



Preparing Teachers to Teach for Social Justice

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Mirrors and Windows

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Abstract

This chapter focuses solely on self-study research that intentionally examines teaching and teacher education through the lens of social justice. Our research questions center on approaches self-study researchers use to implement a social justice education in their courses and teacher education programs. We define social justice teacher education and describe the criteria used for selecting research articles from 2002 to 2017 that met the criteria. We describe our methodology and identify two broad themes that resulted from our analysis of the research articles, i.e., mirrors and windows. The mirror represents self-studies which focus on the identities of the authors, their work as teachers, their roles as

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researchers, and their use of self-study to reflect upon and improve their teaching. The window denotes self-studies which describe the process of implementing systemic change in teacher education programs and the contextual factors which affect the work of teacher educators. Research articles are further described as they relate to the two themes. We conclude with recommendations for future self-study research in teacher education for social justice.

Keywords

Self-study · Teacher education · Teaching for social justice · Socially just teacher education · Teacher education programs

Introduction

Teacher educators and educational researchers have long emphasized the need for teacher education programs to ground themselves in principles of social justice to facilitate teacher candidates' acquisition of skills and dispositions needed to teach diverse and marginalized children, communities, families, and social groups. These advocates call for programs which do more than simply mention or celebrate diversity among people. Principles of social justice, they stress, should permeate teacher education programs both in policy and in practice (Cochran-Smith 2004, 2010; Zeichner 2011). Researchers emphasize the need for teacher preparation courses to confront issues of race, class, sexuality, ability, gender, transgender, ethnicity, and language, so preservice teachers learn to recognize the structural inequities in society and address principles of social justice in their teaching (McDonald 2005; McDonald and Zeichner 2009). Social justice is frequently discussed as a tenet of the self-study of teacher education practice, because self-studies lead teacher educators to examine their own practices and unpack their values, beliefs, biases, and tacit assumptions to better prepare themselves and their students to teach for social justice. (Loughran 2004; LaBoskey 2004). Similarly, Griffiths et al. (2004) state:

... self-study provides a useful way to address issues of equity and justice. We can use self-study to uncover the ways in which an unjust society is mirrored in our assumptions, teaching practices and beliefs about the world. ... Through self-study we can explore, with our current and future teachers, the complex moral issues inherent in the pedagogies they choose and the curriculum they are required to teach as well as in the relations they will have with diverse students, who live in a globalised, interconnected world (p. 650).

The purpose of this chapter is to review self-study research on social justice from 2002 to 2017. We asked the following questions:

- How do teacher educators who practice self-study teach through a social justice lens?
- How do teacher educators who practice self-study foster the enactment of social justice pedagogical practices with their preservice and in-service teachers?

This review of the research on self-studies and social justice will define social justice teacher education, describe the methods used to select the literature, explore the themes which emerge from the studies, discuss the implications of our findings, and make recommendations for future self-studies.

Teaching for and About Social Justice

We define social justice teacher education as teaching that aims to address and change inequities and injustice in the world. Theories and pedagogical frameworks such as multicultural education, culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogy, critical literacy, critical race theory, gender studies, and queer theory all incorporate aspects of Fraser's economic, cultural, and political dimensions of social justice (Fraser 2005, 2009) and embody what it means to teach for social justice. Multicultural education has the goal of providing an equitable education for all children. The National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME) defines multicultural education as a process of education infused in all aspects of schools, school systems, and education with the goal of academic achievement and social justice. Additionally, multicultural education:

... helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. It prepares all students to work actively toward structural equality in organizations and institutions by providing the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for the redistribution of power and income among diverse groups. Thus, school curriculum must directly address issues of racism, sexism, classism, linguisticism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, religious intolerance, and xenophobia (NAME n.d.).

Similarly, culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogy addresses how and why teachers can and should focus on social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of teaching diverse students for social change and academic achievement (Gay 2010; Ladson-Billings 1995a, b; Villegas and Lucas 2002). As with most theories of social justice education, critical literacy has a foundation in Freire and Macedo's (2005) work on literacy as reading the word and the world. Critical literacy consists of learning how to analyze and interrogate texts to reveal the ways in which texts are socially constructed, how relations of power and injustice can be seen through these texts and in the world, and the various roles of readers in deconstructing texts. (Comber 2015; Freebody and Luke 1990; Marsh et al. 2015). Similarly, scholarship on gender, queer, and transgender theories explore the issues of power and identity in these marginalized groups and the need to disrupt social and cultural beliefs, such as heteronormativity (Stryker 2013; Wilchins 2011). Critical race theory examines race, racism and the beliefs, laws, economics, and sociocultural practices which allow institutional and systemic racism to exist and persist. In the sphere of education, critical race theory can serve as a tool to analyze inequity (Ladson-Billings 1998; Ladson-Billings and Tate 2017). Teaching for social justice in teacher education or socially just teacher education means teacher educators are

tasked with developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of preservice and in-service teachers, so they recognize the diversity of their students, develop equitable ways of teaching, provide children with the tools and strategies to understand systems of inequity that exist in societies, and facilitate understandings of how texts children read and view support and reinforce systems of inequity and oppression. Accordingly, teacher educators must equip themselves with understandings, dispositions, and skills to implement social justice teacher education. Teaching for social justice also involves using these understandings, dispositions and skills as a springboard to work for social change (Duncan-Andrade 2005; Hackman 2005; Lipman 2004). All the actors or stakeholders in education, teacher educators, preservice teachers, families, and school communities must become “conscious actors in the world” (Gutstein 2003, p. 40). Gutstein suggests “helping young people develop a sense of personal and social agency” (p. 40) is essential in working toward achieving equity. The terms teacher candidates and preservice teachers will be used interchangeably in this chapter.

The next section of this chapter describes the methodology we used to review the research literature on self-studies of teacher education practices and social justice.

Methodology

Stance of the Researchers

We come to this review of self-study research and social justice as friends, self-study researchers, former colleagues, and teacher educators. Our friendship, careers, and experiences have taken us through various paths. We met as colleagues, bonded as friends, and grew together in our understandings of and commitment to social justice teacher education. Patience was born in Ghana, while Cynthia is a white middle-class Midwesterner. We turned to self-study to critically reflect on and make improvements in our teaching. Patience’s background is in teaching English learners and Cynthia’s in literacy. The school of education where Cynthia taught has, as its mission, the preparation of preservice teachers to teach in urban settings. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where Patience taught in a college of education, the mission of the college of education and the university is to prepare leaders who are globally aware and culturally responsive. As teacher educators we infused our courses with methods to prepare our teacher candidates to understand and appreciate the diversity of children they would encounter in their classrooms (Sowa 2016; Sowa and Schmidt 2017). We scaffolded teaching for social justice by developing a critical literacy stance ourselves and engaging our preservice teachers in critical literacy practices to promote social justice (Lewison et al. 2008; Luke and Freebody 1999). We both experienced the tensions inherent in fulfilling our ascribed roles as university faculty and the sheer amount of work it takes to thoughtfully support preservice teachers as they learned to teach for social justice.

Parameters for the Review of Literature

To conduct this study, we performed a systematic review of the literature on self-study in teacher education practices and social justice. We developed explicit criteria for selecting studies to be included in the review. We then searched for the studies using the said criteria and screened the studies to ensure they included the criteria (EPPI Center 2007). Many self-study scholars state most self-study research has an inherent social justice orientation because self-study researchers tend to explore issues of equity, diversity, advocacy for marginalized groups, multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and educational transformation (Berry and Hamilton 2013; LaBoskey 2004, p. 832). However, self-studies selected for this chapter specifically focus on teaching and teacher preparation through a social justice lens. The articles selected explicitly highlight the terms *social justice*, *socially just*, *teacher education/preparation*, and *in-service* and *preservice teachers* as keywords or descriptors. Also selected are studies which used the term social justice in titles and in abstracts. It should be noted that although self-studies may be completed in other professional areas, this chapter will focus solely on self-studies about teacher education. The next section describes our data collection and analysis process.

Data Collection and Analysis

We searched for the self-studies in research databases such as ERIC, Scopus, EBSCOhost, Education Full Text, and Academic Search Complete. We also explored the journal *Studying Teacher Education*, the Springer *Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices* book series, the *International Handbook of the Self-Study of Teacher Education* (2004), and the self-study group's biennial Herstmonceux Castle conference proceedings for research studies which met our criteria. The articles and chapters were limited to peer-reviewed empirical research studies published in English within the last 15 years – the years 2002–2017. From the review and screening, we selected 51 self-studies which met our criteria.

To examine the self-studies, we grouped them into three categories: individual self-studies, collaborative self-studies, and administrative self-studies. We then explored each category separately and coded the studies for emerging themes and patterns. We define individual self-studies as research by and about the teaching of the researcher or author. Loughran (2004) describes self-study as inherently collaborative in that researchers collaborate with each other to study their teaching and learning. He posits “there is an ongoing need to be able to view the teaching and learning process from different perspectives. Thus, the value of collaboration and the notion that self-study is advanced when it is a shared adventure” (p. 33). Self-study researchers may collaborate with colleagues, teacher candidates, and in-service teachers. They may also collaborate with a critical friend. We define collaborative self-studies as studies conducted and co-authored by more than one person. Administrative self-studies are studies which may be individual or collaborative but focus on the reform and/or administration of teacher education programs. We are cognizant of the fact that these categories can and do overlap.

Self-Study Methods

The self-studies selected for this chapter use different forms of qualitative research to explore learning and teaching. The methods researchers used include auto-ethnographies (Pennington et al. 2012; Prado-Olmos et al. 2007); case studies (Griffiths et al. 2004); focus groups (Galman et al. 2010); multi-case analysis (Schoorman and Bogotch 2010); dialogue or conversations (Fitzgerald et al. 2006; Griffiths et al. 2004; Ketter and Stoffel 2008); rhizomatics (Strom and Martin 2013); and narrative self-study (Sowa 2016) to analyze their teaching practices. Table 1 identifies the number of articles which met our criteria from different geographic locations. The next section of this chapter discusses the themes which emerged from our review of the literature on self-study and social justice.

Findings

This section describes the themes which emerged from the review of literature.

Themes: Mirrors and Windows

The themes which emerged from our analysis of data are the themes of self-studies as mirrors and windows. We borrow and adapt the metaphor of mirrors and windows from the Arizona Group (1996), Mitchell and Weber (2004), and Batchelor and Sander (2017) to describe these themes. Batchelor and Sander (2017) described the phenomenon of the integrated form of self-study research education “as a mirror (looking at ourselves) and a window (looking at teacher education)” (p. 69). In our study the mirror denotes the identities of the authors, their work as teachers, their roles as researchers, and their use of self-study to reflect upon and improve their teaching. The window represents the process of implementing systemic change in teacher education programs. It also represents the need for self-study researchers to use their research to look outwardly, that is, “look out of their windows” at the injustices in the world, take social action, and work toward a commitment to the principles of social justice in communities beyond the university and K-12 classrooms. This category describes the work of teacher education program

Table 1 Geographic locations

Geographic location	Number of articles
Australia	1
New Zealand	1
South Africa	2
United Arab Emirates	1
United Kingdom	5
United States of America	41
Total	51

administrators or faculty administrators who practice self-study to improve their programs and their work as administrators (Manke 2004), teacher educators whose work is affected by external issues, and those who make connections beyond the university and K-12 classrooms. The next section explores the theme of self-studies as mirrors.

Self-Study as a Mirror

Analysis of self-studies in this chapter reveals teacher educators frequently examined their personal identities and explored their roles as teachers and researchers. In self-study, the roles of teacher and researcher are inextricably linked with personal identity. Schulte (2004) further explained this phenomenon by stating “All practitioner knowledge is integrated with problems of practice. Self-study demonstrates that these problems of practice are also indelibly connected to the educator, and that recognizing these connections can serve to bridge one’s beliefs and actions to improve one’s knowledge about one’s practice” (p. 710).

The theme of self-studies as mirrors emphasizes the reflective nature of self-studies regarding implementation of social justice education. Griffiths et al. (2004) note that “the work of social justice involves knowing self” (p. 655). Teacher educators look inward at themselves and their personal identities and consider how their race, gender, and socioeconomic status, as well as their experiences and contexts, influence their interactions with preservice teachers (Kelly-Jackson 2015; Lee 2011; Ohito 2016; Perselli 2006; Schulte 2004; Sevier 2005; Skerrett 2006, 2010). These researchers also explored the ways their identities privileged or disadvantaged them in their work as teacher educators.

Skerrett (2006) noted how her status, as an immigrant, faculty of color, and former teacher in urban schools, was a double-edged sword because it gave her the confidence and expertise to teach for social justice but also resulted in tensions with her mainly middle-class white preservice teachers who questioned her experience and authority. Ohito (2016) positioned herself as a black educator teaching primarily white middle-class preservice teachers and described how she used the “pedagogy of discomfort” to provoke her students into deeper reflection about “race, racism and white supremacy” (p. 454).

In her self-study about preservice teacher clinical supervision, Lee (2011) described her initial discomfort as a Korean immigrant when relating to American teachers and mostly white preservice teachers. She was vividly aware of “cultural differences in language and the need to negotiate meanings between people” (p. 4). Implementing her supervisory role through a social justice lens and conducting self-study research led her to learn how to negotiate the different cultures and to a “rediscovery of her cultural identity” (p. 3). “Initially, I tried to assimilate into American culture,” she stated, . . . “What I learned was to value my Korean ways of being and to use them in productive ways in a different culture” (p. 16).

Galman et al. (2010), white teacher educators, emphasized that teacher educators can more effectively implement an antiracist pedagogy if they explore their own practices and beliefs and interrogate whiteness in teacher education. They discovered

through their self-study data and focus group interviews with current and former students of color that they inadvertently catered to white comfort by silencing or marginalizing conversations about race in their courses. Therefore, they highlighted the need for faculty and teacher education programs to “interrupt white racial knowledge” and to do so “aggressively, yet tenderly” (p. 234). Trout (2017) described how she introduced the ethic of caring in her courses to address the tensions that had risen between her, a white teacher educator, and her students of color. Trout’s self-study helped her realize the importance of paying attention to the needs of her preservice teachers and ends by stating “in racially and culturally diverse classrooms, caring habits can help teacher educators from dominant groups gain critical self-awareness” (p. 39). Calling herself a pākehā, that is, a white New Zealander, Warren (2014) explored how self-study helped her become more critically aware of her role as a “bicultural teacher educator” and her personal and professional responsibility to resist colonial discourses which position teachers and students in ways that perpetuate social injustice for Maori. Similarly, White (2009) a “white, female, middle-class teacher educator” (p. 5), discovered that for teacher education to become truly transformational, teacher educators must teach on emotional and intellectual levels to address the challenges of helping preservice teachers examine issues of diversity and equity. In Henderson and Hyun’s (2017) self-study of Henderson’s mixed-method course, Henderson initially questioned her ability to effectively address issues of race and racism as a white middle-class teacher educator. Henderson’s experiences caused her to explore her identity and improve her pedagogical practices by facilitating more discussions and assigning more readings on social justice, equity, race, and racism. Both researchers concluded that implementing social justice education depends less on *who* that is, the race of the teacher educator, and more on *how* the conversation is facilitated. In contrast to the above studies, Prado-Olmos et al. (2007) addressed tensions which emerged as they taught their preservice teachers of color in a multicultural education course. They found they were uniquely positioned as faculty of color to emphasize the importance of learning about diversity and equity in the face of resistance from preservice teachers of color who questioned “what they could learn about diversity” (p. 93).

Studies on social justice and teacher education research stress the importance of teacher educators participating in professional development which helps them address their own prejudices and biases as well as strengthen their understandings of what it means to teach for social justice (Cochran-Smith et al. 2009; Cochran-Smith 2010; Galman et al. 2010). Consequently, in their collaborative self-study, Pennington et al. (2012) critically examined their own dispositions to better cultivate the dispositions of their preservice teachers. These researchers noted how collaborative self-study among teacher educators from various disciplines led to the unpacking of their own problematic dispositions toward their preservice teachers. This process facilitated critical awareness leading to their growth as teacher educators. The next section in this review explores the strategies teacher educators use to prepare themselves and/or their preservice teachers to teach for social justice.

Self-Study as Reframing

One of the purposes of self-study is the study of one's teaching practices with the goal of improvement (Hamilton and Pinnegar, 1998; Loughran et al. 2004). Self-study is reframing, that is, the systematic reflection of teacher educators to "open themselves to new interpretations and to create different strategies for educating students" (Hamilton and Pinnegar 1998, p. 2). Consequently, most of the studies reviewed in this chapter describe a variety of strategies teacher educators use in their university coursework to prepare preservice and in-service teachers to teach for social justice. In this research, faculty examine the impact of their teaching on themselves and the students they teach. In terms of the former, teacher educators have found that by interrogating their teaching practices, they become more aware of their strengths, challenges, vulnerabilities, and the actions needed to improve their teaching. Courses described by self-study practitioners in this review of the literature include civic education and social studies (Lowenstein 2010; Sevier 2005); social justice education (Boyd and Noblit 2015; Freidus 2006); multicultural education and diversity (Prado-Olmos et al. 2007); primary design and technology (Aston 2009), critical literacy (Skerrett 2010; Sowa 2016), physical education (Flory and Walton-Fisette 2015); integrated arts, social studies, and literacy (Bartlett 2009); field supervision (Lee 2011; Perselli 2006); mathematics (Harrison 2015; de Freitas 2008; Van Laren 2011); and elementary education (LaBoskey 2012; LaBoskey and Richert 2015; Regenspan 2002).

Improving Teaching

Studying one's teaching practices calls for looking inward and then opening up and becoming vulnerable. Although this can be challenging, self-study researchers value this reflective process in their efforts to improve their teaching. Schulte (2005) noted "one needs to stand in one's own vulnerability in order for it to become a strength" (p. 41). Knowles (2014) made herself vulnerable by asking peers and students to give her feedback on her teaching. In her discussion about of her role as a supervisor of preservice teachers, Lee (2011) learned that vulnerability is valuable and crucial to building trusting relationships.

Student assignments, classroom observations, interviews, questionnaires, course surveys, and focus groups provided insight into how researchers might strengthen their teaching and preservice teacher learning. Teaching in challenging contexts was the overarching goal of LaBoskey's (2012) course in elementary education and the university teacher education program. While she observed her students' considerable strengths, she also discovered she had inadvertently "placed limitations" on their abilities to work in these situations because of her own uncertainties about working in challenging schools. Additionally, LaBoskey discovered she had been "giving mixed messages about the role of joy in the elementary curriculum" (p. 244). To improve her teaching, LaBoskey (2012) committed to finding more resources to support her current students, and continuing to observe her former students in their classrooms every year. Preservice teacher feedback through a survey taught Bartlett (2009) that she "could have done more to emphasize social justice issues over

technical aspects of teaching” (p. 37). Similarly, Knowles (2014) discovered student and peer feedback on her teaching led to “powerful new knowledge” (p. 89). Lee’s (2011) self-study led to improved supervision practices. In her self-study of her preparation of Emirati preservice teachers, Tensions of teaching through a social justice lens led Sowa (2016) to be more intentional and purposeful in planning lessons and discussions with her Emirati pre-service teachers.

Some of the studies explore the changes and improvements in self-study researchers’ teaching over time (Henderson and Hyun 2017; Flory and Walton-Fisette 2015; Ketter and Stoffel 2008; LaBoskey 2009; Lee 2011; Sevier 2005; Sowa 2016). Sevier (2005) described the changes he made while teaching his social studies methods course, while Sowa (2016) discussed how she reframed her teaching over a period of 8 years to move teacher candidates toward teaching for social justice. Flory and Walton-Fisette (2015) conducted their study for a year and Griffiths and Poursanidou (2005) for 2 years.

Resistance is a theme featured in many self-studies explored for this chapter (Boyd and Noblit 2015; Faulkner and Crowhurst 2014; Freidus 2006; Galman et al. 2010; Johnston-Parsons et al. 2007; Ohito 2016; Prado-Olmos et al. 2007). Teacher educators recognized this resistance on the part of their mostly white preservice teachers and used various means to move them toward teaching for social justice. Consequently, these self-studies explore a variety of pedagogical strategies used to scaffold preservice and in-service teachers in enacting teaching for social justice. Teacher educators modeled teaching for social justice to influence how their students think about and practice teaching (Loughran 2004). These strategies included modeling dialogue and think-alouds where faculty explicitly unpacked the reasoning behind their pedagogical decisions (Lee 2011; Ritter 2012; Torres and Mercado 2004). Burke (2016) used her own illustrated storybook to involve preservice teachers in reflecting about and critically analyzing the everyday common metaphors used in school rhetoric. Others focused on the impact of one or two pedagogical strategies on student beliefs, attitudes, dispositions (Fitzgerald et al. 2006; Aston 2009; Sevier 2005; Skerrett 2010; Faulkner and Crowhurst 2014) and practical knowledge (Bartlett 2009; Kavanagh 2017). Fitzgerald et al. (2006) described how they collaborated to develop preservice teachers’ dispositions related to teaching for social justice. However, for some self-study researchers, having the dispositions to teach for social justice is not enough. These researchers posit dispositions must also be accompanied by pedagogical skills and developing professional judgment through practice. To achieve these goals, Bartlett (2009) tasked her preservice teachers with designing eight-lesson social justice units in their integrated arts, social studies, and literacy course, which teacher candidates then taught in their field placements. Kavanagh (2017) argued that “specifying practice allows teacher educators to engage preservice teachers in representations . . . of teaching that intentionally bring social justice issues to the fore” (p. 161). Coursework assignments which teacher educators used to scaffold teaching through a social justice lens included reading, discussing and responding to articles, developing portfolios, targeted field placements, focus groups, illustrated story books, autobiographies, inquiry projects, service learning projects, teacher research, reflective journals, and self-studies.

Field placements are a frequent topic of self-studies in general because they are a key component of teacher preparation. Self-studies about field placements explored this chapter include studies describing assignments to compare between well-resourced and under-resourced schools (Sevier 2005) supervision (Lee 2011; Perselli 2006) and teaching in classrooms. Included in this category are self-studies which examined collaboration with in-service teachers in K-12 schools (Ketter and Stoffel 2008; LaBoskey 2009, 2012; LaBoskey and Richert 2015). Collaborating with K-12 schools enables teacher educators to help teacher candidates and in-service teachers make theory to practice connections, develop their practical knowledge, and provide them with experiences in different contexts. Teacher education programs which prepare students to teach for social justice very often place them in urban, highly challenging contexts and/or schools with culturally and linguistically diverse learners to help them develop the skills needed to teach in these settings (Ketter and Stoffel 2008; Kroll 2012; LaBoskey 2009, 2012; LaBoskey and Richert 2015). The goal here, as LaBoskey (2009) stated, is to scaffold teacher candidates in creating “positive, educative learning environments for all children, especially those in high-need urban contexts” (p. 73). Ketter and Stoffel (2008) collaborated to conduct a year-long self-study in Stoffel’s middle school writing class in an urban charter school. For Ketter, this experience proved to be invaluable as it gave her insights into the realities of inner city classrooms and helped her become more aware of theory to practice connections she could use in her preparation of teacher candidates. Such experiences, Ketter suggested, also give teacher education faculty credibility among their preservice teachers and test their beliefs about how to prepare teachers to teach for social justice, especially regarding issues of behaviour management. Most of all, Ketter stated her experiences led her to believe her preservice teachers “need to be learning the discourses of power, but . . . also need to learn about the cultural and political contexts of these discourses” (p. 141). Kroll (2012) concluded that teaching in-service teachers’ inquiry and self-study was a powerful way of developing habits of mind, critical questioning, and transforming teaching and learning for social justice. Similarly, LaBoskey and Richert (2015) taught their graduate students to conduct self-studies “to research and improve their teaching in urban elementary schools” (p. 164). Like the self-study assignment LaBoskey and Richert (2015) developed for their graduate students, tasks designed by self-study researchers were developed to engage students in interrogating the status quo and to reflect more deeply about their values and issues of equity and diversity, thereby raising their critical consciousness (Aston 2009; Boyd and Noblit 2015; Burke 2016; Lowenstein 2010; Regenspan 2002; Sevier 2005; Sowa 2016; Torres and Mercado 2004; Van Laren 2011). The next section of this chapter examines how teacher educators navigate their roles as faculty while implementing social justice teacher education.

Exploring and Navigating Faculty Roles

Moule (2005) explored her teaching, service, and research roles as a faculty of color, while her college implemented a social justice-themed teacher education program. An analysis of her work over 5 years revealed she was “carrying an inequitable

proportion of the needed changes” compared to her colleagues (p. 39). Moule realized that her passion and belief in implementing social justice teacher education, and making it succeed led to work overload, and that difficulties in managing her faculty roles could jeopardize her quest for tenure. In their collaborative self-studies, Schoorman and Bogotch (2010) and Gemmell et al. (2010) reflected on their roles as researchers. Gemmell et al. (2010) described their journey of discovery as they examined their research identities in a university which emphasized excellence in research. These self-study researchers discussed their achievements, frustrations, and difficulties as they tried to balance their agendas of social justice, their research, and their role as teacher educators. Similarly, Schoorman and Bogotch (2010) critically reflected on their roles as social justice researchers and the challenges they faced in their institutions. Their objective was to ensure that principles of social justice permeated their work as teacher educators and researchers. Their work needed to:

exemplify emancipatory practice, which includes how we think about the purpose of research, and who it serves, how we re-conceptualize re-conceptualize the relationship between the researchers and the researched and being critically aware of the power structures being perpetuated or challenged by the research process and the product (p. 261).

Schoorman and Bogotch (2010) also described the characteristics of a multicultural/social justice researcher. These are “the commitment to a common good, the redefinition of the researcher-researched relationship and the interrogation of the traditional roles, norms and power dynamics of academic research and researchers” (p. 249). The second theme, self-studies as windows, is discussed in the section below.

Self-Study as a Window

As stated above, the second theme that emerged from our analysis of self-studies was self-studies as windows. These self-studies are characterized as windows looking outward at contextual factors and issues which affect the work of teacher educators. This theme also includes the approaches they use to research and collaborate within their own institutions, in schools, and in communities. Studies by van Laren (2011) and An (2016) explored outside forces which influence the work they do. An (2016) focused on high-stakes state testing requirements for teacher candidates. She described the challenges she faced teaching social studies with a social justice lens after the introduction of the EdTPA, a subject-specific performance-based assessment that teacher candidates were required to take for teacher certification. According to van Laren (2011), in 1999 the South African government mandated that HIV/AIDS education be infused into all areas of education. To address this issue, van Laren integrated HIV/AIDS topics into her mathematics courses. She found HIV/AIDS integration in the teaching and learning of mathematics education “provides opportunities to take action for social justice” (p. 333).

Administrative self studies. In 2004, Manke wrote about the need for and importance of self-studies by administrators which critically consider how

stakeholders in teacher education build community, address issues of power, and collaborate to work for social justice and teacher education reform. Consequently, administrative self-studies “have considerable potential for revealing the impact of today’s educational changes in the world of practice” (p. 1367). Administrative self-studies in teacher education are necessary because the preparation of teachers involves institutions of higher education, schools, and school districts, all of which require management. When Manke wrote her self-study, she noted there were only three self-studies of administrative practices. For this review, we only found two studies about administrative self-studies which focus on social justice: Manke’s study (2004) and Hamilton’s (2002) narrative about leading an initiative to introduce social justice as a major theme of the college of education where she worked. Hamilton’s reform efforts were unsuccessful. The college curriculum committee decided to table the consideration of social justice as a theme for the college. This experience led Hamilton (2002) to think more critically about her position of privilege and status as a white woman faculty member of a university college of education.

Conclusion

In our analysis of self-studies with a focus on social justice education, themes which emerged are self-studies as mirrors and windows. All self-studies are reflective, but self-studies which are mirrors are particularly self-reflective as they demonstrate how the personal identities, teaching, and research of teacher educators are inextricably intertwined. In these research studies, teacher educators looked inward and reflected on their race, personal experiences, socioeconomic status, dispositions, their privileged positions as teacher or supervisor, and how these factors influenced the way they prepared preservice and in-service teachers to teach for social justice. Conducting self-studies helped these teacher educators to raise their own critical consciousness (Aston 2009; Boyd and Noblit 2015; Burke 2016; Lowenstein 2010; Regenspan 2002; Sevier 2005; Sowa 2016; Torres and Mercado 2004; Van Laren 2011).

The mirror as self-reflection also includes self-studies which served as learning tools to help teacher educators improve their teaching. Through the analysis of teacher candidate coursework, conducting interviews, surveys, and discussions with critical friends and teacher candidates, teacher educators’ systematic research revealed their strengths, vulnerabilities, biases, and values thereby helping them to reframe their teaching in ways that were more consistent with social justice education. This in turn helped them grow as teacher educators (Bartlett 2009; Flory and Walton-Fisette 2015; Knowles 2014; LaBoskey 2012).

Pedagogical strategies teacher educators used to scaffold and foster preservice and in-service teaching with a social justice lens include autobiographies, developing unit plans, artwork, responding to research publications, field experiences, and reflective journals. Some self-studies focused on changing attitudes and dispositions, while others focused on fostering the learning and enactment of pedagogical

strategies designed to promote social justice. Only a few self-studies emphasized research in K-12 classrooms with in-service teachers; clearly, more of these self-studies are needed. Regardless of the topic explored, and methodology or pedagogical strategies used, all the self-studies as mirrors explicitly or implicitly unpack the tensions of implementing a social justice curriculum among the competing factors of meeting accreditation standards and ensuring teacher candidates pass assessments like the EdTPA. Teacher educators also navigated the tensions arising from university expectations for research and tenure and implementing a social justice education.

Self-studies as windows are research studies which help teacher educators and administrators of colleges or schools of teacher education look outwardly and away from university classrooms to explore institutional and external factors which can affect their teaching for social justice. Included in this theme are research studies that focus on programmatic and institutional change led by university faculty and/or administrators. There is more research needed in this area, especially studies like Cochran-Smith et al. (1999), which explore how faculty members with different philosophies and ideologies collaborated to develop a teacher education program which emphasized teaching for social justice. McDonald and Zeichner (2009) emphasize the need to ensure that teacher education programs have a social justice focus in content, structure, and quality. More self-studies are needed regarding teacher educators' use of self-study methodology to study these types of institutional reforms and programs. The theme self-studies as windows also includes research that connects teacher preparation with external communities and factors which influence teachers work in schools, such as high-stake testing and national curriculum mandates. Needed in self-study research on social justice, are studies which describe teacher education programs linked to social movements that "prepare teachers to take both individual and collective action toward mitigating oppression" (McDonald and Zeichner 2009, p. 597). McDonald and Zeichner also state "social justice teacher education programs might benefit from connecting their work with other social movements, locally, nationally, or globally and provide some historical and international examples of such efforts" (p. 596). Additionally, the canon of self-study research needs more international studies from teacher educators working in the Global South or low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). As Table 1 indicates, most self-studies examined in this chapter are from the Global North. Of the 51 studies, 41 are based in the United States, 2 are based in South Africa, and 1 is based in the United Arab Emirates. Self-study practitioners, through the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the self-study special interest group, and the Herstmonceux Castle conference, should continue to reach out to international scholars from the Global South. Through the self-study of teacher education practices, teacher education worldwide can only be made stronger with the addition of voices of scholars from these countries. Encouraging and fostering the inclusion of more studies from the Global South in research and collaboration are essential in this era of globalization. "Why is there so little self-study on social justice issues?" is the question Griffiths et al. (2004) asked in their research on knowledge, social justice, and self-study. Since these researchers wrote their case

studies, and as this chapter demonstrates, there has been an increase in the number of self-studies on issues of social justice. However, we still need more. As asserted above, we need more self-studies which concentrate on researching in-service teachers in K-12 rural and urban schools, more from LMIC countries, and we need more self-studies connected to social movements. Additionally, we strongly advocate for more self-studies which explore LGBTQ issues, language learning, inclusion, and disability. As the research reviewed in this chapter demonstrates, self-studies can and should be used to prepare teacher candidates and in-service teachers to teach for social justice.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Challenges in Engaging in Self-Study within Teacher Education Contexts](#)
- ▶ [Continuous Collaborative Self-Study in a Multicultural Teacher Education Program](#)
- ▶ [Engaging My Whole Self in Learning to Teach for Social Justice](#)
- ▶ [LGBTQ Themes in the Self-Study of Teacher Educators](#)
- ▶ [Reflexive Ubuntu, Co-learning, and Transforming Higher Education at a Rural University in South Africa](#)
- ▶ [Role of Positioning, Identity, and Stance in Becoming S-STTEP Researchers](#)
- ▶ [Role of Self-Study in Navigating Teacher Educator Administrators' Responsibilities](#)
- ▶ [Self-Study Methodology: An Emerging Approach for Practitioner Research in Europe](#)
- ▶ [S-STTEP: Standing on a Threshold of Opportunity](#)
- ▶ [Teacher Educator Knowledge, Practice, and S-STTEP Research](#)
- ▶ [Theater of the Oppressed for Social Justice Teacher Education](#)
- ▶ [The Role of Self-Study in Teaching and Teacher Education for Social Justice](#)

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