



5TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**CRITICAL LEADERSHIP
TOWARDS RESISTANCE AND
TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE**

OCTOBER 17 - 19, 2024

Conference Program



CENTRE FOR
LEADERSHIP
AND
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Keynote Speaker



Pontso Moorosi, PhD
Associate Professor of
Educational Leadership
University of Warwick

Welcome Address



Ann Lopez, PhD
Director, Centre for Leadership
and Diversity
Professor, Educational
Leadership & Policy, OISE
University of Toronto





CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP & DIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Virtual Day: Thursday, October 17, 2024

“Critical Leadership Towards Resistance and Transformative Change”

Virtual CONFERENCE PROGRAM

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ABSTRACTS FOR PAPERS ARE AT THE END OF THE PROGRAM

* Please note that each presentation has 15 minutes, and we ask the chair of each session to facilitate the presentations in the order listed in the program, keep time, and moderate questions afterward. Please find our CLD core members in the Zoom spaces for any questions.

<p>9:00 – 9:25am</p>	<p>Zoom Room 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yvonne Chan, Centre for Leadership and Diversity Core Team OISE, University of Toronto</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WELCOME ADDRESS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prof Ann Lopez, Director, Centre for Leadership and Diversity OISE, University of Toronto</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GREETINGS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prof Marcelo Vieta Interim Chair of LHAE, OISE, University of Toronto</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CONFERENCE LOGISTICS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Seo Young Lee, Centre for Leadership and Diversity Core Team OISE, University of Toronto</p>
	<p>Virtual Session 1A</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Carly Manion</p> <p>Presenters: Prof. Lucy Effeh Attom University of Education, Winneba, Ghana</p>



<p>9:30 - 10:45am</p>	<p>Zoom Room A</p>	<p><i>Assessing the Influential Factors that Guide Students of University of Education, Winneba toward Choosing Teaching Career Path</i></p> <p>Dr. Patricia Briscoe Niagara University, New York, USA <i>Let's Talk About the Elephant in the Room: Good Intentions!</i></p> <p>Dr. Peter Rugano University of Embu, Kenya <i>Principals' Influence on Teachers' Collective Efficacy: Meta-Analysis of Afrocentric Literature</i></p> <p>Dr. Katina Pollock, Dr. Donna Swapp, & Dr. Annette Walker University of Western Ontario; University of Regina, Saskatchewan <i>Colonial Constraints on Black School Leaders' Efforts to Enact Transformative Change in Canada, Grenada, and Jamaica</i></p>
<p>9:30 - 10:45am</p>	<p>Virtual Session 1B</p> <p>Zoom Room B</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Zuhra Abawi</p> <p>Presenters: Mr. Kiiza Smith & Dr. Renu Pal Sood Shoolini University, India <i>Challenges Posed by State Sovereignty to the Achievement of the Right to Self Determination</i></p> <p>Dr. Erin Keith, Dr. Ken MacKinnon, & Dr. Donna Kowalchuk Cape Breton University, Nova Scotia, Canada; University of Prince Edward Island, PEI, Canada; Trent University, Ontario, Canada <i>Leading as Co-Conspirators: Discovering the Prismatic Equity Work of Activist School Leaders</i></p> <p>Ms. Alison Mitchell University of Glasgow, School of Education, Scotland <i>Principalship Development for Critical Leadership Praxis: Narratives and Implications of a Theory/Practice Dichotomy</i></p> <p>Mr. Ahmad Kareem Qatar Foundation, Qatar <i>Navigating Educational Reform: Leadership, Resistance, and Transformative Change in Qatar's Quest for Excellence.</i></p>
<p>10:50 am – 12:05 pm</p>	<p>Virtual Session 2A</p> <p>Zoom Room A</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Everton Ellis</p> <p>Presenters: Mr. Marshall Gerbrandt University of New Brunswick, New Brunswick, Canada <i>Educational Leadership: Recognizing How Physical Space Can Undermine Espoused Culture within the Canadian Military</i></p> <p>Dr. Felicia Esinam Pufaa, Prof. Lucy Effeh Attom, & Ms. Dinah Ampomah University of Education, Winneba, Ghana <i>Participation of Female Student Leaders at the Junior High Schools in Ghana</i></p>



		<p>Mr. Trevor Mwansa University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia <i>Key Challenges and Key approaches in Enhancing Gender-related Transformative Change: A Reflective and Student Perspective-Oriented Study</i></p> <p>Miss Edith Selase Yibor & Prof. Lucy Effeh Attom University of Education, Winneba, Ghana <i>Barriers to Female Higher Education in Selected Communities in the Ketu-South Municipality</i></p>
10:50 am – 12:05 pm	<p>Virtual Session 2B</p> <p>Zoom Room B</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Francine Menashy</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Emin Kilinc, Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad, & Dr. Jennifer Straub Faculty of Education, Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, Canada <i>Reconceptualizing Global Citizenship in Turkish Social Studies Textbooks with a Focus on Social Justice</i></p> <p>Dr. Ato (Atu) Kenya Rockcliffe University of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago <i>Exploring Instructors' Views of the Academy of Sport's Socialisation Process: Using Semi-Structured Interviews.</i></p> <p>Ms. Rabia Khokhar OISE, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Educators as Changemakers: Interactive Read Alouds as Equity Praxis</i></p> <p>Ms. Ann Armstrong University of Toronto Mississauga, Ontario, Canada <i>Does DEI Work? A Leftist Perspective</i></p>
12:05 – 12:35 pm	LUNCH BREAK	
12:35 – 1:50 pm	<p>Virtual Session 3A</p> <p>Zoom Room A</p>	<p>Chair: Ms. Eun Gi (Cathy) Kim</p> <p>Presenters: Mrs. Cynanie Sawyers-Haylett University of the West Indies, Mona, West Indies <i>Operationalising Learning Organisation Practices in HE: Critical Approaches to Educational Leadership</i></p> <p>Dr. Sigrid Roman University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada <i>The Politicking of Teachers in the Media</i></p> <p>Dr. Asma Ahmed, & Mr. Asad Choudhary Niagara University, New York, USA & Western University, London, Ontario <i>Shifting Away from Normative and Dominant Pedagogies in Canadian Islamic Schools</i></p> <p>Dr. Stephanie Tuters, & Ms. Ateeqa Arain OISE, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Critical Policy Analysis of Bill 98 in Ontario</i></p>
		Chair: Dr. Said Sidani



	<p>Virtual Session 3B</p> <p>Zoom Room B</p>	<p>Presenters: Prof. Carol A. Mullen Virginia Tech University, Virginia, USA <i>Centering Equity in New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Through the SACE Framework</i></p> <p>Mrs. Helen Chatburn-Ojehomon OISE, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Exploring Teacher Professional Autonomy in Private International Schools in Nigeria: Leadership Strategies for Transformative Change</i></p> <p>Dr. Dale Orlando Taylor Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, Canada <i>Reflections of a BIPOC International School Leader</i></p> <p>Dr. Rema Passarelli OISE, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Formal Teacher Leadership and the Education Management Hierarchy</i></p>
<p>1:55 – 3:10 pm</p>	<p>Virtual Session 4A</p> <p>Zoom Room A</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Asma Ahmed</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Cordelia Azumi Yates Morningside University, Sioux City, Iowa State, USA <i>Empowering a Fair and Just Society: Demystifying the World of Equity Discourses and Practices</i></p> <p>Dr. Cheryl Ricco University of Western Ontario, Canada <i>Principal Leadership from a Settler Canadian's Perspective</i></p> <p>Dr. Karla Orantes University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Ableism in Ontario's School System – Seeking Strategies to Create and Foster Decolonial Inclusive Education</i></p> <p>Mr. Tonny Nsubuga Texas Tech University, USA <i>Teachers' Leadership Role in Promoting Representation and Fostering a Sense of Belonging Among Music Students</i></p>
	<p>Virtual Session 4B</p> <p>Zoom Room B</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Stephanie Tuters</p> <p>Presenters: Mr. Nathan R. G. Barnett Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, Canada <i>"People Will Notice That Level of Silence Way More": How Identity-Based Language in EDI Policies Shapes LGBTQ+ Students' Belonging</i></p> <p>Dr. Karena A. Escalante, Dr. Kimberly Sterin, & Dr. Katrina Struloeff Drexel University, University of Pennsylvania, USA <i>Demystifying Equity Discourses of U.S. Education Policy: A Decolonial Leadership Exploration of the Compact of Free Association (COFA)</i></p> <p>Dr. Dionisio Nyaga</p>



		<p>Algoma University, Ontario, Canada <i>Ethical Leadership: Rethinking Resistance in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism</i></p> <p>Ms. Casey Hanna SUNY Binghamton, USA <i>A 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' Policy Analysis of Federal Full-Service Community School Funding in the United States</i></p>
3:15 – 4:30 pm	<p>Virtual Session 5A</p> <p>Zoom Room A</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Claudia Diaz Rios</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Emily Ellwood & Mr. Michael Baker Western University, Ontario, Canada; University of Manitoba, Manitoba, Canada <i>Transinstitutionalization in Canadian K-12 Public Schools Is The Rule, Not the Exception</i></p> <p>Mr. Leroy Fearon The Mico University College, Jamaica <i>Exploring Critical Approaches in Educational Leadership: Comparative Perspectives of Male and Female Leaders Across K-12 and Higher Education Systems</i></p> <p>Dr. Everton Ellis OISE, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada <i>Locating the Coloniality in Educational Policy: Boys (Still) Underachieving in Jamaica's Secondary Education</i></p> <p>Ms. Ruth-Ann Edwards The Mico University College/AGRE, Jamaica <i>Succession Planning and Talent Management: Critical Approaches to Educational Leadership for Institutional Continuity and Employee Development</i></p>
4:30 - 4:45 pm	Zoom Room A	<p>CLOSING REMARKS</p> <p>Eun Gi (Cathy) Kim, Centre for Leadership and Diversity Core Team OISE, University of Toronto</p>
4:45 – 5:30pm		<p>VIRTUAL NETWORKING</p>
		<p>THANKS</p> <p>This Conference would not have been possible without the commitment and the collaborative efforts of University of Toronto Graduates & Graduate Students</p> <p>CLD Core Team Yvonne Chan, Coordinator Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto</p> <p>Dr. Fatema Hossain, Assistant Coordinator Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto</p>



Eun Gi (Cathy) Kim
Higher Education Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Seo Young Lee
Adult Education & Community Development Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Parsa Shahid
Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Graduate Assistants

Shernett Auld
Higher Education Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Lawrence DeMaeyer
Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Volunteers

Dr. Said Sidani
University of Toronto Mississauga

Merva Huchinson
Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Dareen Fatimah
Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto

Kirdeen Matthews-Hutchinson
Educational Leadership and Policy Program, OISE, University of Toronto



ABSTRACTS

Asma Ahmed
Niagara University
Asad Choudhary
Western University



Shifting Away from Normative and Dominant Pedagogies in Canadian Islamic Schools

Despite being the fastest-growing religious group in Canada, Muslim youth aspiring to practice their faith in public schools face numerous challenges from administrators, teachers, and peers (Bakali, 2022). The reinforcement of stereotypes and misconceptions about Muslims within school settings exacerbates apprehension among Muslim students expressing their faith and identity. This situation reflects postsecularism, the erosion of the traditional division in liberal thought between a private realm of belief and a public realm of academic, political, and civil rationality (Crockett, 2021). Simply put, public education is failing Muslim students in Canada. As such, Islamic schools across Canada have witnessed unprecedented demand. Islamic schools provide Muslim students with the opportunity to faithfully adhere to a monotheistic worldview (Brifkani, 2021; Ezzani et al., 2023; Memon, 2019). The Islamic Schools Association of Canada (ISAC) is a support network providing much-needed assistance to Islamic schools, especially Muslim educators, to nurture the formation of Muslim identity and religious education that moves away from normative pedagogies (Mavin et al., 2023). Such dominant pedagogies are geared towards a specific learner cohort (Hattam, 2018), marginalizing religion and failing to recognize Muslim sources of knowledge. However, Islamic schools are also facing significant challenges in moving away from normative pedagogies. This presentation will explore the main challenges that Muslim educators/leaders face in Islamic schools. In this study, we draw on the Cultural Identity Theory (CIT) to understand the sense of belonging that emerges within the context of Islamic schools and how it contributes to the well-being of educators and leaders. We utilized a qualitative survey approach to collect data at ISAC's inaugural conference. These surveys were self-administered and consisted of open-ended questions, allowing participants to answer in the provided space using their own words. Fifty individuals completed the Google Form, including 30 Islamic schools from various regions, such as the Greater Toronto Area, Ottawa, Windsor, Calgary, Edmonton, and Halifax. We will provide an understanding of the challenges and needs of Islamic schools in Canada, explore ISAC's leadership in establishing a strong Islamic faith and identity in the students, and discuss the benefits and limitations of Islamic schools.

Ann Armstrong

**University of Toronto, Mississauga
*Does DEI Work? A Leftist Perspective***

In the last three years, DEI work has come under attack from right-wing ideologues. They insist that DEI work is 'woke', and that it is reverse discrimination. Their ideology is gaining alarming traction. Some organizations have shuttered their DEI departments that were created soon after the murder of George Floyd. Espoused commitments to DEI are being ignored or jettisoned. The exit of senior US DEI talent since July 2022 has been significant. The hiring of chief diversity officers declined in 2022, and it was the only C-suite role which experienced decline (Gonzales 2023). Right-wing politicians have jumped onto the anti-DEI work bandwagon. Their rhetoric is often inflammatory and seems to have legitimated racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia, at a minimum.

DEI work now must confront right-wing ideology while simultaneously remedying workplace inequities. DEI work's impact is under scrutiny from the left too. Some see DEI work as another tool of oppression that does not address the power imbalances deeply rooted in capitalism. Angela Davis notes, "I have a hard time accepting diversity as a synonym for justice. Diversity is a corporate strategy. It's a strategy designed to ensure that the institution functions in the same way that it functioned before, except now that you now have some [B]lack faces and [B]rown faces. It's a difference that doesn't make a difference" (Eckert 2015). In a rare, systematic ethnographic study of diversity work, Sadeh and Mair (2023: 22) found that "...the divide between the economic and political spheres.... plays a role in the concealment of political inequality." DEI work, with its inherently and reformist (i.e., cautious) approach, does not change the underlying socio-political power dynamics. DEI work therefore seems to be complicit in reinforcing current neo-liberal capitalist structures (Armstrong, 2024).



So, what now for DEI work...? It is time to look at radical feminist and decolonial approaches to act against the profound and inherent tools of oppression that capitalism rests on which DEI work does not address. Until DEI work tackles socio-economic disparities, it is not likely to accomplish its espoused goals.

Lucy Effeh Attom

University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

Assessing the Influential Factors that Guide Students of University Education, Winneba Toward Choosing Teaching Career Path

This study examined the multilayered factors that determined the career selection of students at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), particularly emphasizing the decision-making process for the selection of teaching career path. The study adopted explanatory sequential design of the mixed-methods approach. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques (proportional) were utilized to sample 627 level 400 students from six departments. Six hundred and seventeen (617) out of the 627 respondents submitted completed questionnaires for the study. Purposive sampling technique was also utilized to select 12 students from the sample for interview, 2 from each department. Frequencies and percentages as well as regression were used to analyze the quantitative data while qualitative content analysis was used for the qualitative data analysis. The results revealed that avenue for academic progression (n=512, 82.9%), personal attributes (n=488, 79.0%), achievement of career aspiration (n=459, 75.5%), motivated by teachers (n=400, 64.8%) are important influential factors for choosing teaching career path. The findings also revealed that temperament, interest and personal qualities were the personal factors that motivated the students to opt for teaching career path. It was also revealed that financial challenges and inability to satisfy admission requirements compelled some students to select teacher education programmes. It was recommended that the government, NGOs and universities should launch campaigns to educate parents about the need to respect their children's independence in career decisions.

Nathan R. G. Barnett

Wilfrid Laurier University

"People Will Notice That Level of Silence Way More": How Identity-Based Language in EDI Policies Shapes LGBTQ+ Students' Belonging

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of queerphobic rhetoric in the US and UK; however, Canada has not been immune to this. Much of this queerphobic rhetoric begins as "coded language" (i.e., "protecting children"), which often focuses on how particular language can invoke particular prejudices without specifically mentioning them (for more information on coded language, see Tali Mendelberg's 2001 book *The Race Card*). Though coded language is typically understood in a negative, racial context, I explored how policy writers can use identity-based language (such as LGBTQ+, queer, etc.) can be used to signal support. Ultimately, I investigated three interrelated research questions: is there identity-based language that best resonates for support across diverse queer communities? Is there identity-based language that resonates for particular queer communities? Lastly, if there is identity-based language that improves support for EDI policies (either across communities or within a specific community), why might that be the case? To explore this question, I utilized both a limited number of cognitive interviews as well as a more far-reaching experimental survey design to investigate the impact particular, identity-based language has on policy support. Many individuals, both LGBTQ+ and not, struggle with knowing what language to use and it often creates a barrier for engagement. In completing this research, I aimed to provide policy writers, in areas across



political fields and sectors, with the understanding of how language can impact LGBTQ+ communities and their belonging.

Keywords: identity-based language, sense of belonging, coded language, policy development

Patricia Briscoe
Niagara University

Let's Talk About the Elephant in the Room: Good Intentions!

This presentation is meant to be thought-provoking by discussing the elephant in the room: good intentions! It is grounded in Niehaus's (2020) theory of good intentions, which states that "altruists' effectiveness often falls short of their intentions" (p.1). Based on the premise that we ask educational leaders in formal and informal positions to be more agentive and committed to a path of justice, we must support their understanding and encourage them to develop skills and tools to critically reflect on their actions grounded in good intentions. In brief, good intentions can shield and protect one's unconscious, perpetuating acts of social (in)justice, shifting the blame externally with an ability to exclude self from the problem. Gorski (2008) argues that despite unquestionably good intentions, most people who call themselves or see themselves as enacting critical leadership (i.e., towards resistance and transformative change) "support, rather than challenge, dominant hegemony, prevailing social hierarchies and inequitable distributions of power and privilege" (p. 515). The exclusion of critically interrogating the self and one's actions is problematic. Growing evidence demonstrates that acts of good intentions secure rather than challenge existing social and political hierarchies that cause inequalities, indicating that well-intentioned individuals and their actions unconsciously support and continue to perpetuate dominant ideologies and continue inequities. I present conscientization, or consciousness-raising (Freire, 1970) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2010), as a framework for examining and encouraging self-interrogation of our good-intentioned actions moving toward the tenants of transformative leadership. My argument is that if we continue to excuse our good-intentioned actions from the work of challenging inequities in education, then the progression of creating a socially just education system may be limited.

Helen Chatburn-Ojehomon
OISE, University of Toronto

Exploring Teacher Professional Autonomy in Private International Schools in Nigeria: Leadership Strategies for Transformative Change

This study investigates how school leaders in private international schools in Nigeria (PISN) promote teacher professional autonomy, a critical aspect of transformative educational leadership. It addresses two primary questions: (1) How do institutional and organizational contexts and professional formation impact school leaders' beliefs and practices regarding teacher professional autonomy? (2) What strategies do school leaders use to support teacher professional autonomy in PISN? Methods, Techniques, or Modes of Inquiry: A mixed-methods approach was employed, integrating quantitative data from an online survey with qualitative insights from interviews with ten school leaders. The study is framed by neoinstitutionalism, inhabited institutionalism, and sensemaking theories, providing a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between institutional pressures, organizational structures, and individual agency. Data Sources: Quantitative data were collected via an online survey targeting PISN school leaders. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with ten school leaders, offering deeper insights into their beliefs, experiences, and practices regarding teacher professional autonomy. Results and/or Substantiated Conclusions: Findings reveal that institutional pressures, such as demands for high student performance and enrolment growth, significantly shape school leaders' practices. Formative career experiences and



influential leaders also impact their current practices. The sensemaking framework highlights a tension between leaders' beliefs and actual practices, emphasizing the complexities of implementing teacher autonomy in PISN. School leaders employ strategies like creating bounded spaces for autonomy and addressing professional development challenges to support teacher autonomy. Significance of the Research or Project: This research contributes to educational leadership by providing insights into the practices of school leaders in a relatively understudied context. The findings offer practical recommendations for enhancing teacher autonomy, emphasizing the need for targeted support and professional development for school leaders. By demonstrating how leadership can act as a form of resistance and promote transformative change in education, this study aligns with the conference theme of critical leadership towards resistance and transformative change.

Ruth-Ann Edwards

The Mico University College/AGRE

Succession Planning and Talent Management: Critical Approaches to Educational Leadership for Institutional Continuity and Employee Development

In the dynamic and evolving field of education, effective succession planning and talent management are essential to ensure sustainable leadership and continuous improvement. This paper explores critical approaches to educational leadership, focusing on strategies for succession planning and talent management that develop a pipeline of skilled and motivated educational leaders. Succession planning in educational institutions ensures leadership continuity, reduces risks associated with sudden vacancies and prepares institutions for future challenges. Talent management, on the other hand, focuses on identifying, developing and retaining high-potential educators and leaders, aligning their growth with institutional goals. This study employs a comprehensive literature review to establish a theoretical foundation for succession planning and talent management in educational leadership. Detailed case studies of educational institutions with successful practices are analyzed to identify key strategies and outcomes. Additionally, interviews and surveys with educational leaders and HR professionals provide practical insights and examples of effective succession planning and talent management. Key findings indicate the critical importance of proactive identification of potential successors and the creation of personalized development plans. Ensuring diversity and inclusion in the succession planning process leverages a wide range of skills and perspectives, contributing to a robust talent pool. Continuous evaluation and updating of succession plans are essential to reflect changing institutional needs and employee progress. Innovative approaches in talent management include the implementation of mentorship and coaching programs to support educator growth and readiness for leadership roles. The integration of advanced HR technologies and data analytics is also highlighted, as these tools help identify talent gaps, track progress and optimize talent management strategies. By implementing these effective strategies and best practices, educational institutions can ensure leadership continuity, foster employee development and maintain a competitive edge. This paper aims to provide valuable insights and practical recommendations for educational institutions seeking to enhance their succession planning and talent management efforts, thereby contributing to the overall success and sustainability of the institution. Keywords: succession planning, talent management, educational leadership, leadership continuity, employee development, institutional success.

Everton Ellis

OISE, University of Toronto

Locating the Coloniality in Educational Policy: Boys (Still) Underachieving in Jamaica's Secondary Education

In this paper, I argue that the underachievement of boys in Jamaica's secondary education occurs within the intricacies of class culture and, more broadly, the colonial structure upon which the education system operates. This paper draws on data from a larger SSHRC study conducted in the Spring and Summer months of 2013 that examines the gender differential education in Jamaica's secondary education and employs qualitative research across two research sites. The paper uses Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano's notion of coloniality as a critical lens



to assess and interpret student-teacher interaction, the learning process, and education policy dynamics within the two sites. Using a combination of participants' responses drawn from semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers across two rural high schools in Jamaica, an analysis of secondary sources, and (to a lesser extent) participant observations, I put forward a few claims regarding the persistence of coloniality in Jamaica's secondary education. The study reveals that there is a need to 'localize' and make more inclusive the policy-making process to respond to the contextual specificities of Jamaica where the underachievement of Black boys remains a challenge. The neocolonial structures within which teachers operate make it more difficult to embrace pedagogical strategies that facilitate critical thinking and student engagement amongst Black Boys. The findings also reveal the complexities regarding global policy borrowing in education as strategies to remake schools often reproduce the coloniality in education. The paper concludes that strategies aimed at decolonizing schools and the learning of boys must avoid performatives in education and intentionally re-make the schools and educational policy-making process (Abdi, 2012; Lopez, 2020:30). This paper is significant as decolonizing discourse and practices should not be perceived as a panacea, as we have seen in the contemporary era of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Instead, the decolonizing process in education must be perceived as an "alternative way of intentionally remaking schools and educational policy-making process as sites of resistance to modern forms of colonization, white supremacy, and settler colonialism" (Abdi, 2012; Lopez, 2020:30, Quijano, 2017).

Emily Ellwood
Western University
Michael Baker

University of Manitoba

Transinstitutionalization in Canadian K-12 Public Schools Is The Rule, Not the Exception

In Manitoba and Ontario (Canada), students with disabilities are systematically confined to processes that result in transinstitutionalization. As a design, the Kindergarten-12 (K-12) public school system actively participates in the systematic institutionalization of those students participating in Individualized (I) and Modified (M) programming in Manitoba, and Modified (MOD) and Alternative (K) programming in Ontario. K-12 education transinstitutionalization is currently underrepresented in education literature and databases in Canada, raising concerns about the implementation of equity and inclusivity in the Canadian K-12 education system. This study is a dual autoethnographical reflection by two K-12 Special Education (Ontario)/Student Service (Manitoba) educators exploring the institutionalizing processes in the Manitoba and Ontario K-12 public school system. Applying a Critical Disability Studies lens of analysis, we briefly identify and analyze transinstitutionalization in Manitoba and Ontario K-12 public schools using lived experience (reflection) and curricular documents, grounded in empirical research. As Special Education and Student Service educators for the past eleven or more years, we argue the enactment of (I) and (M) and (MOD) and (K) designations in K-12 public schools demarcate students with disabilities, systematically selecting them for transinstitutionalization. This study demonstrates that despite Inclusive Education as a pedagogical approach, students with disabilities participating in these programmatic channels continue to be actively identified, confined, and marginalized.

Karena A. Escalante
Drexel University
Kimberly Sterin
Drexel University
Katrina Struloeff

University of Pennsylvania

Demystifying Equity Discourses of U.S. Education Policy: A Decolonial Leadership Exploration of the Compact of Free Association (COFA)



The dehumanizing language used to describe immigrants in the U.S. has received considerable attention in the media, as former President Donald Trump has made repeated incendiary comments about immigrants, labeling them as violent and undocumented criminals in ongoing presidential debates. Despite these efforts, Marshallese students – who live and travel freely to the U.S. under a unique bilateral treaty called the Compact of Free Association – continue to suffer low graduation rates, high behavior referrals, and racism. Given the disparaging impact of the word “alien” to describe humanity, the current Biden Administration has proclaimed to stop using the term “illegal aliens” to describe individuals who do not have the appropriate documents to travel to the U.S., yet the recent renewal of the COFA in March of 2024 continues to refer to people from the Marshall Islands as legal nonimmigrant aliens. This study uses a postcolonial framework (Parry, 2004) to mobilize change by advocating for an equitable distribution of power between the U.S. and Marshall Islands and opening a dialogue to study the relationships between texts and social practices in education. Grounded in postcolonial theory, this research is part of a critical ethnographic study that seeks to advocate for multilingual communities like the Marshallese to help improve contemporary efforts toward educational equity and proposes best practices for decolonizing education leadership as the next step in deconstructing the broader educational impact of U.S. policy on indigenous communities. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the urgency of increasing support for Marshallese communities by reviewing the COFA treaty to understand the educational implications of the law. In order to remove barriers while creating and retaining space for the inclusion of Marshallese communities, this qualitative ethnographic research project includes policy discourse as part of a larger critical ethnographic study. For this proposal, we focus on the cases of 47 pages of legal policy text to unveil discursive patterns and demystify equity discourses. The findings of this study provide insight into the different types of transformative change that can be created during the demystifying discursive work performed by education policy researchers.

Leroy Fearon

The Mico University College

Exploring Critical Approaches in Educational Leadership: Comparative Perspectives of Male and Female Leaders Across K-12 and Higher Education Systems

This study investigated critical approaches in educational leadership by comparing the perspectives and practices of four educational leaders—two males and two females—across K-12 and higher education systems. Grounded in the philosophical underpinning of critical theory, this research aimed to understand how these leaders navigated their roles to champion justice and equity within their institutions amidst ongoing societal challenges and inequities. Employing a qualitative research design, this study conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the selected educational leaders. Thematic analysis was applied to identify key themes and patterns in their leadership practices, focusing on their strategies for fostering transformative change, community engagement, and redefining leadership roles. Findings indicated that both male and female leaders employed distinct yet complementary approaches to critical leadership. Male leaders tended to focus on systemic policy changes and structural reforms, aligning with critical theory's emphasis on addressing power dynamics and institutional structures. Female leaders, on the other hand, emphasized relational leadership and community collaboration, reflecting a commitment to fostering inclusive and participatory environments. Despite differing approaches, both groups faced common challenges such as resistance to change and resource constraints, yet they also achieved significant successes in promoting equity and inclusion. This study underscored the importance of diverse leadership perspectives in driving transformative change in educational settings. By highlighting the unique contributions and strategies of male and female leaders across different educational levels, it provided actionable insights for educators, policymakers, and community members. These insights were crucial for developing more effective and inclusive leadership models that responded to the current demands for equity and justice in education. The findings contributed to the broader dialogue on critical leadership, offering a nuanced understanding of how gender influences leadership in education. They also suggested



practical implications for leadership development programs and policy initiatives aimed at supporting educational leaders in their efforts to create equitable learning environments. This research thus not only expanded the theoretical discourse on critical leadership but also offered pragmatic solutions for fostering justice-oriented educational leadership.

Marshall Gerbrandt

University of New Brunswick

Educational Leadership: Recognizing How Physical Space Can Undermine Espoused Culture Within the Canadian Military

It may come as no surprise that the Canadian military, like most militaries and many educational organizations, is a gendered institution. For some, this idea of the military aligns with personal experiences or beliefs. For others, those who are not White, able, heterosexual, cisgender men, this may represent a place of friction situated between an institution's espoused values and individual experiences. This paper draws attention to role leaders play in recognizing how formal, non-formal, and informal learning can work to support or subvert institutional efforts to address hateful conduct and harmful culture. Drawing upon the Canadian military as an example, this paper describes how formal instruction inculcates military members with the institution's espoused values. Whereas the many items which make up an educational spaces' background, through the subtle act of being, can subvert those same efforts by normalizing the reproduction of a gendered status quo. To confront this disjuncture, I will explicate the mundane or seemingly innocuous ways that space within the military education system is gendered and acts as a type of hidden curriculum. To do so, I rely upon ideas of public pedagogy, specific to education and learning within public spaces, alongside an examination of the physical spaces I occupied within the military to understand the ways I contributed to and experienced the reproduction of a gendered status-quo. My intent is to show how sharing space does not equate to experiencing space similarly. By spatializing education, I hope to expose the gendered natures of the learning environment that is often taken for granted by looking for points of friction. Therefore, I suggest educational leaders have a responsibility to interrogate how the mundane aspects of their learning environment work to help or subvert efforts to sustain or change institutional culture.

Casey Hanna

SUNY Binghamton

A 'What's the Problem Represented To Be?' Policy Analysis of Federal Full-Service Community School Funding in the United States

In the United States, the full-service community school (FSCS) model, a significant departure from 'traditional' public schools, positions schools as resource hubs for all members of a geographic community (Dryfoos, 1994). FSCSs integrate health and social services, academics, youth development, and community engagement into daily practices. Advocates frame FSCSs as an educational strategy for equity, leveraging resources, services, and funding to transgress neoliberalism and social and economic divestment (Oakes et al., 2017; Rogers, 1999). However, federal legislators present an alternative, dominant perspective on the purpose of FSCSs. To critically examine the discourses communicated by policymakers, a 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' policy analysis (Bacchi, 2009) was conducted on the FSCS subsections of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) and accompanying Office of Elementary and Secondary Education resources. Analysis of these policy documents illuminated deficit assumptions of communities experiencing high poverty and harmful representations of the purpose of schooling in high-poverty areas. These findings demonstrate that the foundations of community schools (mostly grassroots advocacy work) and the roof of community schools (mostly federal funding) are at odds with one another: community schools were created to address neoliberalism and divestment, yet most community school financial support and



resulting evaluations implicitly normalize them. Future policy discussions should include FSCS advocates and other community stakeholders to ensure that FSCS policy reflects intended FSCS practice.

Ahmed Kareem
Qatar Foundation

Navigating Educational Reform: Leadership, Resistance, and Transformative Change in Qatar's Quest of Excellence

Qatar's remarkable advancements over the past two decades are driven by strategic investments in social and economic development, guided by the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV) (Qatar National Vision 2030, 2008). Among its four pillars—Human, Social, Economic, and Environmental Development—Human Development emphasizes education, healthcare, and workforce participation. While healthcare and workforce participation have seen substantial success, educational reform has lagged, presenting significant challenges. In 2001, Qatar enlisted the RAND Corporation to overhaul its underperforming K-12 education system, leading to the "Education for a New Era" initiative (Abou-El-Kheir, 2017). RAND's recommendations included decentralized governance, a national curriculum framework, professional development for teachers, and standardized testing, modeled after Western educational systems (Brewer et al., 2007; Romanowski & Du, 2020). However, the implementation of these reforms faced resistance due to Qatar's unique socio-political and cultural landscape. Despite some progress, Qatar's education system remains plagued by systemic issues. These include inadequate teacher preparation and unethical practices like cheating. The swift adoption of English-only instruction and the marginalization of Islamic education have fueled public discontent, with many feeling a loss of Arab identity (Abdel-Moneim, 2020). As a result, there has been a significant shift toward private international schools, driven by a voucher system, despite these schools often failing to meet government-mandated Arabic and Islamic education standards (Abou-El-Kheir, 2017; Amin & Cochrane, 2023). This dichotomy has led to a divided educational landscape, with some families prioritizing cultural preservation through public schools, while others seek higher academic standards in private institutions (Amin & Cochrane, 2023). In response, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) has initiated measures to reinforce national identity and Islamic values in both public and private schools. Effective leadership is crucial in navigating these reforms, ensuring policies align with local values and socio-political conditions. Transformative leadership must prioritize cultural context, foster stakeholder collaboration, and drive adaptive change to achieve sustainable progress in education (Romanowski et al., 2018). This literature review explores the intersection of critical leadership, resistance, and transformative change in Qatar's education reform, emphasizing the necessity for contextually appropriate policies to achieve lasting improvement.

Erin Keith
Cape Breton University
Ken MacKinnon
University of Prince Edward Island
Donna Kowalchuk
Trent University

Leading as Co-Conspirators: Discovering the Prismatic Equity Work of Activist School Leaders

The purpose of this project is to identify strategies and recommendations to help school leaders enact equity and anti-oppressive leadership practices, and to build their activist leadership competencies. This project is in co-partnership with leadership at the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC). In alignment to OPC's equity, diversity, and inclusion key actions and the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF, The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013), equity and anti-oppressive leadership practices are a critical issue for the OPC. While there has been much discourse in recent years about why this transformative work is imperative to support diverse identities of students, staff, and communities, school leaders continue to question how to responsively actionize their leadership competencies, particularly if they represent dominant and privileged identities. Investigating this professional dilemma



will result in strengthening school leaders' equity work resulting in enhanced agency, self-efficacy, and moral courage. As critical investigators, we have been intentional in centering educational leaders' stories and counter stories through 1:1 conversation and focus groups. We have virtually met with principals, VPs, superintendents, and ministry of education officers over the last two months. Our role has not been to lead or 'be the expert' in conversations or story-sharing, but to create space for school leaders to contribute their efforts as a whole (Love, 2019) so that each story shared allows for new stories to be lived and appreciated. The tenets of transformative leadership are foundational to our research (Lopez 2020, Shields & Hesbol, 2020). As privileged, white researchers with lived experiences as school leaders in Ontario, we are continually learning, unlearning, and unleading to decolonize notions and practices of educational leadership. This critically self-aware praxis is inspired by such scholars as Lopez, Khalifa, Gooden, Ladson-Billings, etc. as we acknowledge our own biases, beliefs, and colonial tropes while listening to the equity stories of school leaders in Ontario. This research is presently on-going with results and conclusions finalized by late summer, in time for KMB, generation, and dissemination at the CLD conference. In co-partnership with OPC, we aim to document whether and how equity as an activist leadership competency is currently embodied by leaders in schools and to showcase their lived stories as they re-imagine and embody equity and anti-oppressive leadership competencies in daily school practice and interactions with students / communities.

Emin Kilinc, Ardavan Eizadirad & Jennifer Straub
Faculty of Education, Wilfrid Laurier University

Reconceptualizing Global Citizenship in Turkish Social Studies Textbooks with a Focus on Social Justice

This study examines the integration of global perspectives in the social studies textbooks used in Grades 4 to 7 in Turkey using content analysis as a methodology. The analysis focuses on seven mandatory textbooks distributed across the country and the big ideas and themes reinforced as official knowledge promoted by the state. The findings reveal both strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks' content and approach to teaching about global connections. While the textbooks aim to promote global citizenship, cultural understanding, and economic relationships, they also perpetuate nationalistic perspectives, stereotypes, and biased coverage of various forms of inequality and social injustice. Failure to critically analyze diverse cultures, perpetuation of biased views, negative portrayal of Western culture, and a lack of comprehensive coverage of inequality are some of the arising issues and emerging themes identified. Additionally, the textbooks neglect explicit discussions about equity and social justice and connections to the civic engagement of citizens. These findings promote passive citizenship and underscore the need for greater attention to inclusivity, cultural understanding, and comprehensive coverage of global issues and social justice in social studies education in Turkey and beyond as it relates to international relations.

Rabia Khokhar
OISE, University of Toronto

Educators as Changemakers: Interactive Read Alouds as Equity Praxis

Creating and sustaining equitable educational change requires various stakeholders working collaboratively and supporting one another. School and classroom educators play an important and integral role as their positions allow them to directly implement change that will positively impact students. An important way educators can create equitable change is by examining their pedagogy and practices that informs the day-to-day actions and decisions in classrooms. One foundational practice in elementary classrooms is the 'interactive read aloud'. The interactive read aloud is a way educators choose a book, read it to their students and ask key questions throughout to build student comprehension and understanding. This paper will explore how educators can take intentional instructional steps to use the interactive read aloud to foster and engage their students in equity focused conversations, thinking and learning. Through examining specific children's books and key instructional strategies, educators can use the interactive read aloud as a way to affirm and expand student's ideas, experiences and understandings. In this way,



educators can ensure that they are working towards positive equitable transformation in their schools and classrooms and bringing theory to practice.

Alison Mitchell

University of Glasgow School of Education

Principalship Development for Critical Leadership Praxis: Narratives and Implications of a Theory/Practice Dichotomy

Political acuity and critical praxis are increasingly essential leadership attributes in school principals as they reconcile fundamental paradoxes, heightened through and since the COVID-19 pandemic, around equity and democracy in education. This paper reports on a research-practice (university/district) partnership in Scotland, an Enhanced Political Cognizance (EPC) programme designed to develop political acuity and critical praxis in aspirant school principals. The course aims to strengthen leaders' cognizance and critique of the political foundations of education and social policy, and the confidence to model and nurture critical consciousness and activism across their school communities. The data presented through this paper draws from six participants' first-person narratives that were co-constructed with the researcher, following co-analysis of the transcripts of semi-structured interviews held with each participant. The narratives, from two district leaders, two school principal and two deputy principals, focus on the extent to which the EPC programme aims are realized and evidenced, through their leadership, and through developing critical praxis in their sites of practice. The main body of the paper presents distinct features of each narrative. It then problematises four recurring dynamics across the narratives that support or undermine the impact of the Enhanced Political Cognizance course in participants' leadership praxis in their contexts. The four dynamics, listed below, are explored and discussed through the theoretical lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Framework. 1) Participants' agency, in response to the policy exosystem. 2) Contextual support or isolation in participants' sites of practice 3) Pushback against perceived wokeness of positive action measures 4) Competing priorities and ideologies that intersect all system levels The paper concludes with two propositions. First, it recommends that principalship preparation programmes privilege the development of political acuity and critical praxis as essential attributes of social justice leaders. Second, preparation programmes globally, should include opportunities to scrutinise local and national contextual and systemic dynamics that can undermine leaders' confidence, agency and capacity to fully realize their learning, in practice. Both propositions raise implications for institutions designing and leading principalship development, if we are to value and promote leadership that will cultivate critical consciousness and praxis across school communities.

Carol A. Mullen

Virginia Tech University

Centering Equity in New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Through the SACE Framework

Equity-centered comprehensive mentoring and induction is a "path of justice" that can counteract teacher attrition while fostering "critical leadership towards resistance and transformative change" (Call for Proposals). The purpose of this research is to share an original mentoring/induction framework that spotlights equity in schools. SACE (support-accessibility-collaboration-equity) is a powerful structure for re-imagining mentoring/induction for critical leadership. Current mentoring models refer to the three pillars of support, accessibility, and collaboration (SAC). Long overdue, the crucial aspect of equity/justice in regard to career entry and socialization is introduced. The SACE framework extends the SAC model and fills a gap in the literature. Equity, a professional standard, was defined as a "mentoring approach" to supporting and sustaining teachers (A. Lopez, 2013, Mentoring & Tutoring). A case methodology determined the features of a division-wide, job-embedded mentoring/induction program. Research questions were: How do elementary practitioners involved in formal mentoring describe it? What was the perceived effect of COVID-19 on this program? Data sources: A basic demographics survey and Zoom audio-recorded 1:1 interview were completed by four mentor teachers, three principals, and three new teachers within three elementary



schools in the southern USA. The teachers were white and principals white, Asian, and Latinx. New teachers were queried about their commitment to stay at the school; teacher mentors about their work guiding mentees; and principals about mentor selection. As found from the results, while the program was operating in the crisis and benefits were identified, it did not uniformly demonstrate consistency and fidelity. The new teachers were disconnectedly mentored; one mentor had been relocated. With the uneven quality, support was inequitable. The significance of this research was established through the theorizing of equity-embedded SAC as SACE, a new framework (Author, 2022). It is time for equity to be recognized as a crucial programmatic feature for guiding “leadership praxis.” The addition of equity to theory and practice seems vital for countering unwanted trends and school-wide consequences. Equity is important for “re-imagining new futurities” (Call for Proposals) and fully realizing the goals of sustained intervention through empowered theory and practice. A contracted book with additional cases is in progress.

Tonny Nsubuga
Texas Tech University

Teachers' Leadership Role in Promoting Representation and Fostering a Sense of Belonging Among Music Students

This conceptual paper redefines music education by examining it from the perspective of critical leadership. It highlights the significance of representation, fostering a sense of belonging, and bringing about transformative change in student learning. In this paper, I assert that representation goes beyond mere exposure to diverse music. Instead, it serves as a means for empowering music educators to question conventional Eurocentric curricula and foster a learning environment that is more inclusive and equitable. The study delineates the necessary strategies for music teachers to transform into critical leaders who actively prioritize the inclusion of diverse perspectives in their curriculum. Several strategies can be implemented, such as integrating music, composers, and genres that align with the cultural backgrounds of the students and promoting critical thinking abilities to examine the historical and cultural aspects of music. I tackle the difficulties encountered by educators in promoting representation in classrooms, specifically concerning cultural appropriation and authenticity. This paper also addresses the impact of belonging on students within school settings. Research demonstrates that belonging leads to increased student motivation, values, engagement, and a positive shift in attitudes and beliefs about education that goes beyond the classroom (Alesech, 2021). Consequently, in this study, I demonstrate and exemplify how music educators, as the leaders and facilitators of learning, can empower students to see themselves as agents of change within the musical spaces. This study is important for music educators, and all teachers that seek to develop critical leadership skills for promoting diversity and equity in the classrooms. It equips teachers with strategies for designing a more inclusive and representative music curriculum, ultimately fostering transformative change in student understanding and appreciation of music. As research has indicated that belonging is a psychological need for students (Ratliff, 2022), this conceptual paper also targets teachers who seek ways in which to implement a sense of belonging for their students.

Dionisio Nyaga
Algoma University

Ethical Leadership: Rethinking Resistance in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism

Neoliberalism as an ideology focuses on market rationality to reduce life into a commodity that can be sold in the market place. This form of coding life for profits has continue to define how we peoples daily life is organized and managed. In the words of Michel Foucault, life under capitalism must be ordered in ways meant to train and control the masses in ways that are scientific and led by truth. Truth becomes the hall mark of governing population . This kind of government must decide who moves and who must be removed to allow continuous process of existence of some at the expense of others. This form of biopolitical control must be rethought more so in the age neoliberalism.



This presentation therefore reconceptualizes leadership under the current neoliberal governmentality where true leadership is given credence since it's assumed to be scientific and truth driven. Such leadership is given prominence under neoliberal capitalism such that its end is to enhance surplus value. We find this kind of leadership in most transnational corporation where everything must be gauged under terms such as efficiency, transparency, effectiveness and accountability. This presentation pays attention to these neoliberal concepts that help define true leadership to start asking other questions of whether we can equally have other concepts that are situated in people's lived experiences and values and that would help reimagine leadership in strange ways.

Karla Orantes

University of Toronto

Ableism in Ontario's School System – Seeking Strategies to Create and Foster Decolonial Inclusive Education

This presentation will focus on ableist attitudes towards people with invisible disabilities within the school system in Ontario and how those impact the academic experience and performance of neurodiverse children, specifically students in the Autistic Spectrum. I am also including in my presentation an analysis of microaggressions embedded in the educational system concerning my observations about experiences with labelling as a tool to identify and justify support within the school and explain how those contribute to the internalization of those labels. Microaggressions are being considered in this essay since they represent behaviors that have a significant negative impact on the lives of neurodiverse students. Many education systems are structured in a way that perpetuates and maintains oppressive practices that operate to disadvantage students who do not fit into the system. These types of oppression represent significant barriers in the educational journey of students with different learning abilities. These barriers also have the potential to cause the internalization of perceived stigma and create feelings of shame, low self-esteem, and anxiety in children identified as special needs, exceptional, different, or outside of the norm. By removing the barriers that prevent neurodiverse students from developing their full potential we have the possibility to create and foster education systems that can be more equitable and meaningful to inspire positive development and growth in all children. Decolonial inclusive models of education systems have the potential to drive societal change by implementing practices that embrace difference and belonging to prevent different forms of oppression.

Rema Passarelli

OISE, University of Toronto

Formal Teacher Leadership and the Education Management Hierarchy

Teacher Leadership has become a significant area of interest for building capacity within schools. This qualitative study centres on the constraints imposed on teacher leaders in their relationships with teachers and administration. The impact hierarchical relationships have on the effectiveness of the teacher leadership role is of particular interest. Micro-political analysis of teacher relationships in schools research on collegial teacher interactions are fundamental to this study. A lack of formal policy recognition may contribute to the way teacher leaders engage in their roles, their role ambiguity, and their lack of authority. The results show that teacher leaders navigate their roles by engaging in "invisible leadership" or "leading from the center" as teachers, mentors, guides, confidantes, and leaders in their "teacherness" within their school communities. Many of the teacher leaders use their emotional intelligence and micro-political strategies to navigate collegial relations in their roles with other teachers and the education management hierarchy. The data demonstrated that some teacher leaders are identified and mentored very early in their teaching careers, while others bring skills from other industries and university training to support them in their work. The teacher leadership role is complex and has become a topic of interest in sustaining reform efforts and catalyzing change. This research provides further insights into the micro-political and collegial relations of teacher



leaders within the education management hierarchy and the supports leading to their effectiveness.

Katina Pollock

University of Western Ontario

Donna Swapp

University of Regina

Annette Walker

University of Western Ontario

Colonial Constraints on Black School Leaders' Efforts to Enact Transformative Change in Canada, Grenada, and Jamaica

Purpose: In Canada, Jamaica, and Grenada, Black school leaders' efforts to enact transformative change in their schools is constrained by colonial hegemony. In Canada, Black principals are a minoritized and marginalized group whose experiences have been silenced in the academic literature (Armstrong & Mitchell, 2017; Newton-Thompson, 2020; Nyereyemhuka, 2024). In the Caribbean, Black principals are part of the racial majority and as such issues around inequities manifest in different though significant ways that have not been examined in the context of colonial regimes and longstanding inequity (Louisy, 2001; Swapp, 2015). Findings expose how colonial regimes constrain Black principals' attempts to enact transformative change and impact their occupational wellness. **Data Sources and Method:** We are collecting data in five Canadian provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario) and in two Caribbean countries (Grenada and Jamaica). At the writing of this proposal, 50 principals have participated in 1.5–2 hour virtual discussions. **Results:** Black school leaders' experiences of colonial constraints in the Canadian and Caribbean sites were contextualized by the intersections of race, gender, class, and religion. Ongoing coloniality shapes work structures and norms across all sites, constraining equity-oriented options for Canadian school leaders and hampering school growth in the Caribbean settings. Education administration, governance, and discourse remain pervasively Eurocentric and Christian. In Canada, anti-Black racism, microaggressions, whiteness, exclusion/erasure, performativity, and hypervigilance were pervasive themes in the data. These experiences played out in recruitment, hiring, and promotion practices that gatekeep Black applicants; Black school leaders' deliberate, political negotiations of their identities and leadership in schools, including the policing of hairstyles and clothing and Black school leaders' ongoing refusal to acquiesce to white stereotypes of Blackness; and expectations of free Black labour, especially around EDI work. Strong themes emerging from Grenada and Jamaica were widespread fiscal lack; notions of success being tied to Christianity and Christian education; sexism and patriarchy in principal recruitment, hiring, and promotions; and an ongoing defence of coloniality. Gender was another axis of oppression for women across the sites, while in Grenada and Jamaica skin tone and religion were two further layers. **Significance:** Colonial ideology is impacting Canadian, Grenadian, and Jamaican Black principals' efforts to enact transformative change in their schools. Our findings highlight the importance of decolonizing educational leadership.

Felicia Esinam Pufaa, Lucy Effe Attom & Dinah Ampomah

Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba

Participation of Females in Students Leadership at Junior High Schools in the Effutu Municipality, Ghana

Although women leaders globally continue to contribute meaningfully to student leadership and management, they remain largely underrepresented in leadership positions in Ghanaian educational institutions. Female students in most cases are not considered for top leadership positions at the Junior High Schools due to the assumption that they might not effectively lead their peers or be bold enough to instill discipline in schools because of their feminine



nature. However, in cases where women happen to get the top positions, they still face varied challenges among their peers, within institutional structures, systems, and perspectives, which require systemic transformative change. The purpose of this study therefore is to examine the participation of female in student leadership at Junior High Schools in Effutu Municipality, Ghana. Qualitative approach and phenomenological design was used to purposively select 15 participants (ten female leaders and five key informants). It was therefore found that females shy away from the top leadership positions for fear of being stressed by their peers and school management, fear of poor academic performance due to the leadership position, among others. It was therefore recommended that there is the need to create awareness among young girls in Junior High Schools on the benefits of leadership and how to effectively combine leadership with academic work in order to nurture young future leaders for both educational and national positions in Ghana, among others.

Key words: Participation, Female Student, Leadership, Junior High School, Ghana.

Cheryl Ricco
University of Western Ontario
Principal Leadership from a Settler Canadian's Perspective

The Truth and Reconciliation Committee's (TRC) Calls to Action #7 and #63 focus on the Indigenization and decolonization of schools to create positive change for Indigenous students. To address these specific Calls to Action in an Ontario Catholic elementary school, a critically responsive transformative school leadership approach is required. This approach emphasizes individual and organizational reconciliation that seeks to improve Indigenous students' academic achievement and well-being in the current colonial structures of the Ontario education system. To create an awareness of these structures, Catholic school leaders must acknowledge their own Settler Canadian identity. In doing so, they develop authentic relationships based on allyship with Indigenous partners and families to better support Indigenous students in their organizations. They also focus on improving the lives of their Indigenous students by ensuring that non-Indigenous educators recognize the critical role they play in the education of Indigenous children. This presentation aims to address a problem of practice whereby non-Indigenous educators must deepen their understanding of Indigenous knowledge, history, and pedagogy to address the TRC's Calls to Action. Kurt Lewin's three-stage model of organizational change frames this work within the school and becomes an iterative process that guides all elements of the project including the change implementation plan, the communication plan, and the knowledge mobilization plan (KMb). Halbert and Kaser's (2022) spirals of inquiry compliments Lewin's change model and assists in the monitoring and evaluation of the solution to the problem of practice. In essence, the purpose of the project is to build non-Indigenous teacher capacity in Indigenous histories, knowledge, and pedagogy to address the TRC's Calls to Action #7 and #63 respectively. It is to move beyond what may be perceived as tokenistic responses to the TRC's Calls to Action, and to move toward a stronger understanding of the privileges associated with being a Settler Canadian (Battel Lowman & Barker, 2015). The project is an investigation of how colonialism impacts learning for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, and how Indigenization and decolonization must be at the forefront of the work in equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Ato (Atu) Kenya Rockcliffe
University of Trinidad and Tobago
Exploring Instructors' Views of the Academy of Sport's Socialisation Process: Using Semi-Structured Interviews

This study investigated the socialisation process implemented by a department at a university in the Caribbean, focusing on curriculum, instruction, instructor-student relationships, and facilities necessary for effective socialisation of graduates. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine instructors at the University's campus, ensuring a comfortable and private setting as preferred by the participants. The collected data offers comprehensive insights into the instructors' views on student engagement within the department. The findings are organized into seven main



themes and 24 sub-themes, presented through consensus matrix tables and thematic analyses. The seven key themes include: Profile of Academy's Instructors, Education Philosophy, Programme Curriculum, Instruction Philosophy, Instructor-Student Relationship, Academy's Facilities, and Contrasts Between the department and Similar Foreign Programmes. The results reveal strong consensus among instructors in most themes and sub-themes, particularly in the areas of instruction philosophy and facilities. Instructors emphasized the importance of both university and work experience in producing high-quality graduates, highlighting the need for improved practical training facilities. The theme of Instruction Philosophy revealed a common approach to student engagement, focusing on feedback and interactive learning both inside and outside the classroom. Notable disagreements emerged within the theme of Education Philosophy. Some instructors perceived the educational philosophy as clear and consistent, while others found it ambiguous and inconsistent. This divergence suggests areas for further exploration and potential improvement. The most pronounced consensus was observed in the theme of Academy's Facilities, where instructors unanimously agreed on the inadequacy of current facilities. They emphasized that their innovation and dedication were crucial in mitigating the negative impacts of insufficient resources on practical training. Overall, the findings underscore the critical role of instructor perspectives in understanding and enhancing the socialisation process of the department. The insights gained from these interviews provide valuable guidance for improving curriculum design, instructional strategies, and facility development to better prepare students for their future careers.

Sigrid Roman
University of Ottawa
The Politicking of Teachers in the Media

This paper examines how teachers' politics and political activities are represented in the media in one Romanian (Adevarul) and one Canadian (the Globe and Mail) newspaper. Drawing on critical discourse analysis, this paper examines newspaper articles that were published between January 2023 and September 2024. Preliminary findings suggest media coverage in both contexts address two separate but related issues that question teachers and their political engagement: 1) the ongoing fierce public debate over the goals of education and teachers' role and 2) the perceived acceptable boundaries of teachers' protests. The project asks how the media representation of teachers may shape both the perception and the de facto professionalisation of teachers.

Peter Rugano
University of Embu
Principals' Influence on Teachers' Collective Efficacy: Meta-Analysis of Afrocentric Literature

Collective teacher efficacy, which is defined as the shared belief of a group in their combined ability to achieve goals, has become a very critical construct especially since John Hattie's work revealed that the construct has a very high effect size on students learning outcomes. The collective efficacy of teachers is greatly influenced by the school principal's leadership approach. This study was inspired by the persistent low educational academic attainments of students in the Kenyan context, which is deemed to be identical to that of other African countries.

This study's main objective was to establish what has been published about ways that principals influence the collective teacher efficacy in low resource context that are characterized by large student population, inadequate human and infrastructural resources and low morale of learners.

The study used a Boolean algorithm to search for papers with the key words "Collective teacher efficacy", "principal's leadership" and filtered using the names of African countries. A total of six papers were reviewed.



This study revealed that despite being a critical school improvement construct, very few studies exist from Africa about collective teacher efficacy. The published literature however shed sufficient light on the importance of the leadership role of the principal in the construction of a sound and effective collective teacher efficacy. These findings position the principal at the center of the drive for driving up educational attainments and has profound implications for the direct ways that a principal affects the mediating effect of teachers in providing support to learners.

Cynanie Sawyers-Haylett
University of West Indies, Mona

Operationalising Learning Organisation Practices in HE: Critical Approaches to Educational Leadership

Abstract Sub-Theme: Critical Approaches to Educational Leadership In the dynamic landscape of higher education (HE), fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation is paramount. This conceptual paper explores the operationalization of learning organization practices in higher education institutions (HEIs) through critical approaches to educational leadership, with a specific focus on Peter Senge's Fifth Discipline framework and the concept of the leader as a steward. The study aims to articulate how Senge's principles—personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking—can be integrated into leadership practices to foster continuous improvement, inclusivity, and equity. The primary objectives are to develop a theoretical framework for implementing the Fifth Discipline in HE settings and to highlight the role of leaders as stewards in facilitating this transformation. The inquiry employs a theoretical and analytical approach, synthesizing Senge's organizational learning theory with critical pedagogy and transformative leadership models. This interdisciplinary methodology provides a comprehensive understanding of how learning organization practices can be effectively operationalized in higher education. Data sources include an extensive review of relevant literature and illustrative case studies of higher education institutions that have successfully adopted Senge's Fifth Discipline principles. The critical role of educational leaders in cultivating a shared vision, promoting systems thinking, and empowering individuals at all levels to engage in continuous learning and improvement is explained. It emphasizes the importance of leaders embracing a stewardship mindset and acting as facilitators and catalysts for organizational transformation rather than traditional command-and-control approaches. This research is significant because it has the potential to inform educational leadership practices and institutional policies aimed at fostering learning organizations within higher education. By providing a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on enhancing the adaptability, resilience, and innovation capacity of higher education institutions in an ever-changing educational landscape. By operationalizing Senge's Fifth Discipline through critical leadership approaches and emphasizing the role of leaders as stewards, this paper provides valuable insights for advancing social justice and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in higher education. The findings underscore the importance of leadership that is adaptive, reflective, and committed to equity and systemic transformation.

Keywords: educational leadership, learning organisation practices, higher education, steward leadership

Kiiza Smith & Renu Pal Sood
Shoolini University, India

Challenges Posed by State Sovereignty to the Achievement of the Right to Self Determination

The aim of this paper is to explore the challenges posed by state sovereignty to the achievement of the right to self-determination from a Ugandan perspective. In particular how the achievement of this right among the Bamba and Bakonzo of Western Uganda (through the Rwenzururu movement) has been hampered by the international law concept of state sovereignty and its attendant notion of territorial integrity. The study shall therefore commence with an investigation of the scope of the right to state sovereignty in international law, then proceed with a history of the



right to self-determination generally (on the global scene) and thereafter more specifically in the Ugandan context. This will in turn require a canvassing of the extent to which the Bamba and Bakonzo people of Kasese have expressed this right in the Ugandan context and the prevailing tensions with regard to recent clamor/agitation for a Yiira Republic. An analysis of the policy of the international community and the African Union in particular in the management of self-determination shall also be made. The paper shall thereafter proceed to analyse the frictions between the right to self-determination and state sovereignty and seek to provide solutions as to how these two rights can be resolved without conflict. As shall be seen from this case study, the problem is a mix of the political factors with the legal.

Dale Orlando Taylor
Wilfrid Laurier University
Reflections of a BIPOC International School Leader

The purpose of the study is to examine the experience of a black female international school leader and glean from it the challenges and the joys about how representation in the leadership space can move education beyond a colonized context. The research approach will be qualitative autoethnography. The data sources will come from my own experiencing leading four international schools and also leading two divisions as a principal. In the international schooling environment, I realize that I am a 'unicorn', someone who holds the positions I have had, is extremely rare, and I want to describe the challenges and rewards from my own praxis. A literature review will draw on the experiences of other black female leaders in international schools. However, the deep, rich data that will emerge from the research is the focus of the study. The results of the study will provide awareness of black female school leadership that is often ignored or assumed to be similar to other populations. Black female leaders have the intersectionality of race and gender to contend with, and possibly other oppressed identities. An examination of how black female educational leaders conduct their role and navigate their work environments will be enlightening and offer a valuable perspective to both the academic and school leadership community.

Stephanie Tuterts & Ateeqa Arain
OISE, University of Toronto
Critical Policy Analysis of Bill 98 in Ontario

This paper describes a critical policy analysis of Ontario's Bill 98. The paper is informed by theories of critical policy (Pinto, 2012;2015; Winton, 2013; Winton and Brewer, 2014), critical democracy (Portelli, 2014, Portelli and McMahon, 2004); theories on race, racism, and anti-Black racism in schools (Lopez, 2020; Lopez, & Jean-Marie 2021; Shah, Cuglievan-Mindreau, Flessa, 2022), and social justice leadership (Ryan, 2012; 2010; Ryan & Tuterts, 2017;Wang, 2018). The purpose of this inquiry is to understand how policy changes such as this impact opportunities for the attainment of diversity, anti-racism, and equity in education and other social programs. In 2023, the Ontario Ministry of Education passed Bill 98: The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act (2023). This bill makes substantial changes to the Education Act of Ontario, taking powers away from local school boards and other local actors and placing them in the hands of the Ministry. Representative changes outlined in Bill 98 include transferring the power of setting provincial (and board) priorities for education to the ministry along with the power to unilaterally review and change curriculum. This paper describes how changes such as this demonstrate an historical pattern of conservative governments of centralizing power in the hands of the ministry. Similar centralization efforts can be seen in policies such as Bill 160 and Bill 177. In this paper, it is argued that centralization of decision-making powers in the hands of the ministry (or any actor) represents a critical threat to democracy as fewer people are involved in informing and making decisions for the general public. We argue this trend of policy changes and centralization of power is particularly alarming for those who care about diversity, anti-racism, and equity. As decreasing democratic processes decreases opportunities for diverse perspectives and needs to be considered in policies and processes.



The conclusion of the paper offers considerations for moving towards de-centralization of decision-making powers in the pursuit of greater diversity, anti-racism, and equity.

Cordelia Azumi Yates

Morningside University, Sioux City, Iowa State, United States

Empowering a Fair and Just Society: Demystifying the World of Equity Discourses and Practices

This research study investigates the complex and often misunderstood topic of equity in education. The study seeks to understand the discourses and practices surrounding educational equity and how they impact student success. The research objectives include examining the current discourse on equity, identifying critical equity practices, analyzing their effectiveness in promoting student success, and exploring the challenges in achieving educational equity. To achieve these objectives, the literature review will thoroughly evaluate existing educational equity research. It will involve searching relevant databases and academic journals to identify studies comprehensively addressing education equity. The search will focus on studies conducted within the past ten years to ensure the relevance and reliability of the findings. The inclusion criteria for the literature review will include studies that examine equity discourses and practices in education, the impact of these practices on student success, and the challenges in achieving educational equity. The data collected through the literature review will be analyzed using a thematic approach. This approach will involve identifying common themes and patterns across literature to gain insights into the critical equity practices and the challenges in achieving educational equity. The literature review findings will be presented in a narrative format, highlighting the key themes and patterns identified. The expected outcomes of this study are significant. They include recommendations for policy changes and practical interventions that can be implemented to address disparities and promote inclusive learning environments. Additionally, the study will contribute to ongoing discussions on addressing inequalities in education. The findings of this research will be helpful for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders as they work towards creating equitable educational systems that provide every student with an opportunity to succeed.

Edith S. Yibor & Lucy Effeh Attom

Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba

Barriers to Female Higher Education in Selected Communities in the Ketu-South Municipality

The study examined the effects of sociocultural factors on female higher education in Ketu South Municipality. Using a convergent parallel mixed method design, quantitative data was gathered from 355 female SHS graduates who were selected using a disproportionate stratified sampling technique and 10 participants made up of 7 parents of female SHS graduates and 3 chiefs who were purposively selected for the qualitative aspect. A structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were used to gather the data. The quantitative data was analyzed using frequency, percentages, and means whereas qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. The results showed that the majority of the participants strongly disagreed ($n=201$, 56.6%) and disagreed ($n=54$, 15.2) with the statement that higher education is of little importance. Sociocultural factors were not supported as a barrier to female higher education. The participants strongly disagree ($n=136$, 38.3%) and disagree ($n=69$, 19.4%) with the statement I did not pursue Higher Education because of my desire to marry at an early age. The results also indicated that participants ($n=69$, 19.4%) strongly disagree and disagree ($n=201$, 56.6%) that they ended their education after SHS because of my religious beliefs. The qualitative data showed that female higher education was considered to be good however, some sociocultural factors formed barriers that prevented some female SHS graduates from pursuing higher education. It was also revealed that poor academic performance was a major barrier to female higher education. Female SHS graduates had little access to support systems to pursue higher education. It is recommended that the government of Ghana and NGOs should keep working to eradicate all sociocultural factors that still form barriers to female higher education. NGOs, political, religious, and



local authorities should promote female higher education in communities.