate answers to possible questions. It places the engagement options in the hands of the social justice educator. As was mentioned above, the work of the social justice educator can be challenging, lonely, and stressful at times, and an avoidance strategy also allows the

social justice educator to reduce tension and stress, which enables them to continue working overtime.

These three strategies, direct action, participatory action, and avoidance, are not the only strategies in dealing with peer resistance discussed by the social justice educators; however, they are the approaches that cut across all of the feedback received as possible methods to address resistance by colleagues.

4.5   ELEMENTS OF BEING A SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATOR

During my discussions with these social justice educators it was clear that two elements were critical for them in their praxis as social justice educator, the deconstruction of power and the creation of a community action mindset. Although, the context and practice of these elements manifest themselves in various ways for my respondents the relationship to social justice education was evident. In discussing these elements in an earlier section, I connected these principles to the social justice educators meaning making of social justice, here I relate these elements to being a social justice educator, which was invaluable to the identity work they had done. All but one of the social justice educators in my study discussed the interconnectedness of these elements to social justice education. I will discuss his dissimilarity along with my discussion of the other social justice educators. Although this social justice educator was an outlier from the others, he demonstrated a strong commitment to social justice education.

One of the first elements of being a social justice education is asking what is the purpose of this work. Why do it? For these social justice educators, it is about the understanding of power and how power impacts schools and society. "I want it [social justice] to remain complex and I

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want it to be able to shift and move, but, generally, I think it asks questions related to power; questions and issues surrounding what is good; what is just; what is freedom" (Jackie). Like the work they did regarding their own identity it is important to come to examine their own power, be it in the classroom or in society.

> The social justice discipline reminds us to investigate our own personal agendas. So, whatever social location that we are tied to that gives us power, we need to step out of that to make sure that we are just not driving, you know, our own agenda. That we are not steamrolling all the students. (Ashley)

At the core of it, these social justice educators see social justice education as an investigation of power. As Jackie explains,

> For me social justice education is about, it's about power dynamics that are asymmetrical. We must recognize that if there is oppression somewhere there might have been oppressors. So, I think, yeah, social justice education for sure takes a much more critical social critique around issues of multiculturalism, diversity, language, ethnicity, etc.

Barbara explains it for her classroom context,

> In my classroom, I talk a lot about structure versus agency and so that they [students] start to understand the structural power issues in society like racism, patriarchy, homophobia, hetero-normativity those sorts of things that limit the options available to people, that not everybody has the same kinds of personal agency, and how power shifts it.

Dennise continues this idea,

> So, with our teacher education candidates, we are trying to instill in them or nurture in them an understanding of what equity means in the classroom. As a teacher, how can they create classroom environments that are attuned to issues of justice and fairness. Looking at all of those from a historical perspective and relating that history to what currently is going on in young people's lives. So, for me when I think about social justice for teacher education candidates, its more than just an understanding of or a knowledge of what equity mean or what justice or fairness mean. It's about teaching them how to respond when they see oppression in a child's life or in an educational experience…

Debbie also makes this connection to power and her students understanding of it.

Well, I think the first thing we should do is help people recognize power. What's interesting, this is a US framing of this, but, what's interesting is that we don't often talk about power or we don't talk about it in ways that are explicit. So, I think it's helpful to understand what we mean by power and helping students to begin to unpack that; and, I would say the same thing about privilege…

Addressing power and privilege and the issues surrounding them is, in practice and theory, at the center of social justice education work. The classroom space is the space to address inequality in our society based upon one's race, class, gender, sexuality, and other social identities.

The work of these social justice educators is to connect the classroom learning to classroom spaces, school spaces, and communities specifically as it relates to power. Amber explains,

> Part of that story though is pointing out a lot of the inequalities, the inequities, the injustices that exist in our local schools and nationwide. So, inviting students to see the disparities but not blame children and families, to see it in the larger socio-cultural, economic, political, cultural context…let's look at the experiences of those who have less agency and not in a deficit way; but, in just a, "how can things be done differently?" because students are aware of things like the achievement gap; but, I think headlines would invite them to blame families and kids instead of lots of other factors.

Amber continues this understanding of power as it relates to structures:

> Unfortunately, in education, it's really easy to point to inequality and injustice. I throw up school report card data and civil rights data and demographic data and land ownership data, you know? Like, you can paint a pretty graphic picture with just a set of data. You don't stop there. I think it's really easy to show it or to see it. I think the difficult thing is to ask, so what? and what am I going to do about it? I mean there are a couple of ways in responding to those questions. One, is there are writing assignments to invite students to reflect on their own power and privilege in the educational settings. Starting with things like readings from Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" to look at practices that reproduce this inequity. Two is to show different philosophies of education in action, you know, like, 'Here's a conservative agenda. Here's what it looks like in a classroom. Is that what we want?' Trying to make it personal…I try to challenge students both intellectually and personally to examine their experiences, consider how they are different than others; how others are potentially radically different and radically unjust. Then do the so what, what does this call me to do?

For these social justice educators, the connection between an understanding of personal narrative and power can be useful but can create cognitive dissidence for their students. As Harry explains,

> I try to move them to a postmodern way of understanding oppression that power exists everywhere, kind of Foucaultian sense. So, I actually introduce some different ways of thinking about how power exist in our society and how it shapes; and how it reflects the structures in our society. Often what I get is a response from students that pushes back any social identity power claim. Even using Bell's ideas of dominate/ subordinate identity. For them [students] you are either dominate or you are subordinate. Well that doesn't work! So I provide other ways of thinking about oppression. Well, you know, of course I introduced them to Paulo Freire, and kind of looking at his Marxists roots but I also look at the promise of Paulo Freire where he is really trying to get at these intersections and trying to move out of his sexist language and how power is not just with the dominate but with the subordinate. So, I also introduce them to James Scott's notion of resistance and kind of agency. So, I spend a lot of time thinking about different models for understanding oppression and power.

These social justice educators want students to have knowledge and consciousness but also to move towards "seeing teaching as an activist profession", as Walter explained. They would like their students to be aware and understand that education is multi-dimensional. In a broad sense they are asking students to look at various identities in society and how those identities have been erased, ignored, or privileged. In a specific and concrete way, they are asking students to examine what people have done in response to these inequities; and, once aware of power, privilege and oppression, to implement a response not only pedagogically but also in terms of policy implementation.

Fundamentally these social justice educators driving principle is not only to have teachers to develop a critical consciousness but to question power, their positionality, their identities, and the role of schools in reproducing inequalities. Their desire is for their students to understand that schools and communities can be sites of resistance and spaces for social justice. This requires an exploration of these sites and an examination of communities because "…in social justice we can look at neighborhoods, we can look at communities" (Robert).

In their commitment to community these social justice educators see themselves as well as their students as members of the larger local community, not simply the institutional community but the community in which the institution is embedded. Their work as a social justice educator is greatly connected to these communities and they see their praxis entrenched in these communities. For Jackie, the community is where her students experience their education.

> A lot of our classes are, well almost all of them, are imbedded in school buildings, which I think is unique. So, we actually meet on site at an elementary or middle school and that actually does me a whole lot of good because we are in a diverse district where most of our clinicals are. It's a school district that is 80 to 90 percent Latino, Hispanic. It is a national free and reduced lunch school because their ratios are so high so it's basically 100 percent free and reduced lunch. It has a ton of needs...it's just a really rough district and so that has helped me tremendously because, yeah, we have all this stuff I have to get through but the reality is let's just look around. You know, "tell me about the students you met with today, tell me about their families.

The goal is not about testing some hypothesis but to understand the community, to learn, to embrace. The community is not a sight of research but a space where real lives exist and are looking for some meaningful growth. As Jose explains,

> Then you have these institution spaces that talk about social justice but then you have folks involved that doesn't have the understanding of what that means. And I think that is connected to the community space because in the community space are just seen as sites of research. And nothing really happens for the community. They're left waiting because their expectations of the outcomes are different. They want to see some sort of change happening. We're in education so they want to see something impactful happen for their kids in schools or the communities in which the schools are situated but that never comes. You ever watch the "Wire"? So, I teach, in some of the courses I teach about schools in Baltimore and so my favorite scene, I want to say it's the very last episode of season four, I may be wrong; but, they have this program in the school they are working with the corner boys and they present the program to city hall to get extra funding to keep their program going. But you know city hall is like, "we'll get back to you." It becomes the bureaucratic run around. You have this professor from Maryland and you have the community board. The guy, he's like 'every time I open my mouth around here something bad happens'. The professor is like, 'No no no, this is going to make for great research.' The guy is like 'this is great for academics'. He is like, 'what are you going to study, a study?' Basically, the last thing he said was, 'Man, when does shit ever change.' So, I think that's the part that happens in the

institution is that all this is scholarship and research and will continue to bring our students to these sites but things never change for the communities.

Jose recognizes the care for the community a social justice educator must take. When students are embedded in the community as sites of research or discovery, it can be a challenging space, especially for those students who are not from these communities. Jose explains,

> I have done stuff in classes that sometimes I don't like to talk about it in terms of social justice work. Only because, even though a student will frame it as social justice work or other faculty who do similar things would frame it as social justice work, I still think it embodies this "white savior" complex and so I use these opportunities to let students wrestle through that. What does it mean to actually do socially responsible work? And then what does it mean to do work that kind of reproduces this "white savior" complex? So, it's something I let students wrestle with, that idea.

This concern requires pre-action that many of these social justice educators take with their students. They help students frame their experience. They assist students to understand their role in the community and why they are there.

> The last thing I would say when I think about a justice orientation is when we go into the community as…students…but it's easy to think about "fixing", "helping" communities. I try to make sure I say, "we're not fixing anybody; we are really learning from our community. So, try to interrupt any kind of 'I know and you don't!' entry into the community. (Amber)

Amber recognizes that students can at times enter communities with the "savior" identity. She helps students to be aware that their role is not to be a healer but a learner and to disrupt any bias or the superior identity of healer. This requires self-awareness and an awareness of the humanity of the community they are entering. There is also an awareness of their relationship to that community.

> I think the components of a social justice frame of reference consist of, for me as in most things, having a clear intellectual understanding of systems of oppression and the way that they work; the way that they interface with each other; the way that they maintain each other. Also, there's a component that's dispositional. I come in contact with so many people in the academy that have a language of social justice but don't live it. They don't understand about creating communities.

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> I want students to know there's a certain amount of integrity that you have when you are working with people and recognizing we do have biases and how they impact our automatic understanding, our implicit understanding of people and humanity. (Pricilla)

Part of a social justice disposition is to live it. To live with an understanding of systems of subjugation and their impact on people and communities and to explore the interaction of these systems and education. Pricilla asks her students to interrogate these systems and to see the power of these systems on communities. Amber, like the other social justice educators in this study, ask her students not only to interrogate these systems but to see themselves as members of the communities these systems influence.

> So, my primary goal is perspective-taking along with investigating saying [to her students], 'Look at the great places that exist and the great classrooms and teachers and this is our community.' The other part of my job, I teach in the program in education and I also work in our Service Learning program that's housed here in the program of education and so, as a part of that job, I am also very focused on inviting students to live in the community where they live! That they are not just [students of the institution]. That they are…residents for the time that they are here and to embrace that. (Amber)

Amber invites her students to see themselves as a part of the community, to "live" there, to connect, and to appreciate its value and the value that the educators and community members bring to it. In seeing themselves as members of the community, they are opening themselves up to a social justice disposition. As Martha states, "to open your eyes and to be a part of that bigger community, which in itself is an activist move…".

For these social justice educators, action within the community is a valuable part of being a social justice educator. This activist stance is not simply for students in their current role as student but also it is something for them to consider when they become teachers within a school system. The role of a social justice educator is, in part, to be engaged in the community. Martha explains,

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I think social justice moves this stance into action, into some sort of activism, even if it is radically contextualized to the classroom level or to the teacher/ child relationship…social justice is really going to move you…toward that understanding even as you're doing that one on one work. To think about the barriers that are keeping you from doing this at a bigger level. And it's going to keep pushing you to then ask for and push for change.

Dennise continues,

Social justice education is teaching them more about, not just the issues, not just the identities, but it has to be about collective action. And multicultural education is about the identities, the cultures, people, belief systems but I don't always feel compelled to talk about the social action. So, it doesn't mean we don't! But, it means that certainly in my classes where I think there is a strong focus on social justice they're actually going to do something. They're actually going to take it out into the community and do something.

Barbara sums this commitment up best. She states,

Ok, well there are a couple of different things; because I also think it's not just if you're teaching, you should also be engaging in work in the community. That it shouldn't be just talk, that you should show commitment to people not just ideas; which is very important to me…

For these social justice educators, the work of a social justice is to not simply about ideas or theory. It is a commitment to action, the action of community work. This work is depended upon the community as well as the students in the classroom. The classroom space is where students can begin to be challenged around social justice thought.

These social justice educators attempt to disrupt the notion that inaction is the nature of education. They teach students that their responsibility as an educator is to engage and challenge the hegemonic narrative. That social action within community is fundamental to their everyday lives as educators. Barbara explains,

I always have a social justice disposition in my classes. What I mean, I trouble the term social justice because I think it does get used in pretty superficial ways sometimes. I am pretty critical of someone who claims to be a social justice educator but isn't actually doing work in the community. I think the social justice piece, to me, is the core of that. It is about a commitment to people and not just the ideas. So, I help students understand that it is a part of their everyday life,

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especially their life as an educator. They should ask themselves, how are you committed to that concept in how you treat people and how you live your life and what are you doing in the local community to try and advocate for change.

Here Barbara explains her disappointment in those who remove the commitment to community from their social justice practice. She, like the other social justice educators, see value in the work in the community, which is, at its root, a struggle against oppression and a way to use knowledge as a form of praxis, to use knowledge to form collective action.

As discussed above social justice educator is an identity that these social justice educators have grown to become. The lived experience of a social justice identity is a full commitment to the principles of exposing and challenging oppressive systems. Sally explains,

> I think social justice is…about making visible and challenging issues of power and privilege and, in particular, injustices and inequities. And so in making them visible the challenging aspect of that is a component of who I am. So, I tend to think of it as an activist agenda.

Walter continues this idea,

> …I think I see my job to help promote a critical literacy around educational policy issues; so that has been a part of my social justice identity. I also see myself as supporting local movements, that way whether it is speaking at rallies, I can bring my PhD and whatever authority that's supposed to grant me. Have a very public presence around that kind of stuff. This is part of my academic activism.

The powerful use of his privilege allows him to advance social justice challenges to a hegemonic and oppressive system to aid the community. Walter recognizes the oppressive nature of academic language and translates that language to the community to empower the community so that the community can institute its own change. This is valuing the community to create and determine its own direction. Walter understands the cooperative nature of the academy and the community in the same way that Debbie seeks this to be an expectation.

> When you teach for social justice, one of the things I would like to see is coordination or cooperation across communities. I think we need more of that in academia. We need more of that in our teaching…So if we could see ourselves as

educators as part of those larger social systems and talk about the ways that those other social systems interact with education, I think that's desperately needed. (Debbie)

To form a positive, productive, and reciprocal engagement between the academe and the community is the desire of these social justice educators. The work that these social justice educators participate in and engage their students in has to do with understanding the way power/ privilege influence society and individuals, these social justice educators seek create meaningful and positive action to engage the growth and advancement within the communities.

4.6   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Coming to understand social justice education required the educators in this study to first explore their own identity and to reflect upon moments in their lives that guided them to the work of a social justice educator. On transitioning from doing multicultural education to being a social justice educator, these educators made a clear distinction between their actions as a multicultural educator versus who have become as a social justice educator. When looking back on these anchoring experiences, they provided meaning and relevancy to these moments and connected them to their "being" a social justice educator. They explored the powerful meaning making process they continue to engage in as a social justice educator and understand that their growth process is ongoing.

This complex identity transformation encompasses a rich perspective of the meaning of social justice education as well as an intentional reflective process to link specific anchoring experiences with current pedagogical actions and community engagements. Moreover, these educators encountered various forms of resistance, student, institutional, and peer, to the

implementation of social justice work. Student resistance focused on the students' inability to engage with ideas and concepts that conflict with their predetermined worldview and what actions and behaviors represented this resistance. Institutional resistance manifested itself through policy and structural forms of resistance. Peer resistance took on the structure of alienation and removal of support and promotion. For each of these forms of resistance, strategies where created to push back and to engage students, institutions, and peers around the ideology of social justice. Lastly, I discussed how two part of the definition of social justice education, power and community action, play out in the daily work experiences of these social justice educators.

5.0   CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

My goal in this study was to examine how a group of educators within teacher education programs within schools of education understand their progression from traditional multicultural/ diversity curriculum to social justice education. I focused on the elements of change in practice as they are understood by these teacher educators. I explored how these teacher educators reflected on developing a professional identity and pedagogy around moving the concerns for justice from the periphery to the center of curriculum and pedagogy by adopting a social justice agenda. These teacher educators identified themselves as social justice educators engaged in guiding students to discover their social justice dispositions.

For educators looking for an entrance into integrating a social justice approach within a course or program, an understanding of the areas of resistance is important. These educators need to be aware that there may be resistance from institutions, collogues, and students as well as their own personal biases that may conflict with social justice ideals. In my study, I explored the reflective elements of social justice educators on their transitional process of becoming a social justice educator. This process was informed by their experiences with society, family, friends and other forces that aided in their development as a person and as an educator.

In this final chapter I will begin by revisiting the conceptual ideas and theoretical framing upon which my dissertation is based. I will then provide some thoughts on the experiences of these educators and address my original guiding questions. I will discuss the methods used to

answer these questions and I will examine the major findings of this study. Lastly, I will examine the implications of these findings for curriculum, teacher identity, and future research.

5.1   REVIEW OF CONCEPTUAL IDEAS AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This study, as previously mentioned, is about the transitional experiences of teacher educators to social justice education. To understand the transitional aspect of integrating social justice into the teacher education curriculum and the transformational experience that these social justice educators had undergone, I ground these teacher educators' experiences utilizing the historical nature of multicultural education; the development of social justice education; the theory of curriculum transformation; and identity development. Collectively, these theories provided a useful lens for understanding the curriculum, cultural, and ideological shifts that the teacher educators in my study discussed. As Freire (1974 & 2006) noted, humans are active agents who engage in the world and in community with others. In other words, these social justice educators are educators who carry out critical work within structures and institutions that may be antithetical to their own social justice disposition. That critical work can connect their shared practices, collective meaning making, and identities.

Under the current educational milieu social justice educators' work is complex, continuous, and evolving (Cochran-Smith, 2004 & 2010). Social justice educators are constantly working to integrate social justice education within teacher education programs. My own interest in engaging students to develop a disposition for social justice and the desire to incorporate social justice education with the course I taught as an instructor led me to question what it meant for me to manifest social justice in my teaching and in my everyday life. What does it mean to

teach and live for social justice and what steps does a teacher educator need to take to practice social justice in teacher education? In order to narrow this question of transitional shifting and to develop a richer understanding of what this pedagogy is like for social justice educators, I focused my study on the following:

- How do teacher educators involved in social justice education define multicultural education?

- What practices do these educators associate with the multicultural education curriculum?

- How do these teacher educators define social justice education?

- What practices do these teacher educators associate with the move to a social justice education?

- What facilitated the participants in this study to transition from multicultural education to social justice education within the context of the teacher education programs and courses?

- What do teacher these educators see as the barriers to a successful transition to social justice education?

After examining the literature surrounding the history, development and implantation of multicultural education, I recognize the root design of multicultural education had many social justice intentions (Grant, 1977, Sleeter, 1987, Gay 1994 & 2001, Nieto 2000b); however, the issue became more of practice than design. These diverse models and structures for multicultural education, from curricular revisions to approaches that call for full changes of self, schools, and society have been weaken in implementation with schools. It is important to recognize that the idea of transformational curriculum goes beyond the adoption of diverse authors in the literature of the syllabus and the acknowledgement of cultural festivals. Social justice education

curriculum transition creates curriculum that addresses the power relationships and shortcomings of the current education system with its goal to eliminate inequities in schooling and society and address issues of power distribution in systems.

In utilizing Goodson's (1984, 1988) work on the history of school subjects as specific examples of constructed curriculum, Godson's two keys concepts come to the surface of this study: 1) curriculum and especially school subjects that involve a set of selections about what constitutes the official knowledge of the subject and 2) the curriculum changes that occur as the social and cultural context in which the curriculum is embedded changes (Goodson, 1983, 1988). These social justice educators used various forms literature and knowledge to unpack the various subjects they were teaching; and, they utilized the cultural context of schools and community to frame discussions within the classroom. Goodson's ideas helped me to come to a way to frame the idea of curriculum and establishes that curriculum construction is inherently political (Goodson, 1988; Young, 1971). This illumination on how these educators constructed their understanding of curriculum and knowledge led me to ask questions of power and resistance. These concepts framed these social justice educators' understanding of curriculum transformation around both the classroom and the larger structural forces that have an impact on their pedagogy.

5.1.1 Transformation not transition

I attempted to understand these social justice educators' experiences through the use of Schuster and Van Dyne (1984) Stages of Curriculum Change. This six stage model helped me to explore the idea of transition an educator may apply to ones' curriculum; and, although Schuster and Van Dyne's model appear linear it is far from that. The act of transition is a messy and organic

process. It evolves as the person who is implementing the transition evolves. The transition itself is subject to the individual's knowledge, experiences and understandings. The teacher educators in my study although experienced some form of transition as it relates to curriculum; more critically they had gone through a transformational process as it relates to their personal identity, which led to a professional identity transformation. This transformational experience was predicated on various life anchoring experiences. When reflected on provided insight into the work they ultimately ended up doing as educators. Just as the transition of curriculum is messy so is the personal/ professional identity transformation disorganized.

When I speak of transformation, I am talking about the power of unmasking oneself and discovering who you are, not who you think you are. These social justice educators actively engaged in self-reflection in order to better understand their own values and beliefs and if those values and beliefs supported a system of oppression, these social justice educators worked to enlighten and dismantle these active ideas and beliefs as well as elected to adopt practices that were from the start uncomfortable. This transformation also encourages action to confront all forms of resistance they encountered in making both a curricular and personal transfiguration. It was through this fluid free-flowing process that these social justice educators transform from a simple representation model of women and minorities to a social justice education disposition in their courses and in their lives.

In order to develop in this transformation a definition of social justice, which can be applied to curriculum, what has emerged through the prudent dialogue of "social justice" and has weaved its way through practice and research in teacher education, is a discourse of social justice education that examines power and oppression as well as creates change and agency for students. This conceptual shift for these social justice educators can be seen through Cochran-Smith's

(2010) theory for teacher education for social justice. The key critical questions that Cochran-Smith asks are questions that these social justice educators, in some fashion, have answered as they worked to operationalize the concept of social justice for themselves and their students.

The following sections will address the major findings surrounding each sub-question, beginning with how do teacher educators involved in social justice education define multicultural education and ending with what do teacher these educators see as the barriers to a successful transition to social justice education.

5.1.2 Multicultural education to social justice education

As I discussed previously, multicultural education is a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, equality, equity, and human dignity. It is an approach to education that emphasizes learning through and across race, class, gender, language, exceptionality, and other differences in schools (Banks, 1981, 1987, 2004; Grant & Sleeter, 1986, 1999, 2009). As a concept in teacher education, it provides a broadly accepted foundational knowledge for issues around multiculturalism and diversity (Banks, 1989; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

As a theory, it is both significant and germane to issues facing education today; however, for social justice educators, the reality of its implantation is seen negatively (Lott, 2010; May & Sleeter, 2010; Verovec & Wessendorf, 2010). For many within the teacher education, multicultural education became simply content integration, that is, the integration of different socially constructed identity groups, who have traditionally been absent from the curriculum, into the curriculum. The typical practice of content integration would be adding African Americans in the curriculum, Mexican Americans in the curriculum, Asian Americans in the

curriculum, women in the curriculum, etc. (Banks, 2007). This is often done by focusing on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements. In this approach, ethnic content is limited primarily to special days, weeks, and months related to ethnic events and celebrations. Cinco de Mayo, Martin Luther King's Birthday, and African American History Month are examples of ethnic days and weeks celebrated in the schools. During these celebrations, teachers involve students in lessons, experiences, and pageants related to the ethnic group being commemorated. When this approach is used, the class studies little or nothing about the ethnic group before or after the special event or occasion (Banks, 2007).

The social justice educators that are represented in this study acknowledge that this was not the intent of multicultural education, but it is how it has been constructed in schools. As Jackie states,

> In some ways, I have been a little bothered by multicultural education… not because of its inherent value; but, because of the way it has been packaged. So, we have this sort of perpetual stream of canned lesson plans and curriculum and textbooks that want to talk about multiculturalism but never address issues of power or political economy or historical realities.

The issue that these social justice educators have with multicultural education is not from what its intent has been; but, how it has been operationalized in schools. Many of them have come to think of multicultural from the basis of the human relations approach or cultural relativism (Perusek, 2007). This approach recognizes students' different cultures and embraces them as equal. It also encourages students to be receptive of other cultures. Sleeter and Grant (1988) pointed out that in this approach, students are exposed to different cultural artifacts, and foods; however, the authors contended,

> This is no guarantee that they will learn about issues such as the poverty [for example] in Chinatown or the psychological devastation many Asian immigrants face when they realize they must surrender much of their identity to assimilate into American society (p. 13).

Additionally, the inability of multicultural education to address the issue of power and oppression that Sleeter and Grant (1988) eludes to in this quote is a concern for social justice educators. The use of multicultural education has been a means for teaching students about differences, specifically about race. These lessons generally include information about the history, culture, and politics of various groups. However, multicultural education is inadequate if it does not address core structural injustices and challenges the fundamental imbalance of power in society. The central argument here is that multicultural education is not enough because it does very little in addressing the cooption of power and the distribution of that power.

5.1.3 Defining social justice education

As attempted to explain previously, there are those within education who believe that social justice education is an outgrowth of multiculturalism. This is an attempt to respect the way multiculturalism embraced a theoretical power analysis; however, there exist a distinction from multiculturalism, as various writers address the idea of social justice as it relates to education and schooling (Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2004; North, 2006; Russo, 2004). The voices of these social justice educators in this study are added to the collective narrative regarding social justice education and the meaning making construction around it. What was found for these social justice educators is that social justice education is focused around four themes: social justice education is freedom, social justice education is awareness, social justice education is action, and social justice education addresses power. Although each of these items has played a critical part in the meaning of social justice education, I believe it is the last two that are more critical to the work of social justice educators. These two ideas offer social justice

educators a way to analyze and create the movement around ideas of justice. In this next section I will discuss briefly the first two ideas, and then, more specifically, I will unpack what the later mean for social justice educators.

5.1.3.1 Social justice education is freedom

Freedom to construct and comprehend the classroom space. The freedom that social justice education provides is about the creation of space for critical thinking, multiple voices, creative teaching, and even the freedom to reconstruct social justice within the context of education. This provides social justice educators the power and framework to challenge the status quo and to help future teachers do the same. Social justice education empowers the social justice educator to enact a "problem-posing" process (Freire, 2006) for the achievement of awareness and dialogue. Social justice education is the freedom to create social change utilizing whatever tools that may be useful for students, either through writing and literacy development or yoga. It is about finding and meeting the needs of the students to understand power structures and equipping these students with knowledge and skills for action.

5.1.3.2 Social justice education is awareness

This means that social justice educators provide their students with content and knowledge around injustice in society and its institutions. Social justice educators should provide information to help their students understand the larger socio-political and historical context in which they live and teach. This process allows students to unpack the knowledge of history, ideology, and current manifestations of systemic inequalities. This awareness at times can present as cognitive dissidence for students causing reactions of resistance and rejection. Social justice educators are committed to responding to this reaction with compassion and it provides

the social justice educator the opportunity to share with their students the impact of societal inequalities on their own and others' experiences and lived realities. In addition, it is essential that social justice educators provide information to help their students grasp the diverse forms of privilege and oppression and how they affect people's experiences, opportunities, and access to social power. Providing students with this opportunity to think critically for themselves; to evaluate not only the information they are receiving but the context in which it is situated, and to allow students to think for themselves and come to an informed place. This allows students to become critical consumers of information.

5.1.3.3 Social justice education is action

It is the action that requires the social justice educators to "do something". It is critical first that social justice educators engage in a self-evaluation process. This is a preliminary pre-action that is critical to social justice education. This pre-action can prepare an educator to evaluate and understand where they may contribute to injustice and how they can begin to combat it. This process is iterative and does not conclude with the educator arriving at a moment of social justice pellucidity. This process allows the social justice educator to model the act for their students. This way students can begin to understand this process and may not be dismayed by the uncomfortableness of the process. Another action that is taken by social justice educators is one that happens within their classroom and within policy implementation in communities that they are apart. Social justice education is a response, an active participation. It answers the question, now that I know, now what? This action is about the responses we have to the injustices in the world. Social justice educators seek to help examine the issues of equity, oppression, and identity associated with injustice and in some way, develop teaching and curriculum that creates an

action that addresses these issues and to helps future teachers understand that social action is fundamental to the everyday workings of their lives.

5.1.3.4 Social justice education addresses power

These social justice educators' focus within the context of social justice education is to dismantle oppression. Imbedded in oppression is the notion of power (Bell, 1997). These social justice educators are committed to paying attention to issues of power and subverting oppression and utilizing social justice education as an entry way in doing that. These social justice educators believe that social justice education is here to create a more critical social critique around issues of multiculturalism, diversity, language, and ethnicity and to allow multiple perspectives to awaken an appreciation and action tied to multiplicity (Gay, 2001). Social justice education also provides educators the power to rethink curriculum instruction to transform schools and empower students, teachers, administrators and community members to push back on curriculum that has been male, white, privileged, in power, and sustained a lack of choice. Providing their students access, perspectives, and information that has the potential to be liberating in terms of how they think about the world, power, structures and transforming those structures.

The meaning constructed here for the social justice educators is about coopting the narrative around education. Taking the power of education from those in power. This is action to take back the classroom space as well as the narrative around education, to prepare educators who are prepared to struggle against the current normative culture and oppression. These social justice educators in their practice help students, teachers, and communities design education that works for the whole of society. They continue to see social justice education as a complex and evolving concept; and even with its continuing evolution these social justice educators find ways to operationalize and put into practice their beliefs. Whether working in communities and

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schools, teaching in the classroom, or publishing articles and books, they have come to utilize social justice education to democratize education and to address power and oppression.

5.1.4 What facilitated this transformation to social justice education?

As mentioned earlier, originally, I intended to study how educators transition from doing multicultural education to doing social justice education. As I discovered, this did not capture the nuanced facets of transformation for these social justice educators. The distinction between the two is one of action versus identity. This transformation to social justice education became about identity work, self-reflection, and conversion. The act of being a social justice educator required these social justice educators to unpack the meaning of social justice education and to juxtapose that meaning with critical self-reflection and critical self-evaluation. These social justice educators recalled the act of "doing" multicultural education, which they believed required a narrow definition of the term and an understanding of the practices that take place in this pedagogy. These educational actions were about meeting standards and discussing, at a cursory level, difference across culture. This in contrast with being a social justice educator, which is about transformation and the addressing of oppression and power.

This critical self-reflection and self- evaluation gave way to better understand these social justice educators' own growing and unsolidified paradigm of their social justice professional identity. This reconstruction of their own identity helped them to better understand that this transformation is beyond simply implementing a pedagogy. It is about creating action and integrating social justice practices into their everyday lives. This identity transformation required an experience that shifted their perspective and a process that guided meaning making. This complex identity development encompasses a rich perspective of the meaning of social justice

education as well as an intentional reflective process to link specific anchoring experiences with current pedagogical actions and community engagements. These anchoring experiences, brought to light by these social justice educators, were used to provide a foundational element for their current pedagogical and ideological frames. In creating a social justice educator identity, these moments created meaning around social injustice and were valuable to their transformation.

5.1.5   Barriers to a successful transition to social justice education?

As discussed in a previous chapter, there exist a contested perspective and a critical analysis of social justice education (Fukuyama, 1992; Novak, 2000). This criticism can create resistance and this resistance can create barriers for successful implementation. For the social justice educators in this study there existed an assortment of challenges. Each challenge manifested itself differently based upon the institutional context. Even the action of critical self-reflection operated as an obstacle to overcome for these social justice educators. However, the barriers to implementation that these social justice educators encountered more frequently focused around three fundamental areas of resistance: classroom space, institutional structure, and professional peers. As I discussed earlier, I take advantage of Felman's (1982) notion of resistance. She explains that resistance is disagreement to learning and knowing. This time of resistance best describes the type of resistance experienced by these social justice educators by students.

Classroom space can often be a space were students experience cognitive dissonance and feel implicated by the discourse they are being exposed to in the classroom. This moment for students can be a powerful obstacle for enacting such a liberating curriculum. This type of obstacle often, but not always, originates from student who are systemically privileged. Many of these students do not experience systemic oppression and so the frameworks through which they

interpret their experience support their beliefs. Systemically privileged students often enter such courses believing that systemic oppression is a relic of the past or, if it does exist, that they are not responsible for it. This thinking allows them to disengage from the course and object to the course content. Interestingly these students do not see this act as resistance but rather as maintaining neutrality and not subscribing to the political nature of the course.

Institutional structure was another barrier/ resistance experienced by these social justice educators. As explained earlier, this resistance combines the departmental/school structure, college/university structure and/or state/federal government policy structure. Individually these elements can function as barriers to successful implementation; however, collectively they can create a large systemic blockade. The experiences of these social justice educators are supported by the discussion of these types of barriers found in the literature around social justice education (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Juárez et al., 2008; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2009; Ukpokodu, 2003). For many social justice educators in this study the institutional resistance can be categorized under two subthemes: ideological resistance and philosophical resistance. These two subthemes interestingly manifest themselves within all structures that impact teacher education.

Professional peers' resistance can manifest itself as a simple lack of support to outright hostility. This type of resistance originates from co-workers and other faculty members within the program, school, or departments. This type of resistance is not often discussed in the existing literature; however, was one that the social justice educators in this study discussed. For some of the social justice educators within this study, the balance between maintaining your scholarship and identity as a social justice educator and creating collegial relationships was a challenging one. For others, the resistance came in the form of a critique of the rigor and substance of the curriculum. Yet others, especially educators of color and women, described how peer resistance,

especially the refusal to acknowledge privilege and oppression, had contributed to discomfort within the department. While others were not surprised because their colleagues mostly reflect the identities of their student body, "white, middle class, heterosexual, Christian, and not invested in understanding oppression" (Pricilla).

5.2   DISSCUSION AND REFLECTION

As a social justice educator, meaning one who subscribes and promotes the elements of social justice education discussed above, I came to understand these educators' experiences through my understanding and work through social justice education. The anchoring experiences that these social justice educators reflected upon led me to question my moments of transformation. What led me to investigate this transformational process was my work and the discussions I was having with multicultural education versus social justice education as an instructor of Social Foundations of Education. I asked myself the questions, what is multicultural education? What are its limits? Why is social justice education relevant? What brought me to this place? I believe it was my desire to understand how those who have been awoken through multicultural education instruction about injustices in the world lack the aspiration to address these injustices; they choose to stand silently and hold onto power at the expense of others. As an African American male in America who has experienced various forms of oppression, I desired to push back and call out this oppression and those who use power to oppress.

Like many of my respondents, I am aware of my socially constructed location and what that means in the context of America and a system that supports the nature to subjugate. It is the work that one does to one's self that creates an impact on who one is professionally. The work

that I have done as a person of color in America, as a father, as a husband was instrumental to how I came to understand my responses to the questions above as a professional. These forms of identity become indistinct and can for some create cognitive dissidence on who they are professionally. This cognitive dissidence has an impact on how these educators want to show up as educators. This is perhaps one limitation of this work. My conversations with these social justice educators highlighted the work they had done professionally; however, it did not probe deeper into personal transformations. The social justice educators in this study came to choose, by way of reflection, the anchoring experiences that gave meaning to them. This provides them with the power to construct their narrative of what is meaningful and excludes other moments that may have been just as impactful; yet, they did not hold on to it or perhaps did not want to reveal it. Why choose these experiences? Why are they relevant? Are there others they could have selected from among?

Another issue that I believe is worth mentioning is that the social justice educators in this study created a relationship between power and social justice education; however, their analysis was solely from a US perspective. None of the social justice educators in this study discussed a power analysis from a global viewpoint. This may be due to a limit in the scope of their experiences or perhaps how social justice education came to be formulated for them.

Regarding barriers to implementation, the social justice educators in this study explored a very narrow perspective of resistance. For students, they focused on students who come from dominant social identities. It could be argued that these are not the only students who resist social justice education. For some students of color the discussion of oppression is a thing of the past, and for some women, the idea of feminist perspectives can be seen as un-American or antichristian. Also, institutional and faculty resistance can originate from unlikely places. I

believe a discussion of these forms of resistance from these seemingly unlikely places would have been advantageous for these social justice educators.

Another discussion point that could have been discussed not only in the context of higher education but what it means for the teachers that these social justice educators will teach is the concept of technology in the classroom. As education continues to focus on computerized testing and the use of technology in the classroom, social justice educators cannot ignore students' situated identities that the use of technology privileges some students and disadvantages others. The increased use of iPads, iPods, iPhones and other tablets in the classroom is a clear powerline that was absent from the conversation within these social justice educators' analyses of social justice education.

Lastly, although I do align myself with what these educators have described as critical elements of social justice education, there are some questions that still exist. How does this look in practice? My respondents talked about their transformation; however, they gave little detail as to what this means in implementation. They identified barriers, discussed below, but provided little in the way of translating this into working with students in their classroom. Also, I acknowledge action is critical to the concept of social justice education; however, how does one identify the correct anchoring experience as one of significance to do the reflective action needed to nurture the social justice educator within. I would also like to know more about actions they have taken in communities. What worked? What failed? What were some of the impact on these communities? Some of my respondents talked about this; however, I believe further investigation is warranted.

5.3   POSSIBLE IMPACT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

5.3.1   Implications

This qualitative study contributes to the field of social justice education by providing insight into the transition of social justice educators to social justice education within a course or a teacher education program. The data collected in this study provides additional qualitative research in the field of social justice education, curriculum development, and teacher identity. Currently, there is little empirical research that connects these three elements. The detailed description provided in this study also provides insight into the barriers teacher educators face when implementation of social justice ideals. Essentially, the thick, rich description in this study portrays what social justice educators encounter as they embark on the meaning making process around social justice education.

The findings of this study have potential use for the understanding of adoption of a social justice disposition. For teacher educators' it can guide the understanding of the transitional aspects of becoming a social justice educator. The teacher educators participating in this study may serve as role models, or archetypes, for educators interested in implementing social justice education within their course or program. The stories can provide insight into the transformational work one must do on oneself in coming to this pedagogy. The findings can also be used as a guide for teacher educators interested in the transformational pedagogy regarding barriers faced by the social justice educators, as well as the strategies they used to address these barriers. These insights for teacher educators reveal the complexities of implementing social justice education within the current neoliberal context of education, specifically teacher education programs. The findings may also have potential use for researchers in the field of

social justice education, administrators in teacher preparation programs, and practitioners interested in implanting social justice education in a standards-based environment.

5.3.2   Recommendations for future research

This qualitative study, with a postcritical stance, of fifteen teacher educators' reflection on transitioning to becoming a social justice educator is unique to the field. Few studies exist that explore the efforts of teacher educators transition to such a pedagogy and curriculum. Further studies of this type are needed at the level of post-secondary education to establish a body of research that explores the implications of social justice education in institutions of higher education and schools of education. I believe more studies are needed to explore the transitional facets of an adoption of contested pedagogies that engage students and educators to explore the nature of power in education and necessitate equal education for all. Particularly, more research is needed to fully explore how such educators navigate or circumvent institutional culture and roadblocks toward a successful implementation of social justice curricular approaches. The findings of this study suggest that there are various impediments to the implementation of social justice education within teacher education programs. Because I only interviewed individuals who continue to do this work, future studies could include individuals who have left social justice work. This would help reveal additional effects of these various environmental barriers on social justice education.

In addition, the findings in this study examined the identity work that the teacher educators in this study had undergone. I believe it would be useful to further explore this idea with additional teacher educators who have adopted this transformative pedagogy as well as explore the personal identity development they expereinced. As David Sehr (1997) argued, "We

need research that explores and analyzes the curriculum and teaching practices, as well as the lived experiences of students and teachers…" (p. 3). Although Sehr is speaking specifically about education at the elementary and secondary level, it is critical to explore the lives and "experiences which shape and mold people's ideological frameworks" (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014, p. 3), particularly teacher educators. Additional samples of teacher educators and their personal and professional experiences would further that effort.

At this current time, there has been an abundance of studies of elementary and secondary school teachers' narratives (Alsup & Miller, 2014; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Ladson-Billings 2009); however, the literature focusing on post-secondary educators predominantly deal with narratives of women of color and their experiences in the academy (Maher & Tetreault, 1994). More recently, the book *Narratives of social justice educators: Standing firm* (2014) by Shirley Mthethwa-Sommers, provides a different perspective than the others. It focuses on the narratives of educators who have dedicated their lives to social justice. It is within that dialogue that this study rests. The findings of this study explored the efforts of teacher educators' transition to social justice education. This study serves as an addition to the conversation regarding the complexities and experiences of teacher educators teaching for social justice. Therefore, more studies are needed to further examine the complexities of implementing social justice education and the experiences of teacher educators at the postsecondary level.

5.3.3 Closing statement

In closing, it is important to state why I believe in the relevance of this study. In the current educational climate, the vast majority of children are educated in public schools. These children

are facing educational policies that are masked as policies of accountability and high standards but that marginalize students of color, the poor, English language learners, and recent immigrants from war-torn countries. The deceptive policies such as "No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top use the seductive, capitalist-based language of competition to define the sole purpose of schools as propelling the U.S. to claim the first place in the global market race" (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014, p. 99). These policies have provided a misrepresentation of the objective(s) for education and should cause us to reconsider the central question of curriculum: What is the purpose of education?

As I write, a new vision for education has emerged from the new Presidential administration. Although the ideals are still weighted down with the democratic rhetoric of choice and freedom, this current narrative is a doubling down on removing the push to address issues of power and inequality within education. There is still no room in the discourse to question the access to resources, power, and wealth which provide increased choices for one group over another (Leistyna, 1999). There is still a continued rise in the wealth disparity in the United States, which adds to the enduring stress on families and communities. Our country's position and image around the world is faltering and there is a decrease in the dialogue around the destructive ecological impacts of our current society. Understanding that these conditions play a dramatic role in the psyche of communities, I believe the purpose of education should be to engage communities and students to become critical consumers of information and aid in the problem-solving process. This is the critical consciousness that hooks (2015) asserts,

> As we educate one another to acquire critical consciousness, we have the chance to see how important airing diverse perspectives can be for any progressive political struggle that is serious about transformation. Engaging in intellectual exchange where people hear a diversity of viewpoints enables them to witness first hand solidarity that grows stronger in a context of productive critical exchange and confrontation (p. 6).

It is toward that end that these teacher educators continue to work.

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Source of Support: The University of Pittsburgh

Study Description

Dear participant,

I am a doctoral student and at the University of Pittsburgh. I am studying the ways and the extent to which a pedagogical shift has impact on courses within teacher education programs. I can be reached at the numbers and email addresses below if you have any questions. Thank you!

Study Information

Project Title: Transformative Pedagogical elements within Teacher Education courses

Principal Investigator: Mr. Ronald Gray, SCAE doctoral student
(412-491-2684, rongrayau6@gmail.com or rag96@pitt.edu)

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of what, if any, impacts exist from a pedagogical shift in teacher education courses or curriculum and on the educators teaching these courses.

Procedures: The data for this study will be collected from interviews of teacher educators within schools of education. These will be two to three one-hour interviews with each educator and will be audio taped with the permission of the participants.

Risks of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this study other than the possible breach of confidentiality (for example, the identification of the students). This risk will be minimized by assigning pseudonyms (fake names) to all participants immediately, keeping all the research records in a locked file in the home office of the PI, and removing all information that might identify particular students in publications or reports. The key for the study will be kept in a separate secure location. In addition, if at any point the participants experience discomfort or have questions or concerns, the PI will be available to discuss these with the participants.

Benefits: There exist no guaranteed direct benefit from participation in this study. However, by participating in this study the research participant may gain insights into the nature of their own pedagogical practices and a richer knowledge and understanding of self as a researcher or educator.

Confidentiality: The PI will not disclose your participation in this study. It is possible that audiotapes and other information gathered in the research will become part of a published product or shared with professional audiences at conferences or workshops. On audio, in written descriptions, and in reports of the research, the researcher will make every effort to remove information that identifies the participant. Any information about the participant obtained from this research will be kept as confidential as possible. The participants' identity will not be

revealed in any description or publication of this research. In unusual cases, your research records may be released in response to an order from a court of law. It is also possible that authorized representatives from the University of Pittsburgh Research Conduct and Compliance Office, the University of Pittsburgh IRB will review the data for the purpose of monitoring the conduct of this study.

Compensation: Participants will receive no compensation for participating, nor will they be charged for choosing to participate.

Contacts: If you have questions about the study or your participation in it, you may contact Mr. Ronald Gray (412-491-2684, rongrayau6@gmail.com or rag96@pitt.edu). For information on subjects' rights, contact Human Subject Protection Advocate of the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Review Board at 412-578-8570.

Participant Rights: Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent and end your participation in this study at any time without penalty by notifying Mr. Gray.

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VOLUNTARY CONSENT

All of the above information has been explained to me and all of my current questions have been answered. I understand that I am encouraged to ask questions about any aspect of this research study during the course of the study. The principal investigator, whose numbers and email is listed in the contact section of this form, will answer any future questions. The Human Subject Protection Advocate of the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Review Board toll-free at 1-866-212-2668 will answer any questions I have about my rights as a participant.

By signing this form, I agree to participate in this research study. A copy of this consent form has been given to me.

_____
Participant's Name (Print)

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   **Date**

CERTIFICATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

I certify that I have explained the nature and purpose of this research study to the above-named individual(s), and I have discussed the potential benefits and possible risks of study participation. Any questions the individual(s) may have about this study have been answered, and I will always be available to address future questions, concerns or complaints as they arise. I further certify that no research component of this protocol was begun until after this consent form was signed.

_____   _____
Name of person obtaining consent (print)   Role in research study

_____   _____
Signature of person obtaining consent   Date

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Dear Teacher Educator:

Hello, I hope all is well with you. I am a doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh; and, I am currently writing my dissertation on educators understanding of social justice education and how they have come to adopt this educational framework within courses or teacher education programs.

As a teacher educator your participation in this study is key to better understanding the adoption of new frames in teacher education. If you decide to participate, I would like to arrange an initial interview with you for 1-1/2 hours on a date and a time that is mutually agreeable to both of us. The questions asked will focus on your experiences and perceptions of a course you implemented social justice education and the development of the course's pedagogy and curriculum.

You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to during the interview session. Your name will not be used in my dissertation and any information that is obtained related to this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and disclosed only with your permission. Your decision to participate has little to risk of harm to you. Rather, it is with great hope that your participation in this study will assist in helping provide insight to the teacher preparation and help to gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the factors that affect curriculum and pedagogy within teacher education programs.

If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time. If after reading this letter, you decide to participate in my study, please respond to this email at rongrayau6@gmail.com or contact me by cell phone at (412) 491-2684. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the above e-mail or telephone number.

Thank you in advance for your help on this project.

Ronald A. Gray

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Protocol for Teacher Educators

1. Let's start by talking a bit about your time in undergraduate school.
   a. Where did you go to school?
      i. Where is that?
   b. How would you describe yourself as a student?

2. What about graduate school where did you attend?
   a. What made you choose that school?
   b. What were you involved in while there?

3. Tell me how you became interested in becoming an educator? Teacher educator?
   a. Explore further, if needed, with: What were some of the experiences that were important in getting you interested in becoming an educator? Teacher Educator?

4. In what ways, if at all, have your university courses helped you achieve your goals to become an educator?
   > Please share with me particular goals you feel that your courses have not assisted you in developing?

5. Can you talk about your first time teaching a course? What was the experience like?
   a. What were your first thoughts about teaching your courses?
   b. What were your thoughts about the curriculum of your pedagogy when you first were exposed to teaching?
   c. What have you learned about teaching since then?
   d. What are some of the approaches you used to teach your particular course(s)? How has your course(s) different after your first term of teaching it? Your first year? When you left from teaching the course?

6. I would like to shift a little here, please tell me about your learning about multicultural education?
   a. *What is your perception regarding the goals of multicultural education?*
   b. *What educational or life experiences have influenced your viewpoints?*

7. Please share with me some examples of what you believe are multicultural educational practices?
   a. *Do you believe differences in culture should be addressed? Why or why not?*
   b. *How can or should an educator within education classes address differences?*

8. As an educator give you your perception about multicultural education.
   a. How do you see your thoughts shift from the time you were first exposed to it?

9. What issues do you believe faculty confront when attempting to infuse multicultural education practices in their classrooms?

a. *What have your experiences been when trying to infuse multicultural education or culturally competent practices into your work as an educator?*
b. *How do other educators at your school view such practices? Administrators? Students?*

10. Please describe for me any school-wide or university-wide factors that hinder your ability to infuse multicultural education practices into your teaching?

11. How have you come to understand social justice education?

12. How have you used social justice education in your pedagogy?

13. There are those who are interested in "integrating" social justice education within teacher education. To what extent would you say this integration of this approach to education of teachers happens in your program/ School?
    a. How do you know? What would you point to as examples?
    b. Thinking about the examples, what enables the integration you described?
    c. Please provide me with some examples where social justice pedagogy is not integrated that you feel it should be? Barriers?

14. What would you say the differences are between Multicultural Education and Social Justice Education?

15. There are those who are interested in this notion of "integrating" social justice education within teacher education. To what extent would you say this integration happens in your program?

16. What would you say is the School's definition of social justice as it relates to teaching and learning?

17. What are 2 or 3 main activities that help the school, department, course to realize that definition in practice?

18. How have you continued your work with Social Justice Education? Why? Why not?

19. Any additional information regarding your current work with Social Justice Education that you are interested in sharing? Are there any documents you would like to share with me to explain some of your responses? Do you have any questions for me?

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