The emotional aspects of leadership for social justice
Implications for leadership preparation programs

Michalinos Zembylas
Open University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Abstract

Purpose – The paper seeks to examine the potential implications for leadership preparation programs of the intersection between emotions and leadership for social justice.

Design/methodology/approach – The methodology followed was grounded in an ethnographic case study of a Greek-Cypriot principal who struggled to transform his elementary school into a community that truly included students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Findings – The findings of the case study highlight: the vision and practices of leadership for social justice; the ambivalent emotions of social justice leadership; and strategies for coping with the personal and structural dimensions of social justice leadership.

Practical implications – The practical implications are discussed in relation to the emotional knowledge and skills that are needed for preparing social justice leaders to navigate emotionally through existing school structures and to cultivate critical emotional reflexivity about the changes that are needed to school discourses and practices so that justice and equity are placed at the center of school leadership.

Originality/value – The paper offers insights into the emotional aspects of leadership for social justice, focusing on the implications for leadership preparation programs.

Keywords Emotional intelligence, Social justice, Educational administration, Leadership, Cyprus

Paper type Case study

In a recent article, Theoharis (2007) argues that there are distinctions between a "good leader" and a "social justice leader." Following Ladson-Billings' (1995) similar effort to redefine the distinction between "good teaching" and "social justice teaching," Theoharis argues that social justice leadership goes beyond good leadership. If this is correct, then it is important to re-examine the historic norm of what is considered good leadership to understand how leadership may not always serve all students (Bogotch, 2002; Dimmock and Walker, 2005; Scheurich and Skrla, 2003). Social justice leadership focuses particularly on leadership that disrupts and subverts unjust teaching practices and policies and promotes inclusion and equity for all students (Gewirtz, 1998; Larson and Murtadha, 2002; Marshall, 2004a; Shields, 2004).

One of the aspects that has been raised in the increasing body of literature on social justice leadership but has not been addressed enough is the emotional tensions involved in a leader's struggles for equity and justice in a school (Jansen, 2005, 2006). Jansen argues that there is an absence of studies that specifically address the emotions of leaders who enact justice and frame their leadership as a quest for equity, and asserts that it is important to explore the emotional dimension of social justice leadership. It is helpful, as Jansen points out, to understand how school leaders maintain themselves

emotionally in their struggles to promote social justice education, because this understanding may prove valuable for preparing and empowering school leaders to deal with the emotional tensions of a social justice agenda. As it is shown in recent reviews of research related to educational leadership for social justice (Capper *et al.*, 2006), edited collections of leadership for social justice (Normore, 2008), and special issues of journals devoted to leadership for social justice (e.g. Marshal, 2004b, *Educational Administration Quarterly*; Shoho, 2006, *Journal of Educational Administration*; and Normore, 2007, *Journal of School Leadership*), none of the previous research addresses how leadership preparation programs take into consideration the emotional complexities of becoming a leader for social justice.

This paper seeks to enhance our understanding of the emotional aspects of social justice leadership for the purpose of making recommendations to professional training of school leaders. Through employing a case study lens, the focus is on providing in-depth description and analysis of a principal's emotional struggles to do social justice work. This principal's struggles to navigate the emotional ambivalence of social justice leadership are used as a springboard to provide suggestions for leadership preparation programs. The analysis highlights the emotional knowledge and skills that are needed for preparing social justice leaders:

- to navigate emotionally through existing school structures; and
- to cultivate critical emotional reflexivity about the changes that are needed to school discourses and practices so that justice and equity are placed at the center of school leadership.

Building on Capper *et al.*'s (2006) framework, these emotional tools include critical emotional reflexivity, emotional knowledge, and practical skills focused on social justice as important aspects that should be included in leadership preparation programs. Exploring the emotionality of social justice leadership creates openings not only for transforming practices of leadership so that equity and social justice are more successfully enacted but also for informing leadership preparation programs.

Theoretical framework and previous work
Emotions and leadership
Within education, there have been calls for rethinking educational change with heart and mind (Hargreaves, 1997), for passionate leadership (Davies and Brighouse, 2008), and for balancing logic and artistry in leadership (Deal and Peterson, 1994). Moreover, empirical work has indicated that emotions are powerful forces in school leaders' lives warranting attention (Beatty, 2007a, b; Beatty and Brew, 2004; Blackmore, 1996, 2004; Leithwood and Beatty, 2008; Sachs and Blackmore, 1998). As Beatty has argued in her work, the emotionality of school leadership is an area that has not been explored in depth to date. However, there is growing evidence in the research literature that the affective world of school leaders is both complex and intense (Samier and Schmidt, 2009). School leaders are confronted on a daily basis with a variety of emotions that are inextricably linked to personal, professional, relational, political, and cultural issues (Zembylas, 2009).

The school leaders' emotional struggles have significant implications for their decision making, well-being, and overall leadership style. For instance, there is research that shows how school leaders (especially women) are constantly engaged in emotion

management processes, often with serious implications not only for their emotional health but also for their professional effectiveness (Blackmore, 1996, 2004; Sachs and Blackmore, 1998); at the same time, however, research also documents how mechanisms of emotion management help school leaders promote their own agenda, survive the high emotional demands of school leadership, and bring meaningful changes to their school (Beatty and Brew, 2004). School leaders' handling of the emotions in their own reflective practices and in their relationships with parents, students, and faculty shapes and reflects the climate and culture of their schools (Beatty, 2007a, b).

In educational administration and leadership theory and research, the emotions have been treated, if they are mentioned at all, as little more than psychological and cognitive forces that distract rational processes (Beatty, 2005). Even (Beatty's (2000, 2007a, b; Beatty and Brew, 2004) ground-breaking social and organizational analysis of emotions in educational leadership through a social constructionist lens makes the problematic assumption that organizations are either constructed or pregiven (Zorn and Boler, 2007). However, recent work in the social sciences (including cultural studies, feminist studies, sociology, political science, and communications) increasingly recognizes emotions as part of everyday social, cultural, and political life (Ahmed, 2004; Lupton, 1998; Abu-Lughod and Lutz, 1990). Emotions in leadership, therefore, are not only a psychological matter for individuals but also a political space in which school leaders, teachers, students, and parents interact with implications for larger political and cultural struggles for change (Zembylas, 2007, 2009).

Leadership preparation programs, then, should take into consideration the importance of emotions in leadership and thus give future leaders the emotional tools to navigate effectively through both the personal and the structural/political challenges of leadership (Zembylas, 2009; Zorn and Boler, 2007). In light of these considerations, investigating the role of emotions in leadership constitutes a valuable component of leadership preparation programs. These emotional tools are particularly needed in the fight for social justice (Freire, 2004).

Social justice leadership: implications for leadership preparation programs
In their review of literature on school leadership and social justice, Larson and Murtadha (2002) call for school leaders to collectively work toward social justice leadership. Social justice leadership means that school leaders make prominent issues of social inclusion, justice, respect, care and equity (Theoharis, 2007). In the forefront of social justice leadership there is a concern about the impact of race, class, gender, disability and other historically marginalized conditions on schools and students' learning (Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy, 2005). Contrary to the dominant concerns about technical competences, bureaucracy, and efficiency for effective school leadership (Marshall, 2004a), social justice leadership enables questions to be asked about how social, political, and economic advantages and disadvantages are replicated in school organizational structures and cultures. It is those issues that have gradually constituted social justice and diversity concerns as "risky" business for school leaders favoring high scores in student outcomes as evidence of success (Blackmore, 2006, p. 182). The purpose for school leaders, from this standpoint, is to achieve more equitable outcomes for all (Blackmore, 2006).

Embracing and enacting a vision of social justice leadership can evoke a range of emotions, from excitement and passion to anxiety and disillusion, with the more

powerful emotions, such as anger and indignation over the existing social and cultural dynamics, typically most closely associated with injustice. In addition to the usual concerns about bureaucracy and efficiency for effective school leadership, social justice concerns can leave the school leader feeling overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. As Jansen (2005, 2006) shows in his work on the politics and emotions of leading for social justice in South Africa, school leadership for social justice is an emotionally tense and complex process that includes: coming to terms with one's past; demonstrating courage and resilience despite working against formidable pressures; grounding one's practices in strong convictions about justice, inclusion, care, empathy, and equity; struggling constantly for emotional balancing; and understanding change as a multilevel process that contains social integration practices, curriculum revisions, community involvement, and ongoing teacher development. In the life of leaders, writes Jansen (2006, pp. 38-9), "emotions in practice play both roles, destructive and empowering."

Given that emotions are important in leadership for social justice, both at the personal and the structural level, it is valuable to examine what research tells us about the implications of emotions and social justice leadership for preparing school leaders. Although there is no explicit research addressing this issue, Capper *et al.*'s (2006) framework as well as commentaries by McKenzie *et al.* (2008) and Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005) are valuable and can serve as a guide for preparation programs that want to consider the emotional complexities of social justice leadership. Capper *et al.* (2006) suggest a framework for leadership preparation that should strive to give practitioners the tools – critical consciousness, knowledge, and practical skills – focused on social justice. To achieve these ends, argue Capper and his colleagues, requires curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment oriented toward social justice. McKenzie *et al.* (2008) offer specific structure and content ideas for educating social justice leaders, focusing on three goals: raising the academic standards of all students in their schools; preparing students to live as critical citizens; and structuring their schools to ensure that students learn in heterogeneous, inclusive classrooms. Finally, Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005) note along similar lines that leaders must be provided with new analytical skills, knowledge, and dispositions to promote social justice in schools. In light of these ideas, there is clearly a need to reform professional programs in the ways suggested so that emotions in social justice leadership are also addressed.

Overview of the case study and context
The case study examined in this paper describes the leadership practices of a primary school principal, John Jonas, as he navigated the ambivalent emotions that emerged in his attempts to establish a social justice leadership at a multicultural school, Sun Tower Elementary School, in Cyprus (pseudonyms are used throughout). Case studies are valuable in teaching educational leadership and administration courses because they provide rich data about the sociopolitical context in which leadership is enacted, thus prospective school leaders are prepared to appreciate the particular complexities and implications of the type of leaders they want to become.

Multicultural schools in Cyprus refer to schools whose student population has cultural, religious, ethnic, or language diversity. Principal Jonas's school is located in an underprivileged urban area serving approximately 130 students who speak

nine different languages. The predominant language is Greek (spoken by 50 percent). Other students speak Turkish (they are Turkish Cypriots and Roma) or they come from Bulgaria, Russia, Romania, England, the Philippines, Greece, and the Middle East[1]. Principal Jonas's school was originally selected for study by reputation, as it was identified by government departments to be a "difficult" school because of its large number of non-indigenous students.

Principal Jonas came from a low-income family and grew up in a homogeneous small community comprised only of Greek Cypriots. His family's poverty was a major influence in his life and instilled, as he said, "the values of community, caring, and activism." Principal Jonas recalled the positive influence of his father and grandfather, who were active members of workers' unions. He worked in several other jobs (e.g. as a construction worker and a carpenter) before becoming a teacher to "teach students the values of solidarity and collaboration for common good." After teaching for almost 20 years, he was promoted to assistant principal for five years and then moved into a head principalship. He asked to be placed at Sun Tower Elementary School, not because nobody else wanted to go to a "difficult" school such as this one, but because he felt there he "could make a difference and enact a vision of social justice and respect for multicultural difference."

In general, multicultural education is relatively new to Cypriot schools and society. The Commission for Educational Report (2004) – which was appointed by the government – expressed concerns about the narrowly ethnocentric and culturally monolithic Cypriot educational system that basically ignored multiculturalism. Also, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI, 2006) emphasized the lack of thorough understanding of and genuine sensitivity to human rights by many teachers and school principals. Other studies by researchers in Cyprus emphasize that the policies enforced both at the philosophical and at the practical level are mostly grounded in the notion of assimilation rather than in integration and that the educational system views the diversity of non-indigenous children as a type of deficiency that needs to be treated quickly so that these children can be assimilated (Zembylas and Iasonos, 2010).

The current model of multicultural education being implemented (with respect to elementary education) is a mainstreaming program in which language learners attend classrooms with indigenous Greek-speaking children. There are a number of schools that become part of a zone of educational priority (ZEP). Sun Tower Elementary School is part of that network. ZEP schools receive additional help – such as extra hours for assisting non-indigenous students to learn the language – yet the work of ZEP schools is not just to provide language support but they promote multiculturalism and foster closer links between the schools and the community. In-service training seminars for teachers in multicultural education are optional. Newly promoted principals receive a year-long training program in which they attend a four-hour meeting once a week (starting in October and ending in May, there are 20 such meetings); one of those meetings covers issues of multicultural education but the emotional dimensions of multicultural relations are not explicitly addressed in what these prospective leaders learn in the preparation program.

Methodology
Research questions
The larger research project, of which the study on Principal Jonas constituted one part, examined teachers' and school leaders' practices in multicultural elementary schools,

the variety of emotions constituted in the process, and their implications for social justice education and leadership. The present analysis uses Principal Jonas's leadership practices as a springboard to identify the implications for leadership programs and the kind of training that would assist or hinder a principal's efforts to incorporate social justice into his or her practice. In light of this focus, the following research questions guided this study:

RQ1. How are emotions and leadership linked in Principal Jonas's visions and practices for/about social justice?

RQ2. How does Principal Jonas struggle to navigate the ambivalent emotions of social justice leadership?

RQ3. What are the strategies that Principal Jonas uses to cope with the personal and structural dimensions of social justice leadership?

The present study is grounded in qualitative methods using a case study approach (Merriam, 1998) and ethnographic perspectives (Denzin, 1997). A case study offers in-depth data about the role of emotions in leadership practices and thus is particularly appropriate for capturing the many ambiguous and conflicting emotions that inform social justice leadership. It is important to state that there are no intentions to make any generalizations from this study; most importantly, the results of this study are used to highlight not only the personal but also the structural dimensions of emotions in social justice leadership, both of which are valuable components of leadership preparation programs (Pounder *et al.*, 2002).

Methods and data
Principal Jonas was chosen as the focus of this case study because he became widely known for his passion for social justice and equity; this made him an excellent choice among the principals of the multicultural schools that were part of the larger research project. For a period of two months, a research assistant moved throughout the school and observed both teachers' practices and Principal Jonas's leadership practices in an attempt to capture the dynamics of all the aspects of life at this school. Observations were recorded in audio tape and field notes that were then transcribed. Observations focused on the ways in which Principal Jonas's emotional struggles were manifested in his leadership practices and in his relationships with students, teachers, and parents, as well as how the organizational and political structures of the school influenced the manifestation of these struggles.

Data collection also included a series of five in-depth interviews with Principal Jonas in which he discussed how he felt about his efforts to envision and implement practices of social justice and equity in his school. In particular, Principal Jonas was asked to describe his vision of social justice leadership and the development of that vision. Responding to observation fieldnotes, Principal Jonas also discussed specific events and how those influenced his efforts to implement social justice and equity. Frequently throughout the interviews as well as in unofficial discussions, Principal Jonas was asked to describe the emotions he experienced and how those emotions were or were not connected to his leadership for social justice.

Data analysis was grounded in the theoretical framework. For example, I constantly looked for evidence that showed how emotions were linked to Principal Jonas's

perceptions and practices about multiculturalism and social justice in his school. To ensure validity, the research assistant and I worked separately and collaboratively, using an interpretive method of coding (Erickson, 1986) to ascertain confirming and disconfirming evidence of assertions arising from our data sources. We independently read and coded the data following the open-coding techniques outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1994). Building on this analysis, we interpreted the data by developing themes, categories, and tentative hypotheses. These interpretations were used as the basis for the development of the analysis and discussion presented below.

Findings

Vision and practices of leadership for social justice

Principal Jonas referred to the importance of being committed to social justice values and beliefs that aim at changing school structures and practices so that "students are inspired to be fair and just in their everyday lives." His vision is summarized in the following statement:

My goal is to create a school that works in a just way [...] so that student outcomes are not related to students' ethnic or cultural background, color, language, or race. I want my school to be successful for all students.

Most of the discussions the research assistant and I had with Principal Jonas came back to the issue of what he referred to as his "moral duty," that is, to make his school successful for all students, "especially for those students who are marginalized by the educational system or the society such as poor students, non-indigenous or minority students."

Principal Jonas described a number of practices he had implemented in his school to promote his social justice vision. First, his primary goal was to change existing school structures so that a guiding framework and practice of justice was enacted by school staff, students, and the community. Thus, he encouraged his staff to incorporate new ideas in the curriculum that met the specific needs of the particular school. For example, Principal Jonas encouraged his teachers to collaborate and infuse conflict resolution ideas in the curriculum, because there were many fights in the school between indigenous (the majority) and non-indigenous (the minority) children. Another idea included the differentiation of course content based on students' needs with a push for higher expectations. "The issue," said Principal Jonas:

[...] is not simply to convince children they should stay at school, because they have developed this habit of leaving school whenever they want to. The expectations are high at the moment. We want all children to feel good because they are successful in learning. We don't want to see them fail.

As he further explained:

My school staff and the parents need to be convinced first that it is morally unacceptable to subscribe to deficit thinking for non-indigenous and minority students or students who come from low socio-economic background. [...] Naturally, there is a lot of resistance from those who belong to the dominant culture [i.e. Greek Cypriots]. Non-indigenous students, for example, are blamed for everything [that happens in the school]. [...] We need to examine our practices, take responsibility for what we do, and not blame others or the system for everything.

Several teachers confirmed Principal Jonas's style of leadership; one teacher was quoted saying:

> Principal Jonas is very encouraging and never tells us we should do this or that. He is extremely committed to the ideals of justice and equity and that makes you want to be part of this effort.

Another practice that Principal Jonas implemented was to organize systematically events so that all parents, and especially non-indigenous and minority students and their parents, could be active participants in school life and the community – such as, inviting professionals to give lectures and seminars, offering afternoon Greek lessons to non-indigenous parents and children, organizing school events in which students and parents from various countries could speak their language and present their culture to the community. When asked about the results of these efforts, Principal Jonas emphasized that the school now experiences fewer fights and students tell teachers that they "feel good" about their school. As he stated:

> Now things are better. You see more parents, both indigenous and non-indigenous, coming to school, participating to the events we organize and commenting positively on the changes. We somehow feel more connected now.

Principal Jonas's enactment of vision and practice for social justice leadership highlights a number of issues that leadership preparation programs must attend to. These issues refer to the importance of developing critical consciousness both as a personal goal (Capper *et al.*, 2006) and as a goal for all students so that they can live as critical citizens (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008). Also, specific knowledge and skills that school leaders need to develop include the ability to put critical consciousness into practice (e.g. through establishing practices toward evaluating school programs in terms of promoting or not equity and justice) and structure the school to ensure that all students are not simply included but are also academically successful. As Solomon (2002) points out, prospective school leaders should learn how to build alliances with students, teachers, and parents and communities and engage them to struggle for social justice.

The ambivalent emotions of social justice leadership

Principal Jonas's emotions about social justice leadership were ambivalent (Zembylas, 2009), that is, there were both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. In a discussion about the emotional aspects of leadership that has explicit vision grounded in social justice, Principal Jonas made an important distinction between emotions related to leadership in general and emotions related to social justice leadership, in particular. As he explained, "Leadership is by definition an emotional process, but the commitment to promote values of social justice and equity is even more so."

He further elaborated that:

> You can't completely abandon yourself to your emotions because then you'll feel immensely overwhelmed. For example, you see things that make you feel paralyzed from sorrow or anger. But then you have to have the courage to stand up and fight. In a sense, though, for me, having those emotions is an indication that I haven't lost my commitment and sensitivity to injustice (smiles). So, I can say that I embrace these feelings, no matter how difficult they are.

Principal Jonas struggled particularly with the emotions of disappointment and frustration, as a result of his perceived sense of personal inadequacy and the resistance he faced to the social justice work he tried to do:

I am doing the best I can do, but apparently it's not enough, because I don't see things changing fast. There are days I feel completely helpless. This sense of complete failure, you know? Also, the resistance from within the school and the community is sometimes unbelievable.

When he was asked to elaborate on the emotions of helplessness and the impact on doing social justice work, Principal Jonas referred to emotional exhaustion, a feeling that has been identified in other school leadership studies (Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004; Blackmore, 2006; Crawford, 2007):

In the process, you become emotionally exhausted because you have to listen to all kinds of, for example, racial slurs and racist comments about immigrant children and their parents. But you have to be patient and teach those parents and occasionally teachers that there is a different way of seeing things. This is really, really hard. It's very frustrating and emotionally demanding and it wears you down.

Although Principal Jonas acknowledged the negative impact of emotional exhaustion at the personal and professional levels, he also had pleasant feelings to share from the relationships he developed with students and community members. He described, for example, a caring and positive relationship he developed with a group of Turkish-speaking students, who barely spoke any Greek, yet they were desperate to be included in the school community. As he explained, these children used to kick everyone, without apparent reason; therefore, he met with their parents, encouraged the parents to participate in the Greek lessons offered at the school, and gradually gained the children's trust:

All of a sudden, these children started coming to my office, telling me words their parents learned in Greek. I was sharing the words I had learned in Turkish and we were laughing a lot. A complete transformation began. These children wanted to be loved, they wanted to feel safe and included. It was important to establish this before focusing our attention on their learning outcomes. The fight incidents stopped and these children began participating in the classroom, in school events. It was emotionally powerful to see this transformation in process.

It was important for these children to be known and have reciprocity in their exchanges with others or in this case language acquisition success and experiences of joy in learning. Being known gradually led to a feeling of belonging and success, for both parties.

Principal Jonas's descriptions about both the pleasant and unpleasant emotions of engaging in social justice leadership are valuable for leadership preparation programs, because they show the constant emotional intensity involved and thus leadership students get a good picture of both the rewards and the challenges in enacting such a leadership approach. In other words, leadership preparation programs should strive to prepare practitioners so that they can survive emotionally in structures with intense emotional adversities. School leaders need the emotional knowledge (Zembylas, 2007) to see inequalities (McClellan and Dominguez, 2006) and the strategies to cope with the personal and the structural dimensions of social justice leaderships. These strategies and the implications for leadership preparation programs are described in the last theme.

Strategies for coping with the personal and structural dimensions of social justice leadership
For Principal Jonas, practicing social justice leadership was an emotionally demanding process that changed him over time, as he pointed out. These changes happened at

two levels: first, at the level of personal, internal changes that had to do with his coping strategies to deal with the emotions of social justice leadership; and second, at the level of school changes in how to enact social justice leadership. The strategies employed by Principal Jonas at these two levels are discussed below.

First, in relation to internal coping strategies, Principal Jonas admitted that his emotional responses were often "paralyzing" so he consciously tried to find some emotional balancing (Huy, 2002) in his responses. When asked about the strategies he used to establish this balance, Principal Jonas explained:

> I consciously try to balance things out and rationalize the situation. Yes, there are losses but then I ask myself, what do we also gain from this? So, I try to keep things in perspective. If I get too emotionally overwhelmed then I cannot think properly, so I let things cool down a bit and then reflect on the big picture. Often it helps me to talk to some teachers or parents that are close to me.

The strategies mentioned by Principal Jonas, e.g. keeping balance; keeping things in perspective; talking to close friends and colleagues, could be linked nicely with the literature on becoming emotionally prepared for leadership (Beatty, 2007a, b) so that the inner and outer challenges are successfully dealt with.

Furthermore, Principal Jonas's struggle to navigate his ambivalent emotions produced changes in his understanding and practice of social justice leadership. For example, he emphasized how he gradually came to the realization that social justice leadership was not an individual but a communal effort:

> I often feel guilty for failing to bring about the changes we envision, but if I feel too disappointed and paralyzed then I will let down my colleagues, my students and my community. So, doing social justice work is not an individual thing, it involves everyone. But you need to understand that your feelings have an impact on everyone around you. So you are not alone on this.

Therefore, Principal Jonas discussed the importance of constantly questioning one's self on an everyday basis. As he pointed out, this process of reflection included: "exploring the impact of your feelings on the people around you" and "keep[ing] things in perspective, keep[ing] in mind what we are fighting for." What he got out of this reflection, as he stated, was an enriched perspective about the impact of social justice work on life at the school and the community level:

> Seeing the impact of what we do, but most importantly perhaps, feeling that impact, feeling the joy of immigrant students and their parents when they come to school and tell us how their life has changed to the better, these powerful feelings are indescribable. They sustain your efforts and remind you of the big picture of life, despite the obstacles we face in the process.

As Principal Jonas asserted in the final interview:

> For me, the commitment to keep fighting means taking a firm stand on government policies without fearing for the consequences. So, I don't have any fear for criticizing what's going on, because the values of justice and equity are not negotiable.

Principal Jonas's case highlights that leadership preparation programs for social justice must teach prospective principals tools to cope with the personal and structural dimensions of social justice leadership. The coping strategies of unpacking the emotions of the day, for example, need to be featured in preparation programs.

This process of active reflection on emotional experiences is important in the data shared in this case study. An important implication, then, is that preparation programs should not only promote knowledge and skills acquisition at "the cognitive level," but also explore the strategies needed at the emotional level. These levels work synergically and thus critical emotional reflexivity is a valuable tool to be taught in leadership preparation programs.

Discussion and implications

Principal Jonas's experiences provide compelling data about the emotional aspects of leadership for social justice and thus constitute a valuable case study for leadership students in preparation programs. His struggles to navigate the emotional ambivalence of social justice leadership show both the pleasant and unpleasant emotions that are involved in the vision and practice of placing justice and equity at the center of one's leadership. Through the analysis of some of Principal Jonas's emotional experiences, it becomes clear that the efforts to enact social justice leadership involve intense emotional experiences. Leadership in itself is emotionally intensive (Beatty, 2007a, b; Beatty and Brew, 2004), however, it seems that leadership for social justice carries an "additional" emotional complexity because school leadership rooted in social justice has emotional tension at its center (Jansen, 2005, 2006). For example, to continue enacting social justice leadership, Principal Jonas refers to a number of emotional strategies that help him keep some emotional balancing – such as, keeping balance; keeping things in perspective; talking to close friends and colleagues – so that he can sustain himself both professionally and personally (Theoharis, 2007). It will be helpful for leadership students to consider then how these emotional strategies might be valuable in their skill repertoire to keep emotional balancing in their professional lives. In the last part of the paper, the potential implications of this study's findings for leadership preparation programs are discussed.

Implications for leadership preparation programs

Preparation programs for school leaders often focus their attention primarily on the effectiveness and efficiency of schools. This narrow emphasis, argue Cambron-McCabe and McCarthy (2005), fails to prepare school leaders to engage in the difficult emotional work that requires a shift in values, attitudes, and practices and limits their ability to address fundamental social justice issues. The difficulty of focusing on social justice issues becomes even more obvious in a time when governments and school systems want to focus primarily on the achievement of basic skills. Therefore, there seems to be a need to change teacher education programs as well as leadership programs to ensure that teachers and leaders are aligned to social justice issues and are able to accept the different perspective that this might bring (Theoharis, 2007). If leaders for social justice are to be successful, they need teachers with similar viewpoints.

In particular, for educational leadership preparation programs to promote and sustain a social justice orientation, future school leaders need to be provided with opportunities to engage in critical emotional reflexivity on their values and practices as well as their impact on the community. Future (or practicing) school leaders need to address the significance of critical emotional reflexivity as a tool of sustaining their emotional resistance against unjust policies and teaching practices. The inner work needed for leaders to work through their own emotions is critical in leadership

preparation programs and there is literature (e.g. some noted earlier in this paper such as Beatty's and Blackmore's work) which supports this position and proposes and explicates approaches that have demonstrated merit. These approaches include specific types of activities and teaching strategies that can be integrated into training programs such as autobiographies, life histories, workshops focused on emotions and social justice issues, reflective emotion journals, critical incidents, controversial readings, and structured group activities (Brown, 2004).

Principal Jonas's case study suggests that school leaders can challenge and expand the possibilities of social justice leadership by investigating the role of emotions as impetus for social justice work at their school. Thus, Theoharis's (2007) suggestion for preparing future school leaders to take on the enormous challenges of social justice education can be adapted by focusing on developing and building the capacity to enact emotional resistance to unjust pedagogical systems and practices. Leadership preparation programs often emphasize the effectiveness and efficiency dimensions of leadership (McKenzie *et al.*, 2008), failing to connect those dimensions to social justice and its emotional demands. It seems clear, however, that the emotions of social justice leadership deserve more attention in leadership preparation programs.

Note

1. Immigration to Cyprus has grown over the last few years, consisting of immigrants and labor workers from East Asia, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East; there has also been some internal movement of Turkish Cypriots from the north (occupied by Turkey since 1974) to the south of Cyprus, especially after the partial lift of restrictions of movement in 2003 in force for 30 years. Of the current inhabitants 13.7 percent are non-Cypriots (Statistical Services of the Republic of Cyprus, 2006). The changing profile of the population in Cyprus has affected the schools and the educational system. While in the school year 1995-1996, the percentage of non-indigenous students was 4.41 percent, in 2007-2008 this percentage has risen to 7.7 percent (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2007a, b). There are now some Cypriot schools where non-indigenous children constitute the large majority (80-90 percent) of the school population.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. and Lutz, C.A. (1990), "Introduction: emotion, discourse, and the politics of everyday life", in Lutz, C. and Abu-Lughod, L. (Eds), *Language and the Politics of Emotion*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1-14.

Ackerman, R. and Maslin-Ostrowski, P. (2004), "The wounded leader and emotional learning in the schoolhouse", *School Leadership & Management*, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 311-28.

Ahmed, S. (2004), *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Beatty, B. (2000), "The emotions of educational leadership: breaking the silence", *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, Vol. 3 No. 4, pp. 331-58.

Beatty, B. (2005), "Emotional leadership", in Davies, B. (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership*, Paul Chapman, London, pp. 122-44.

Beatty, B. (2007a), "Feeling the future of school leadership: learning to lead with the emotions in mind", *Leading and Managing*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 44-65.

Beatty, B. (2007b), "Going through the emotions: leadership that gets to the heart of school renewal", *Australian Journal of Education*, Vol. 51 No. 3, pp. 328-40.

Beatty, B. and Brew, C. (2004), "Trusting relationships and emotional epistemologies: a foundational leadership issue", *School Leadership & Management*, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 329-56.

Blackmore, J. (1996), "Doing emotional labor in the educational market place: stories from the field of women in management", *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 337-52.

Blackmore, J. (2004), "Leading as emotional management work in high risk times: the counterintuitive impulses of performativity and passion", *School Leadership & Management*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 439-59.

Blackmore, J. (2006), "Deconstructing diversity discourses in the field of educational management and leadership", *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, Vol. 34 No. 2, pp. 181-99.

Bogotch, I. (2002), "Educational leadership and social justice: practice into theory", *Journal of School Leadership*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 138-56.

Brown, K.M. (2004), "Leadership for social justice and equity: weaving a transformative framework and pedagogy", *Educational Administrative Quarterly*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 79-110.

Cambron-McCabe, N. and McCarthy, M. (2005), "Educating leaders for social justice", *Educational Policy*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 201-22.

Capper, C.A., Theoharis, G. and Sebastian, J. (2006), "Toward a framework for preparing leaders for social justice", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 44 No. 3, pp. 209-24.

Commission for Educational Report (2004), *Demokratiki kai Anthropini Paideia Stin Evrokipriaki Politeia* (*Democratic and Humanistic Education in the Euro-Cypriot State*), Ministry of Education and Culture, Nicosia.

Crawford, M. (2007), "Rationality and emotion in primary school leadership: an exploration of key themes", *Educational Review*, Vol. 59 No. 1, pp. 87-98.

Davies, B. and Brighouse, T. (2008), *Passionate Leadership in Education*, Paul Chapman, London.

Deal, T. and Peterson, K. (1994), *The Leadership Paradox: Balancing Logic and Artistry in Schools*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Denzin, N.K. (1997), *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Dimmock, C. and Walker, A. (2005), *Educational Leadership: Culture and Diversity*, Sage, London.

ECRI (2006), *Third Report on Cyprus: Adopted 16 December 2005* (*CRI(2006)17*), Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Strasbourg.

Erickson, F. (1986), "Qualitative methods in research on teaching", in Wittrock, M.C. (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 119-61.

Freire, P. (2004), *Pedagogy of Indignation*, Paradigm, Boulder, CO.

Gewirtz, S. (1998), "Conceptualizing social justice in education: mapping the territory", *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 469-84.

Hargreaves, A. (1997), *Rethinking Educational Change with Heart and Mind*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Yearbook, Alexandria, VA.

Huy, Q.N. (2002), "Emotional balancing of organizational continuity and radical change: the contribution of middle managers", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 47 No. 1, pp. 31-69.

Jansen, J.D. (2005), "Black dean: race, reconciliation and the emotions of deanship", *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 75 No. 3, pp. 306-26.

Jansen, J.D. (2006), "Leading against the grain: the politics and emotions of leading for social justice in South Africa", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 37-51.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995), "But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy", *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 159-65.

Larson, C. and Murtadha, K. (2002), "Leadership for social justice", in Murphy, J. (Ed.), *The Educational Leadership Challenge: Redefining Leadership For the 21st Century*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, pp. 134-61.

Leithwood, K. and Beatty, B. (2008), *Leading with Teacher Emotions in Mind*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Lupton, D. (1998), *The Emotional Self: A Sociocultural Exploration*, Sage, London.

McClellan, R. and Dominguez, R. (2006), "The uneven march toward social justice: diversity, conflict, and complexity in educational administration programs", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 44 No. 3, pp. 225-38.

McKenzie, K., Christman, D., Hernandez, F., Fierro, E., Capper, C., Dantley, M., Gonzalez, M.L., Cambron-McCabe, N. and Scheurich, J. (2008), "From the field: a proposal for educating leaders for social justice", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 44 No. 1, pp. 111-38.

Marshall, C. (2004a), "Social justice challenges to educational administration: introduction to a special issue", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 3-13.

Marshall, C. (2004b), "Social justice challenges to educational administration", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 3-161 (special issue).

Merriam, S.B. (1998), *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Ministry of Education and Culture (2007a), *National Report in Education*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Nicosia.

Ministry of Education and Culture (2007b), *Strategic Planning for Education*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Nicosia.

Normore, A.H. (2007), "Leadership for learning in the context of social justice: an international perspective", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 45 No. 6, pp. 645-792 (special issue).

Normore, A.H. (2008), *Leadership for Social Justice: Promoting Equity and Excellence Through Inquiry and Reflective Practice*, Information Age, Charlotte, NC.

Pounder, D., Reitzug, R. and Young, M. (2002), "Preparing school leaders for school improvement, social justice, and community", in Murphy, J. (Ed.), *The Educational Leadership Challenge: Redefining Leadership for the 21st Century*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, pp. 261-88.

Sachs, J. and Blackmore, J. (1998), "You never show you can't cope: women in school leadership roles managing their emotions", *Gender and Education*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 265-80.

Samier, E. and Schmidt, M. (Eds) (2009), *Emotional Dimensions of Educational Administration and Leadership*, Routledge, New York, NY.

Scheurich, J. and Skrla, L. (2003), *Leadership for Equity and Excellence*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Shields, C.M. (2004), "Dialogic leadership for social justice: overcoming pathologies of silence", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 111-34.

Shoho, A.R. (2006), "Dare professors of educational administration build a new social order: social justice within an American perspective", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 44 No. 3, pp. 189-292 (special issue).

Solomon, R.P. (2002), "School leaders and antiracism: overcoming pedagogical and political obstacles", *Journal of School Leadership*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 174-97.

Statistical Services of the Republic of Cyprus (2006), *Demographic Report*, Cyprus Statistical Services, Nicosia.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1994), "Grounded theory methodology: an overview", in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 273-85.

Theoharis, G. (2007), "Social justice educational leaders and resistance: toward a theory of social justice leadership", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 43 No. 2, pp. 221-58.

Zembylas, M. (2007), *Five Pedagogies, a Thousand Possibilities: Struggling For Hope and Transformation in Education*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam.

Zembylas, M. (2009), "The politics of emotions in education: affective economies, ambivalence and transformation", in Samier, E. and Schmidt, M. (Eds), *Emotional Dimensions of Educational Administration and Leadership*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 97-108.

Zembylas, M. and Iasonos, S. (2010), "Leadership styles and multicultural education approaches: an exploration of their relationship", *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 163-83.

Zorn, D. and Boler, M. (2007), "Rethinking emotions and educational leadership", *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 137-51.

About the author

Michalinos Zembylas is an Assistant Professor at the Open University of Cyprus. Michalinos Zembylas can be contacted at: m.zembylas@ouc.ac.cy