**Proposal** to: Faculty of Education, Graduate Student Symposium Review Committee  
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Program: Doctoral Student in Transformative Education: Teaching Leading and Learning  
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Topic: *Transformative Teacher Leadership for Social Justice*

The paper for presentation is a review of the literature and a conceptual framework for a new type of leader in schools, people I refer to as transformative social justice teacher leaders (TSJTLs). TSJTLs are experienced teachers who are informal or formal leaders and change agents for social justice in their schools. A combination of personal convictions and supportive professional development in the areas of leadership and social justice, positions these individuals to advance equity in schools. First, I will outline the theoretical underpinnings of TSJTLs including distributed and participative leadership (Leithwood & Mascal, 2008; Yukl, 1998), transformative leadership (Burns, 1978), social justice leadership (Brown, 2004; Shields, 2004) and teacher leadership (Crowther, Ferguson & Hann, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

Second, I will outline the Conceptual framework for TSJTLs which is comprised of three specific aspects of teacher leadership: dynamic relationships, strategic intentions and enabling leadership practices. Teacher leaders are respected by their peers as competent, credible and approachable colleagues (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2009). As a result of their strong dynamic relationships with colleagues, teacher leaders are able to serve as boundary spanners (Bass & Bass, 1999), capacity builders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lambert, 2003) and change agents (Muijs & Harris, 2003). They have quality lateral and dyadic relationships (Graen &Uhl-Bien, 1995) with their peers as well as their administrators. In addition TSJTLs play important roles in school groups and establish strong relationships with team members. TSJTLs’ strategic intentions include an understanding of excellence, a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007) and intense commitment to the principles of social justice. Enabling leadership practices which TSJTLs
employ include appreciative and generative inquiry (Hart, Conklin & Allen, 2008; Marshall, 2006), critical dialogue and reflection (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009), and transformative learning (Mezirow & Associates, 2000). I will establish the potential value and impact of TSJTLs and relate these ideas to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks outlined above.

Finally, I will explore what type of leadership program would be required to develop TSJTLs from among the ranks of currently practicing teachers. To determine the structure of a leadership development program for TSJTLs, I review managerial (Yukl, 1998) and educational (Department of Education, Victoria, 2007) leadership development programs as well as scholarly writing on social justice and transformative leadership development (Bell-McKenzie et al., 2008). I will conclude my presentation with my recommendations for a leadership development program which blends the various programs reviewed and the skills required of TSJTLs.

The presentation will describe the conceptual framework for TSJTLs and the scholarly references which support the framework as well as the proposed leadership development program. Although the notion of TSJTLs builds on other leadership approaches, the term and the framework is my own and I believe the work is important as TSJTLs have the potential to be a voice in support of those individuals who are the most vulnerable, overlooked and likely to struggle to achieve equitable learning outcomes. Developing TSJTLs will further our journey towards equitable and inclusive practices in schools.

References


