Educating Moral Sensibilities in Urban Schools

Kirsi Tirri (Ed.)
Department of Practical Theology, University of Helsinki, Finland and Center on Adolescence, Stanford University, USA

Nowadays, schools face the challenge of creating pedagogical environments that are sensitive to numerous individual backgrounds in order to support students’ social and academic success. Urban schools are communities with rich possibilities to learn how to think, feel and act morally. In this task, principals, teachers, parents and students of the schools each have their own voice. All these voices have to be heard in order to build communities with moral sensibilities. This book brings together recent work by international researchers from nine countries in the fields of moral development and citizenship education. The book consists of twelve chapters and it is divided into three parts. While the first part deals with the voices of urban school educators, the second part contains chapters with the focus on students. The third part is about curriculum, programs and practices in schools that contribute to the education of moral sensibilities in the school communities. This book can be used as a textbook in moral and citizenship education or as an updated research report on international research on moral sensibilities.
Educating Moral Sensibilities in Urban Schools
Moral Development and Citizenship Education

Series Editors:
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Wiel Veugelers (W.M.M.H.Veugelers@uva.nl)
University of Amsterdam/University for Humanistics Utrecht, the Netherlands

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‘Moral Development and Citizenship Education’ is a book series that focuses on the cultural development of our young people and the pedagogical ideas and educational arrangements to support this development. It includes the social, political and religious domains, as well as cognitive, emotional and action oriented content. The concept of citizenship has extended from being a pure political judgment, to include the social and interpersonal dynamics of people.

Morality has become a multifaceted and highly diversified construct that now includes cultural, developmental, situational and professional aspects. Its theoretical modelling, practical applications and measurements have become central scientific tasks. Citizenship and moral development are connected with the identity constitution of the next generations. A caring and supporting learning environment can help them to participate in society.

Books in this series will be based on different scientific and ideological theories, research methodologies and practical perspectives. The series has an international scope; it will support manuscripts from different parts of the world and it includes authors and practices from various countries and cultures, as well as comparative studies. The series seeks to stimulate a dialogue between different points of view, research traditions and cultures. It contains multi-authored handbooks, focussing on specific issues, and monographs. We invite books that challenge the academic community, bring new perspectives into the community and broaden the horizon of the domain of moral development and citizenship education.
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Kiri Tirri
Department of Practical Theology, University of Helsinki, Finland and Center on Adolescence, Stanford University, USA
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I am also thankful for the series editors Prof. Fritz Oser and Prof. Wiel Veugelers who encouraged me to work on this book. I also thank all the authors of this book for good co-operation. I wish this book could profit both research and practice in education of moral sensibilities in urban schools all over the world.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, schools are under a pressure to create safe, orderly, and effective learning environments where students can acquire social as well as academic skills that will allow them to succeed in school and beyond. Over the last two decades, student populations – but also teachers – have become increasingly diverse. Students and teachers sharing the same school can come from a broad range of cultures and socio-economical backgrounds. Schools face the challenge of creating pedagogical environments that are sensitive to numerous individual backgrounds in order to support students’ social and academic success. Schools can no longer afford to focus solely on delivering academic curricula; they are also responsible for establishing and maintaining school-cultures that empower students – and teachers alike – to negotiate the diverse values and social norms of our communities. The aim is to improve social competence among all pedagogical participants. This is because social curricula are crucial for mutually productive interactions and durable interpersonal relationships. However, students benefit not only socially, but also academically, when they are supported by caring classroom and school environment (Noddings, 1992; Tirri & Husu, 2006).

Many educational scholars have recognized the school’s role in value education and in moral development. Already Dewey (1934) viewed value education as crucial to the basic purpose of a school. According to him, “the child’s moral character must develop in a natural, just, and social atmosphere. The school should provide this environment for its part in the child’s development” (p. 85). The statement reflects the general motion that the school should help to develop students’ morality. Later, i.e. Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen (1993), Campbell (2003), and Tirri & Husu (2006) have emphasized the ethos of the school in the students’ value construction. They all deliver the message that schools simply cannot avoid being involved in the moral education of students. Furthermore, character education has re-emerged in 1990’s as a critical issue in North America and Europe (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006; Lapsley & Power, 2005). Many of today’s educators recognize the role schools play in personal and character development of the youth (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

The present book is motivated with the view of human beings as rational and emotional social beings who can be educated in moral domain. Morality can be defined as an active process of constructing understandings and meanings relating to social interactions (McCadden 1998). According to this definition, there is no definite answers to which morality or whose morality we should observe in our everyday interactions. In the context of the school community, the values of teachers, parents and children are in a constant dialogue with each other. In
addition to these various personal values, teachers need to consider the ethical standards of the teaching profession (Sockett, 1993; Oser, 1991).

The present book rises from two particular points of departure. First, concerning morality, previous research on moral education strongly indicates that moral dilemmas in schools are very context-specific (Jackson et al. 1993; Colnerud, 1997; Tirri, 1999). In the guest edited special issue on moral education these dilemmas are discussed in the context of pedagogical interaction in schools (Tirri & Kansanen, 2003). According to these empirical studies, teachers, students and parents have a need to reflect on the ethics of the school community. Second, nowadays, the average rate of students from different cultural backgrounds is increasing. Even one of the most homogeneous country in Europe, Finland, has today urban schools in which issues of equality and diversity challenge the educators to pay special attention to citizenship education that promotes not only local but also global citizenship. Osler and Starkey (2005) identify cosmopolitan citizenship informed by human rights as a goal of citizenship education. This kind of citizenship is a worldview that celebrates human diversity. Cosmopolitan citizens should act locally, nationally and globally. They accept a shared responsibility for humanity’s common future. They need to learn which values are culturally specific and which are universal. Citizenship is also defined in terms of practice, associated with democracy and with human rights. The practice of citizenship involves solidarity. The education of global citizens must start at the level of the local community and extend outward. Urban schools are communities with rich possibilities to learn and experience solidarity. In this task, principals, teachers, parents and students of the schools each have their own voice. All these voices have to be heard in order to build communities with moral sensibilities.

In the current discussion on citizenship education the emphasis has been on the ideal of cosmopolitan citizen with global awareness (Osler & Starkey, 2005; Noddings, 2005). Researchers in both the US and Europe agree that moral education should be an important part of citizenship education, even though citizenship education must entail much more than moral education (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006; Veugelers, 2007). The moral roots of citizenship and citizenship education have recently been discussed in the special issue of the Journal of Moral Education by various authors from around the world (Gates, 2006a, 437-441). In this special issue the role of religious education is also brought up as important component in pursuing morally intelligent citizenry. According to Gates, values have received attention in the arena of citizenship education but beliefs have not. However, citizenship without believing, philosophy of life, faith to live by, or religious conviction can be hollow-hearted and perfunctory (Gates, 2006b). Furthermore, values are not necessarily any more universally agreed, since they too are affected by beliefs. Gates lists reasons for making more reference to values and valuing in the current discussion than to beliefs and believing. These reasons include an implicit view that there is greater commonality regarding values than there is about beliefs. However, shared values and common sense morality can be themselves subject to a person’s fundamental beliefs and an act of believing. In the survey studies of social sciences the variable of religion is many times undervalued.
INTRODUCTION

and even ignored (Gates, 2006b). Furthermore, in the US the issues of religion and believing are not openly discussed in classrooms. This ignorance has been realized and suggestions for teaching about religious pluralism in the public schools as important part of citizenship education have been made (Nash, 2005; Noddings, 1993; 2005).

The concept of spirituality has been introduced to the discussion concerning linkages between citizenship education, moral education and religious education (Tirri, 2007). The spiritual point of view emphasizes that in spite of our cultural, religious and political differences we are enmeshed in the same human experience together. We all struggle to discover deeper meaning and transcendent purpose in life. The search for ultimate meaning is common to human beings in all times and places. Empirical studies have shown that more and more people prefer to call themselves spiritual rather than religious (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Mikkola, Niemelä, & Petterson, 2007; Tirri 2007). Furthermore, adolescents all over the world ask spiritual questions as important issues concerning the future of humankind (Tirri, Tallent-Runnells, & Nokelainen, 2005). In the discussion on global citizenship the spiritual aspect on life is an important dimension to explore in our search for beliefs and values that guide our life.

Studies in moral identity suggest that individuals with exceptional moral integrity are able to go beyond the immediate context and their personal needs, and demonstrate a strong, long-term commitment to ethical causes. Such moral exemplars have greater awareness of political and social issues, and have supportive relationships that contribute to their ability to identify or define situations as moral issues; moreover, they tend to be optimistic and establish a coherent set of goals (Colby & Damon, 1992; 1995). Moral exemplars can also be seen as moral experts. According to Narvaez (2005, 2006), a moral expert is someone who demonstrates great levels of: (1) ethical sensitivity (e.g., connecting with others, awareness of people’s feelings, controlling one’s social biases, understanding moral/social situations), (2) ethical judgment skills (e.g., applying a code of ethics, reasoning about what needs to be done, determining the best course of action), (3) ethical focus (e.g., making morality a priority, aligning one’s moral values with one’s identity, being an active community member, deriving meaning from living a moral life), and (4) competence at ethical action (e.g., implementing morally-related knowledge and action, engaging in moral leadership, showing courage and resiliency in the face of hardship). Hence, individuals who have good moral character are more expert in the exercise of ethical skills described above. According to Narvaez, students can learn ethical skills like ethical sensitivity, judgment and action by watching, overhearing and interacting with adults and peers. These skills can then be educated in urban schools through formal and informal moral education.

In this book our emphasis is on moral sensibilities. We acknowledge the holistic nature of human morality with both cognitive and emotional factors and the feelings on which people act often superior to their arguments. We build on positive assumption that people can be educated in their capacities to think, feel and act morally. We also acknowledge that we all are global citizens and we need
to become aware of this status in order to have active engagement with the world. Dower (2008) has discussed the different understandings of global citizenship including ethical, institutional and political dimensions. He summarizes the core values of openness and interest in the world as a whole and commitment to the process of values of dialogic and non-violent communication, coupled with the acceptance of the universal status of all human beings and a sense of trans-society responsibility for what happens in the world as common to people who call themselves global citizens. These values with the ethical skills identified by Narvaez (2005) have a good potential to build individuals and communities with moral sensibilities. This task is a moral call for the researchers and teachers in moral and citizenship education.

CHAPTERS IN THE BOOK

In this book international scholars from 9 countries reflect on moral sensibilities in urban schools from different viewpoints. The chapters are divided into three main parts. The first part focuses on educators with their roles and tasks in educating moral sensibilities in schools. Elizabeth Campbell starts the discussion on educators’ role in educating moral sensibilities and identifies the need to prepare ethical professionals in teacher education. She emphasizes the importance of ethical knowledge for teachers, which helps them to acquire an awareness of the moral nuances of their daily practice, and develop a capacity to reflect on how their own formal and informal behaviour within schools either honours or violates ethical principals. The empirical results from her research project indicate that pre-service teachers uniformly agreed that more attention during their pre-service education to the area of ethics in teaching would be desirable. They expressed a need to understand how to deal with ethical issues and dilemmas in the elementary and secondary school classroom rather than being left to rely on their own reactionary responses.

Following Campbell’s chapter on preparing ethical professionals as a challenge for teacher education, Christopher Day and Olof Johansson investigate the key leadership factors, which contribute to achieving and sustaining success in schools which serve disadvantaged communities. Their chapter emphasize the importance of principals’ role to the whole wellbeing of a school. Based on European project with several countries they identify and discuss five arenas that can all be viewed as different aspects of democratic leadership. The importance of moral sensibilities in principals’ work is reflected in all these arenas.

Eija Hanhimäki joins the discussion on principals’ role in the schools by exploring the moral profiles of 4 successful urban school principals. Her first chapter addresses the importance of character and life history in the development of principals’ moral sensibilities. Hanhimäki demonstrates in her research that even though everyone has his or her own life story, moral profiles share much in common between people who represent the same professions and work in similar contexts, as do the moral profiles of successful urban school principals.
In addition to teachers and principals, the schools need other educators that can be called “critical friends”. In her second chapter Eija Hanhimäki presents a case study of a deacon in a challenging Finnish urban school. In this case, the deacon served as a critical friend of the school and gave her own addition and support for the educational work of the school. The deacon also served in her critical role outside of the school and defended the children’s benefits in the decision-making process in the congregation. This pioneer project between the church and the school has crossed old boundaries in the social work of the church.

The second part of the book focuses on students and their mindsets, roles in moral and citizenship education, cultural stereotypes and morality and feelings related to religious education. In his chapter David Scott Yeager presents evidence that educators need to be aware of adolescents’ implicit theories in order to educate their ethical sensitivity. He reviews research on attribution theory and implicit theories followed by two cases in which implicit theories have been shown to be related to ethical sensitivity. Wiel Veugelers contributes to the discussion on students by presenting their views on moral education and citizenship education. He emphasizes the needs for students to develop their own identity and autonomy with active participation to dialogues in schools and in the society.

Vera Husfeldt and Frank D. Bauer discuss the importance of intercultural competence among students. They present empirical data from bilingual school in Germany with the emphasis on students’ intercultural awareness. Based on their findings, bilingual school has a positive impact on students coming from different cultures. Even though students generally have more positive feelings towards a typical person from their own culture, they clearly tend to have also positive attitudes towards other cultures. Intercultural competence can be seen as important aspect in ethical sensitivity and among those skills that schools need to foster in educating moral sensibilities. Theo van der Zee brings feelings and religion into the discussion on students’ moral sensibilities. He presents two educational intervention studies with elementary school students in the Netherlands. The study included students with Christian, Muslim, nonreligious and some other religious backgrounds. The students had the opportunity to learn religious ideas by interpreting religious stories in relation to their real-life experiences. The study provides evidence that positive feelings, negative feelings and boredom relate to religious ideas and that an intervention relates to change in feelings. Hence, feelings are an important aspect to acknowledge in educating moral sensibilities especially in the religious and spiritual domains.

The third part of the book looks at the curriculum, programs and practices in schools that contribute to the education of moral sensibilities in the school communities. Kristiina Holm, Kirsi Tirri and Eija Hanhimäki investigate how human rights are observed in Finnish secondary schools. Their data consists of urban school students (N=591) who have assessed with a help of a questionnaire how their school environment has given everyone a chance to enjoy their rights. The study identifies aspects in human rights that are not so familiar for students and differences in the assessments between boys and girls and students from different schools. In the following chapter Wolfgang Althof introduces the
rationale of just community programs and forms of practice conducive to democratic education. Furthermore, he discusses some affinities of the just community approach, which integrate school as polity and school as just, and caring community. Jean-Luc Patry, Sieglinde Weyringer and Alfred Weinberger introduce a method to nurture moral sensibilities in schools. Values and Knowledge Education (VaKE) is shown to be successful in fostering moral sensibility of students without a negative impact on knowledge acquisition. Furthermore, it promotes positive effects also in social domain. Marta Fulop is the author of the last chapter in this book. She introduces us the concepts of cooperation and competition in the context of citizenship educations. Hungary as a post-socialist country is an interesting case to study the moral aspects in competition. According to empirical studies students in Hungary cheat more than their peers in some other European countries. Thus educating moral sensibility should be part of the educational practices in order to bring up a moral, cooperative citizen in a competitive society.

REFERENCES


Kirsi Tirri
Department of Practical Theology
University of Helsinki
Center on Adolescence,
Stanford University
PART 1: FOCUS ON URBAN SCHOOL EDUCATORS
1. PREPARING ETHICAL PROFESSIONALS
AS A CHALLENGE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

THE MORALLY GOOD TEACHER: AN INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS IN TEACHING

In an article addressing research on teacher ethics and the moral dimensions of teaching, Swedish scholar Gunnel Colnerud poses for our consideration the following question: “Why is it so difficult to be a morally good teacher?” (Colnerud, 2006, p. 365). Given the attention to the moral and ethical aspects of teaching, as illustrated at least in part by three substantial reviews of the literature in this field (Hansen, 2001a; Oser, 1994; Sackett, 1992), such a question has the potential both to intrigue and to jolt those of us who engage in the study of the moral practices of teachers (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Campbell, 2003; Hansen, 2001b; Jackson et al., 1993; McCadden, 1998; Richardson & Fenstermacher, 2001; Simon, 2001; Sackett, 1993). It forces us to confront the reality that, despite the evidence we have to reinforce the concept of teaching as a moral profession, there exist also perils, complexities, and tensions that complicate the concept of the “good teacher” (Hare, 1993).

Long defined broadly as a moral profession (Goodlad et al., 1990; Tom, 1984), teaching as both a moral and intellectual activity has increasingly been the focus of a growing body of scholarship (Boostrom, 1998; Campbell, 2008; Goodman & Lesnick, 2001; Sanger, 2001; Stengel & Tom, 1995, 2006). Integral to the moral and ethical nature of teaching and schooling is the role of the teacher who ideally possesses “moral imagination” (Joseph, 2003), “moral wisdom” (Carr, 1993), and “moral perception” (Simpson & Garrison, 1995). Teachers imbued with the “manner” (Fallona, 2000; Richardson & Fenstermacher, 2001) and “dispositions” (Sackett, 2006), reflective of a range of virtues from fairness, justice, honesty, and integrity to compassion, patience, diligence, respect for others, and constancy, are seen by some as being in a state of moral agency (Bergem, 1990; Campbell, 2003; Huebner, 1996; Katz et al., 1999; Reitz, 1998). As Buzzelli and Johnston (2002) note in their discussion of moral agency, “In this view, teaching is an activity involving a deep awareness of the significance of one’s choices and how those choices influence the development and well-being of others. An awareness of the moral significance of one’s work enlarges the understanding of that work” (p. 12).

Inevitably, as the literature exemplifies, in the consideration of the moral role of the teacher, both as an individual and as a member of a professional group, issues of professional ethics in education become crucial (Campbell, 2000, 2001; Carr, 2000; Hostetler, 1997; Lovat, 1998; Nash, 1996; Strike & Ternasky, 1993). And, yet, so too do the ethical dilemmas and tensions that confront teachers (Campbell, 1996, 1997a; Colnerud, 1997; Husa, 2001; Strike & Soltis, 1992; Tirri, 1999; Tirri
& Husu, 2002; Zubay & Soltis, 2005) to complicate their moral agency and challenge their sense of professional ethics. In adding to the complexity of their practice, these moral and ethical tensions, as an unavoidable aspect of institutional and interpersonal life in schools, are what have led Colnerud to pose her thought-provoking question about the difficulties that inhibit teachers from being “morally good.” She further notes, “However, only knowing that they constantly have to be in a battlefield of conflicting forces may not help teachers. They also have to manage to navigate in this complicated matter, which is dependent on their ethical judgement” (Colnerud, 2006, p. 380).

The intention of this chapter is not to answer Colnerud’s question, but rather to acknowledge it as an indication that, despite the ethical nature of teaching as a moral profession, the maintenance of a clear moral orientation to the practice of teaching is not a guaranteed characteristic that is naturally embedded in the role of teacher. As I have stated previously, “While the ethical teacher is, by necessity, an ethical person . . . the reverse is not necessarily the case” (Campbell, 2003, p. 59). Somehow, teachers need to acquire an awareness of the moral nuances of their daily practice, and develop a capacity to reflect on how their own formal and informal behaviour within schools and classrooms either honours or violates ethical principles. They need to cultivate what I have discussed before as “ethical knowledge” (Campbell, 2003).

This chapter explores the role of pre-service teacher education in enabling or thwarting such cultivation. In concurrence with much of the literature in the field, it proposes that programs of teacher education represent a logical starting point and a unique opportunity for introducing the moral imperatives of teaching to those embarking on their professional career. It further reports on some of the empirical evidence I have gathered in a current research project that indicates, again in line with much of the literature, that the ethics of teaching remains either an ignored or misrepresented area of instruction in teacher education. Ultimately, the chapter considers, again from the perspective of this research, the inadequacy of ethics education in teacher preparation and questions if it can be remedied.

I define ethical knowledge as a virtue-based construct situated within an applied appreciation of the significance in teaching of such moral principles as justice and fairness, honesty and integrity, kindness and care, empathy and respect for others. Those teachers with a heightened sense of ethical knowledge have the capacity to identify both formal and spontaneous moments in their teaching that are infused with or compromising of such virtues. These moments may relate to teachers’ use of pedagogical techniques or classroom management strategies, their choices of curriculum and teaching materials, their methods of assessment and evaluation, their interpersonal exchanges with students and others on behalf of students, or any other aspect of their daily practice that has the potential to influence student well-being emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Ethical knowledge may be recognized in the tone of voice a teacher uses to address students, the care a teacher takes with students’ work, the substance of a lesson taught, the casual remarks a teacher makes, the way a teacher arranges groups or adjudicates among the sometimes conflicting needs and interests of individual students and the class
GROUP AS A WHOLE. I DESCRIBE TEACHERS WHO HAVE A HEIGHTENED AWARENESS OF THEIR MORAL AGENCY ROLE AS THOSE POSSESSING A KEEN SENSE OF ETHICAL KNOWLEDGE:

With thoughtful intent, they express a reflective acknowledgement of the virtues and principles that guide their practice. They are mindful of the good. So, while their daily acts of fairness, kindness, honesty, and respect—as well as the complex subtleties of interacting with students—may still be largely spontaneous and habitual, some teachers nonetheless do seem able to perceive and explain them within a moral and ethical framework to an extent greater than that which they have been previously credited (Campbell, 2003, p. 39).

And yet, even those teachers who have developed a level of ethical knowledge are not immune from what Buzzelli and Johnston (2002) refer to as moral “blind spots” (p. 25). As Huebner (1996) similarly remarks, “Teachers are often blind to the moral dimension of their practice because educational language tends to call attention only to those problems that can be solved technically . . . Teachers do not talk about themselves as moral agents” (p. 268). Others have clearly argued that teachers do not use a “moral language” when discussing their practice (Bergem, 1993; Sockett, 1993; Sackett & LePage, 2002). Kenneth Strike (1995), who advocates for the development of an “ethical language” in teaching, states, “Teachers are rarely asked to engage in moral dialogue with other educational professionals about the ethical issues of their practice” (p. 33).

How then can ethical knowledge be developed, shared, and sustained within professional communities of teachers? This question has implications for those involved in teacher education whose mission is to prepare future practitioners for the realities of teaching and schooling. Presumably, pre-service teachers come to their formal preparation and induction with some kind of moral foundation and ethical standards as people (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Fenstermacher, 2001; Joseph & Efron, 1993; Sackett, 1993). However, how do they supplement their more general moral sensibilities, as they become trusted professionals charged with the complex demands of moral agency (Sackett, 1990)? How do they come to recognize and anticipate the connections between ethical orientations to core principles and the daily realities of teaching (Carr, 2000; Hostetler, 1997; Nash, 1996; Strike & Ternasky, 1993)? What does ethical knowledge look like in those embarking on a career in teaching, and what types of curricular experiences influence its development? Furthermore, how does teacher education foster an understanding of teaching as a moral endeavour (Joseph, 2003; Richardson & Fallona, 2001; Stengel & Tom, 1995; Strike, 1995)? These questions, which for the most part remain for me unanswered, should help guide the conceptualization of any teacher education program as the initial place for engaging teachers with the moral and ethical nuances and complexities of practice.

TEACHER EDUCATION AS A STARTING POINT

It is my belief that an effective teacher education program must begin with the personal ethical/moral development of the prospective teacher . . .
future teachers are to guide others toward moral maturity, they must possess a certain level of moral maturity and be capable of making choices based on moral principles (Weber, 1998, p. 86).

Scholarship in the fields of professional ethics and the moral dimensions of teaching overwhelmingly identifies pre-service teacher education as both the logical and potentially most effective point at which to introduce the moral and ethical domain of teaching to teachers (Beyer, 1997; Bradley, 1998; Bull, 1993; Campbell, 1997b; Cummings et al., 2001; Donahue, 1999; Freeman, 1998; Hamberger & Moore, 1997; Joseph, 2003; Lovat, 1998; Oser & Althof, 1993; Nash, 1991; Rogers & Webb, 1991; Ungaretti et al., 1997; Willemse et al., 2005; Yost, 1997). Applied professional ethics and the cultivation of moral sensibilities should be an intricate component of teacher education, connected to the daily experiences of classroom teachers. As Joseph (2003) says of her seminars on moral imagination, “I wanted my students to have a complex view of moral development and education, to characterize themselves as moral practitioners, to use moral language for understanding themselves and their work, and finally, to engage in critical reflection about their personal beliefs and ethical dilemmas” (p. 9). Others have also written about various approaches to acquainting pre-service teachers with the ethics of teaching, from adopting Kohlbergian theory to Aristotelian virtue theory, from applied ethical theory and the examination of ethical codes, as well as the use of case study dilemmas, to reflective inquiry that both anticipates and extends the practical experiences student teachers have during their in-school field placements (Dinkelman, 2000; Fallona, 2000; Hamberger & Moore, 1997; Hansen, 1998; Howe, 1986).

Empirical studies have explored these and other ways teacher educators expose their students to the ethical landscape of teaching. For example, Donahue (1999) describes a case study of pre-service teachers who participate in service learning initiatives as a means of heightening their ethical orientation to teaching. Rogers and Webb (1991) address models of caring as a guide for ethical decision making that should be infused into teacher education programs.

As a related field of study, there exists a body of research literature that reveals initiatives in teacher education to develop pre-service teachers into moral or character educators (Berkowitz, 1998; Jones et al., 1998; Lickona, 1998; Mathison, 1998; Narváez & Lapsley, 2008). This is quite a distinct objective from the preparation of teachers to be moral and ethical practitioners, not for the educative benefit of their students but rather as a professional imperative in and of itself. Nonetheless, as others note, it is difficult to separate fully the moral role of teachers as ethical practitioners and the impact they may have on educating students to be themselves more morally disposed. The inevitable influence of role modelling is often referenced (Bergem, 1990; Campbell, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003; Willemse et al., 2005).

Much of the literature that emphasizes the importance of including ethics instruction of some kind in teacher education programs, even those articles that describe specific approaches that do exist, simultaneously acknowledges that, unlike in many other professions, such instruction is extremely limited in schools.
PREPARING ETHICAL PROFESSIONALS AS A CHALLENGE

of education (Bergem, 1993; Nash, 1991; Oser, 1994; Ungaretti et al., 1997). As Bradley (1998) strongly asserts, “Until such time as teacher educators adopt a public and accountable ethical regime for teacher candidates, this quasi-profession of teaching will continue to wallow in uncertainty and misdirection” (p. 299). Some of the common criticisms conclude that, in the rare instances when professional ethics and/or the moral aspects of teaching are taught to pre-service teachers, the content is invariably presented as an add-on to the program rather than as a compulsory component, or it is obscured by an emphasis on law and formalized ethical codes that are not useful (Campbell, 2001; Nash, 1991), or it is embedded in abstract courses in philosophy (Strike, 1995) that are similarly removed from the daily dynamics of classroom teaching.

It seems, at least from the perspective of my own research, that such criticisms relating to either the lack or inadequacy of ethics instruction in programs of teacher education continue to be justified. The remainder of this chapter provides snapshots of research findings from my ongoing qualitative project entitled, “The Cultivation of Ethical Knowledge in Teaching.” Briefly, the objective of this research is to explore if, how, and the degree to which experiences in teacher education programs contribute to an appreciation of the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching on the part of student teachers and beginning teachers. Following from an analysis of documentary evidence (e.g., course syllabi, program literature, reading lists, ethical codes, mission statements, program overviews, practice teaching handbooks) gathered from faculties and schools of education across Canada and in some areas of the United States, the data gathering has involved semi-structured interviews conducted both with focus groups and individuals. To date, 45 student teachers and 15 beginning teachers with up to five years of practice in the profession have been interviewed. They collectively represent experiences from five different faculties of education in Canada.

As a point relevant to the overall theme of this book, which centres on urban schools, I should note that the participants in this study uniformly reflect the realities of teaching in urban areas, although this is not an explicit focus of the research project. Their programs of teacher education are all located in mid to large sized cities, and the majority of participants teach, as either student teachers or new teachers, in elementary and secondary schools located in and around Metropolitan Toronto, the largest and most diverse city in Canada, and one of the most diverse in the world. This factor has particular significance for student teachers grappling with what they see as differing and sometimes-conflicting moral perspectives represented in schools, reflective of highly heterogeneous populations, while at the same time striving to identify a common and consistent ethical perspective that defines the professional expectations for teachers. It also influences one specific orientation to the ethics of teaching that some student teachers identify as critical to their moral agency. Unfortunately, as will be explored in the next section, this orientation, in combination with other aspects of their student teaching experiences, seems wanting in its capacity to build ethical knowledge. An emerging impression is that their teacher education programs provide not a starting
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point for their professional ethical development, but rather a possible deviation from it.

TEACHER EDUCATION AS A DEVIATION: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE FIELD

The data presented in this section represent brief exemplars of the kinds of responses student teachers and beginning teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels offered when asked to describe their teacher education experiences, as they either illuminated or failed to illuminate the moral and ethical aspects of teaching. Consistent with the literature in this field, the participants claimed that they received minimal, if any, explicit education or training in professional ethics and the moral responsibilities of teachers. In courses where such issues “did come up,” either intentionally or unintentionally, participants claimed that the treatment of the area was brief, vague, and inconsequential to their teaching practice and theoretical professional knowledge. As one stated, “It was so little that I cannot remember. Most of it, to tell you the truth, was stuff that was just handed out . . . (to) read on your own, if you’re interested.” Another commented, “If they (teacher education program) did do something on ethics, then it would have sunk in better. But, it was more of a passing of the knowledge rather than having us understand it. I can’t remember much.” Collectively, the participants “were not overly certain as to which components of the program were ethically related,” to quote one of them.

Any direct emphasis on the moral dimensions of teaching is clearly seen to be missing from the teacher education curricular experience of most participants. However, perhaps even more unsettling are the theoretical and practical experiences participants identified as possible substitutions for more rigorous instruction in applied ethics. Such experiences may be clustered around three broad thematic foci that the participants address as having some relevance to their understanding of the ethics of teaching. Firstly, rather than appreciating the moral essence of their professional work as teachers, many see it as defined and limited by legal regulations, ethical codes, and standards-based prohibitions. Buttressed by repeated warnings of prosecution for professional misconduct, such instruction in the ethics of teaching is viewed more as fear mongering than as morally inspiring. Secondly, participants discussed their programs’ emphases on issues of social justice, cultural diversity, and equity as a variation on the ethical principles of justice and fairness; however, their interpretations seem to imply a commitment to a more general and ideological systemic critique of schools and schooling along the lines of politicized principles than to the ethical responsibilities towards their own students of individual teachers as just and caring professionals. Thirdly, an alarming number of participants described a morally intuitive feeling of discomfort and anxiety during their practice teaching experiences in schools. As witnesses to unprofessional and sometimes harmful conduct on the part of their supervising teachers, these participants identified ethical issues in teaching almost by default in terms of the negative role modelling they received. Taken together, these three aspects of the teacher education experience do little to prepare student teachers to
be ethical professionals, and may instead impede their capacity to develop moral sensibilities integral to the cultivation of ethical knowledge.

*Ethics as Standards, Ethics as Law*

Some acknowledge the potentially inspiring nature of a well-crafted ethical code or set of professional ethical standards (Beckner, 2004; Bradley, 1998; Campbell, 2000; Freeman, 1998). However, these scholars and others, for the most part, accept that such a formalized approach to defining the moral and ethical nature of teaching is ultimately unsatisfactory if it is rendered remote from the daily dynamics of actual practice (Campbell, 2001; Nash, 1991; Soltis, 1986; Strike & Ternasky, 1993; Watras, 1986). As Ungaretti *et al* (1997) explain, “A relevant and explicit code of ethics is inadequate if left on the shelf. If students and teachers are going to be prepared to do ethics they must know their professional code and know how to apply it confidently and competently . . . Teachers must develop proficiency in identifying ethical concerns, techniques for discussing ethical dilemmas, and expertise in reaching solutions reflecting knowledge of the profession’s standards and ideals” (p. 274). Nonetheless, while standards and codes are on their own insufficient tools to help teachers fully appreciate the moral nuances of their work, one would presume that, at minimum, a working knowledge of relevant codes might provide an initial theoretical base for conceptualizing teaching as moral.

All of the participants in my study were teaching, either as student teachers or newly inducted teachers, in jurisdictions that have a code or set of ethical standards. While many, but not all, of them were aware of the existence of such standards, all were unfamiliar with their content and unable to identify or discuss them in any depth. As one noted, “In our classes we didn’t spend a great deal of time on them. If I can remember, I think it’s because it seemed like they were very obvious to all of us in the class. So, it wasn’t something worth spending hours talking about.”

Unlike their knowledge of the ethical standards, which was either non-existent or minimal, the participants’ understanding of at least some limited aspects of educational law governing teachers’ moral conduct was keener. When asked about what ethical teachers do or do not do, they evoked only the laws that deal with teacher misconduct and how to avoid getting into trouble as a new teacher. However, as one participant noted, “That sort of stuff really isn’t anything to do with morals or ethics . . . it’s just a justification that if you do it (something wrong), you’re going to lose your job or end up in jail. It is not so much an ethical thing as a practical thing of a legal sort.” Another aptly drew a similar distinction: “We were told that there are certain do’s and don’ts but a lot of the focus was on basically saving our skin rather than on ethics per se. You know, not about what we should be doing because it is right, but what we should be doing because it is safe.” Referred to by several participants as “scare tactics,” student teachers whose responses fit into this category focused the discussion largely on self-preservation:
“I remember coming home very scared from one class. We kept getting the message, ‘don’t do this or you’ll get fired. If you are sued, we won’t support you’.”

While some participants acknowledged learning about formal ethical codes as well as legal restrictions during their teacher education programs, they rarely interpreted these approaches as helpful to their overall formation as moral practitioners. Yet, for many, it was all they thought they received in terms of ethics instruction. There was a clear sense among them that authentic learning about the ethics of teaching would come later after they graduated, in contextual and situational ways within their own classrooms, honed by experience and their own personal intuition of right and wrong.

**Ethics as Social Justice**

Given the urban context of the schools in which the participants taught and the diversity of the populations they were being prepared to teach, it is not surprising that many of their teacher education programs emphasized the need to recognize, respect, and enable the range of social, cultural, racial, religious, and other differences apparent in large multicultural cities and reflected in their students. However, in some cases this focus resulted in the dominance of a conceptual orientation towards issues of equity, diversity, and social justice that build on ideological principles of critical theory and promote the role of the teacher as a social activist (Ayers, 2004; Beyer, 1997; Donahue, 1999; Slattery & Rapp, 2003). For students in such programs, ethics in education came to be equated more with how political positions relating to social justice could be used to influence curriculum and systemic educational policy more generally than with how they, as individual teachers, should be morally accountable for their own conduct in schools. One participant stated that this all-pervasive orientation provided an “umbrella of equity” that enveloped the entire program while “definitely placing equity above ethics.” In this respect, ethical responsibility is reframed in such a way as to critique political and institutional structures, such as schools, within society rather than to hold individual professionals morally and ethically answerable for their own practice.

From my perspective, concern with larger ideals of a socio-political nature, often beyond the scope of the teacher’s influence, overshadows the thoughtful examination of how daily conduct reflects or fails to reflect principles such as fairness, honesty and compassion. As Hansen (2001b) cautions, “Ideals can become ideological or doctrinaire and can lead teachers away from their educational obligations and cause them to treat their students as a means to an end, whether the latter be political, social, or whatever” (p. 188). Regardless of one’s opinion of social justice education more generally, it is problematic to view it as synonymous with education in the ethics of teaching, especially if it diverts attention from the moral responsibilities of and expectations for individual teachers as accountable and ethical professionals. Teaching a diverse student body in urban
schools, representative of potentially conflicting values that pose dilemmas for teachers is a complex curricular, pedagogical, and interpersonal process. It demands attention to ethical imperatives such as kindness, a sense of fairness, honesty, empathy, trustworthiness, and respect as they are woven into the daily, often routine, activities in the classroom. There is little virtue in being morally or moralistically outraged by perceived or real societal injustices that may affect one’s students if, at the same time, the teacher fails to consider how his or her daily interpersonal behaviour in the classroom has the potential to harm as well as help those same students.

In some cases, participants did try to relate the messages of equity and social justice embedded in the teacher education curriculum to their own conduct: “We’ve learned so much about how to control our language to make sure that it’s inclusive of all students; just learning about different ‘isms’—racism, classism, heterosexism, has really just taught us to be aware of things.” However, this awareness is inevitably political, driven by ideological frameworks that are never made explicit or open to interrogation. And, perhaps ironically, student teachers, in their efforts to be “inclusive,” seem at the same time oblivious to the complexity of moral principles such as “fairness,” sometimes regarded as one of the most valued of professional ethical qualities in teaching (Bricker, 1989; Jackson et al, 1993). They use the political language of equity and social justice rather than the morally based language of virtue. As one student teacher concluded, “When you talk about all these things (equity, inclusiveness, anti-racism), what comes to mind is just diversity, but not morality or ethics.” And, yet, it was the participants in this study, not the interviewers, who raised the related topics of equity and social justice when asked to discuss what they see as the moral and ethical aspects of teaching. In the absence of a clear curricular focus on the ethics of teaching as a moral profession, theories of social justice seem to provide, for some at least, an alternative.

However, for me, such an alternative is clearly no substitute in the professional quest to cultivate ethical knowledge in teachers. It seems to share, at least at a fairly superficial level, an emphasis on the “do’s and don’ts” of teaching that require one to be “politically correct,” as one participant stated. This is more reminiscent of the previous discussion on legal restrictions than indicative of any depth of philosophical reflection on the moral nature of one’s choices and actions and the ethical obligations to one’s own students as a professional.

Ethics as Modelled and Witnessed

In their article on an “ethics initiative” in teacher education, Ungaretti et al (1997) refer to student teachers’ observations of the unethical classroom practices of their supervising teachers, and they imply how challenging it is for both the student teachers themselves and the teacher educators who coordinate the programs to address such issues for fear of criticizing peer practitioners. This is entirely consistent with the literature on the ethics of collegial loyalty and the dilemmas
that emanate from it (Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Tirri & Husu, 2002). Unfortunately, participants in my study echoed this impression. As one student teacher stated, “We were explicitly told to keep our mouth shut and close our door by our instructor. ‘Don’t be involved. You’re going to see things that will make you sick, close your door, close your eyes’ . . . We were told to complain about sexual and physical abuse only if we could prove it.” This experience characterizes a common feeling of helplessness that was expressed by participants who felt personally conflicted when advised by teacher educators to avoid confrontation with supervising teachers, even in situations they found to be morally objectionable.

Participants spoke at great length about their practice teaching experiences. While some thought they witnessed positive ethical examples of respectful and professional conduct of teachers in the field, many more described the negative modelling and poor examples they observed, such as teachers gossiping about students and their families, treating students unfairly, engaging in dishonest assessment practices, subverting school policies, neglecting students as well as curricular expectations, disparaging colleagues and administrators, and publicly frightening, ridiculing, or embarrassing students. As one student teacher summed up, “I don’t want to become like them (teachers she witnessed).”

One elementary student teacher felt so overwhelmed by her negative field experience that she cried during her interview as she explained:

She (the supervising teacher) was a kindergarten teacher, and she destroyed children every single day. Everything she would say to me, it was like dripping poison in my ear every single bloody day . . . I have a hard time talking about her, she was horrible. She was so nasty . . . (She once said to a child) ‘You have no right to sit with other human beings because you don’t act like a human being; you don’t even act like an animal, you’re worse. I am never going to allow you to sit with human beings because you disrupt them in their learning, so you will sit here by yourself from now on.’

Another student teacher, this time at the secondary level, was shocked when she asked a teacher in her practicum school if she could sit in and watch what he did with a small remedial basic level class of students considered to be “at risk” of dropping out of school. The teacher, who was apparently seen often to leave his class to do other things around the school, commented, “I don’t really do anything with them. They’re not really going anywhere. I’ve got 35 kids in my grade 11 science class, and I’m going to work for them because they’re there every day, and they’re there to learn. But, I’m not going to do anything for (the remedial class).”

While the cultivation of ethical knowledge and the development of moral sensibility in new teachers rely at least in part on positive practical experiences in schools, such exposure to unethical aspects of the practitioner culture hardly reinforces the deepening of an appreciation for teaching as a moral activity. The participants in this study expressed clear dismay at some conduct they saw insofar as it violated their own sensitivity about what ethical practice should involve. For the most part, however, their outrage, they believed, was based entirely on their
own personal and intuitive sense of moral behaviour, rather than on anything they felt they learned about teacher ethics in their pre-service program.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The student teaching experiences described in the previous section may be seen as deviations from the sound instruction in the ethics of teaching, insofar as they either focus too narrowly on laws and regulations or broadly on political critique rather than on the ethics of the individual teacher’s professional conduct, or they reflect negative practical examples of unprofessional teacher behaviour. Ultimately, what can this suggest about the overall teacher education experience and its capacity to educate new teachers to be morally astute, ethically self aware, and professionally responsible? In response, I turn again to the concluding thoughts of the participants in my study.

The participants uniformly agreed that more attention during their pre-service education to the area of ethics in teaching would be desirable. They expressed a need to understand how to deal with ethical issues and dilemmas in the elementary and secondary school classroom rather than being left to rely on their own reactionary responses. Some indicated that they engaged in casual conversations with peers about ethically troublesome things they observed, usually in practice teaching, and that such conversations were always very useful. However, these discussions invariably occurred informally outside of class time. The following is a compilation of their thoughts:

Ethics was organically embedded throughout the program. But it wasn’t deliberately so. I think every instructor could have looked at his or her course and could have been a bit more thoughtful about putting it in . . . I didn’t feel we were specifically taught ethics. I didn’t feel that we were taught how to handle these situations (moral and ethical dilemmas) . . . Training in dealing with how to resolve ethical dilemmas is important because there is not a minute that goes by on a daily basis when I am not required to resolve some type of conflict in my practice. Teachers need a starting point, and, as a new teacher, I would have liked to have that starting point because it was difficult to figure out on my own . . . They didn’t teach you morals, you already have them. But, they could tell you how to use those morals and address them in your classroom.

This last statement anticipates another perspective expressed by many of the participants. Even though they were supportive of increasing an emphasis on the ethics of teaching within teacher education programs, they simultaneously believed that ultimately such programs should not be expected to provide a level of ethical understanding needed to be a morally “good” teacher. They interpreted morality and ethics as something intuitive and personal based on character, background, family, religion, and one’s life experiences. And, they indicated that ethical practice in teaching is something best shaped by actual experience as teachers, not
inculcated in the teacher education classroom. The following series of quotations reflects the responses of several of the participants:

I feel it needs to come from within first and then we need to be exposed and maybe trained to hone it better I guess. But unless I am ethical, I believe that integrity is something that I need to stick to, I don’t think that any amount of faculty training is going to help me get there . . . I think that all morals are already in you and that you are not going to pick this up from a course. I don’t think that a course is going to teach me how I should be treating people from a moral or ethical standpoint. So, I’m not really sure what the goal of an ethics course would be . . . I think that most of what I learned about professionalism and ethics was not at the faculty. But, to be fair, I don’t think that you can be prepared because I think that it’s just the nature of our job. You work with kids every day, and kids are dynamic. Every day is different. I don’t think that there is anything specific that could have prepared us.

Many claimed that becoming an ethical professional is something one needs to go through on their own as a good person, and that it “gets better with practice and experience.” After all, as one participant explains, “In terms of ethics, there really wasn’t a discussion about learning ethics or what we were expected to do. I think that it was implicit that teachers are generally supposed to be ‘good people’ and that we were expected to have a higher moral standard than the rest of society.”

So what shall we take from this—that the lack of instruction about the moral dimensions of teaching and the professional ethics of teaching in teacher education programs is not really a cause for concern because teachers are good people who will somehow develop ethical knowledge independently as they gain experience as practitioners? Scholar Robert Nash (1991) has a powerful answer to this:

Educators, like many other professionals, make ethical judgments and decisions by relying somewhat haphazardly on past religious and family training, early schooling, on-the-job trial and error, and vague impressions of what constitutes good moral character. Unfortunately, this prediscursive decision making is not adequate. One important insight that teacher educators can contribute to students’ ethical education is that too often intuitive moral decision making is arbitrary (p. 164).

In returning to Colnerud’s (2006) question about a why it is so difficult to be a good teacher and recalling the participants’ negative recollections of teachers’ practices, it seems evident that leaving ethical education to chance is both professionally unwise and morally risky. Even “good people” need to appreciate how the complexities of their work in schools have the capacity both to reflect and subvert the moral virtues and principles they think they use to guide them. Ethical knowledge depends on one’s awareness of the goodness or badness of one’s actions, not merely on one’s intuitive judgement. As one student teacher participant wisely noted, “I think that what you learn in the classroom gives you more of a framework for what you actually know as an individual and what you feel about it. It gives you more of a framework in which to work from. It’s having the ethical
standards and applying them to your practice and figuring it out . . . you have to think about it.”

The challenge for teacher education programs is to develop curricular and pedagogical approaches that draw the theme of ethics in teaching into the forefront of their programs rather than embedding it in other curricular initiatives, disguising it as merely school law, obscuring it as social justice education, or ignoring it as it is played out in very real practice teaching experiences. Fortunately, it is likely true that the majority of people who choose teaching as a vocation are inclined to want to do good things, and, from my experience, pre-service students seem both eager to explore the ethics of teaching and receptive to the conceptualization of the teacher’s professional role as one infused with moral imperatives. On an equally encouraging note, there is ample evidence in the research literature that there are many dedicated teachers “out there” who either have a heightened sense of ethical knowledge (Campbell, 2003) or engage in practices that illuminate and champion the moral nature of teaching (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Hansen, 2002; Jackson et al, 1993; Richardson & Fenstermacher, 2001; Sackett, 1993). These are the models of good practice and good theory combined that do exist, and their presence in the field will hopefully continue to influence beginning teachers who work with them. And, for our part as researchers and teacher educators, we can continue to seek out, document, and teach about the exemplary practices of such teachers so that their moral and ethical orientations towards their students and their practice may be shared with the wider professional community.

NOTES

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PREPARING ETHICAL PROFESSIONALS AS A CHALLENGE


ELIZABETH CAMPBELL


Elizabeth Campbell
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education,
University of Toronto

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2. LEADERSHIP WITH A DIFFERENCE IN SCHOOLS SERVING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES: ARENAS FOR SUCCESS

This chapter investigates the key leadership factors which contribute to achieving and sustaining success in schools which serve disadvantaged communities. In doing so, it draws upon data from four key sources: i) an eight country international research project on successful school principalship (Day and Leithwood, 2007); ii) an ongoing nine country European research and development project involving thirty six successful primary and secondary school principals leading schools in challenging urban contexts; iii) an ongoing Government Funded project on effective principals and student outcomes (Day et al, 2007 and iv) a five year Swedish project ‘Structure, Culture,Leadership: Prerequisite for Successful schools? (Höög, J., Johansson, O, Lindberg, L. & Olofsson, A., (2003).

The evidence from these projects suggests that whilst there are generic qualities, strategies and skills which are common to all, successful principals who lead schools serving disadvantaged communities face a greater range of more persistent, intensive challenges than others and so not only need to possess these qualities to a greater degree but also need different qualities and skills which are specific to the context of their schools. Together, these research projects provide a powerful argument for policy makers and training organisations to develop differentiated criteria for the recruitment, training and in-service support of principals who lead and manage schools in such disadvantaged contexts.

The chapter begins with the observation that whilst no schools are entirely alike, there are groups of schools which share similar characteristics. These are schools which are located either in areas of relative socio-economic advantage or areas of relative socio-economic disadvantage. Their populations may be largely homogeneous in terms of the characteristics of the students, and parental, social and economic circumstances or heterogeneous (i.e. in England secondary schools are often located in areas of socio-economic deprivation but may have a mixed student intake). Student achievement within each of these groups is likely to depend in part upon the level of resource, quality of leadership and teaching but in part, also, upon the nature of the community from which they are drawn. Research suggests that even in schools judged to be successful, those students in schools in more advantaged areas are likely to achieve more – at least in terms of test and examination scores – than those in more disadvantaged areas (Day et al, 2007). However, even schools in these areas may achieve success relative to the nature of the student intake and this will be influenced directly and indirectly by the quality of school leadership (Törnsén, 2008).
Because many of the students in these schools are at greater risk of under
achieving in their personal, social and work lives, it is particularly important to
examine conditions which may work to improve this. In a recent national survey of
successful schools in England, we found that principals in improving schools
serving disadvantaged communities: i) face the most persistent levels of challenge;
ii) apply greater combinations or clusters of strategies with greater intensity; and
iii) use a broader range of personal and social skills than do those in other schools
which serve more advantaged communities and are at later stages of professional
and whole school development. Such principals are often younger and less
experienced that those in more advantaged schools and are responsible for leading
and managing situations which are less physically and emotionally stable. For
example, teacher and student mobility tend to be higher in their schools, challenges
of student and teacher motivation, student behaviour, engagement and attendance
greater (Day et al., 2007). It is not that they work less hard or are less committed,
but rather than the sets of skills and attributes used by these principals is different
and, we would argue, more complex, than those in more advantaged schools.

Different leadership strategies may be effective in different circumstances but
also…the principal’s purposes and the ways they act out their beliefs, values
and visions in the contexts in which they work make the difference between
success and failure. (Day and Leithwood, 2007, p. 174)

Table 1 below provides a number of tentative hypotheses which, together, indicate
the special nature of the challenges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools serving relatively advantaged communities</th>
<th>Strategies and Characteristics</th>
<th>Schools serving relatively disadvantaged communities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Establish vision and set directions</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Understand and develop people</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>(Re)structure and (re)culture the organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenging</td>
<td>Manage the teaching and learning programme</td>
<td>More Challenging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging</td>
<td>Values-led responsiveness to context</td>
<td>More Challenging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Delegate or distribute leadership</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging</td>
<td>Build staff/student motivation, commitment, morale, engagement (relational trust)</td>
<td>More Challenging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenging Sustain staff/student motivation, commitment, morale, engagement (relational trust) More Challenging

Challenging Raise teaching, learning and achievement expectations More Challenging

Challenging Combine logic and emotion More Challenging

Important Be responsive to and manage diverse internal and external communities Essential

- Manage and reduce staff and student mobility Challenging

- Manage alienation Challenging

Important Persistent, optimistic, resilient, leaders of hope Essential

Important Open minded, flexible, ready to learn from others Essential

Important Leadership and management of whole school change and transition Essential

An analysis by the authors of previous research in successful schools in eight countries which were located in neighbourhoods with relatively high levels of social deprivation and, in which, on entry, the majority of students were underachieving, suggests that there are five key tensions for principals in schools which serve disadvantaged communities: i) attainment and welfare; ii) building and sustaining an inclusive community; iii) building a sense of identity; iv) values, beliefs and ethics; and v) renewal of trust.

ARENAS OF LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOLS IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

In almost every democratic country the school plays a critical part in the upbringing of new citizens. In these states, therefore, an important implicit or explicit function of principals is to ensure that students learn about democracy. In Sweden, for example, democracy forms the foundation of the national school system. The School Act stipulates that all school activity should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and that each and every person working in the school should encourage respect for each person as an intrinsic value, and for the environment we all share. The school has responsibility for the critical task of imparting, instilling and forming in pupils those fundamental values on which our society is based (Lpo94).

Regardless of the precise form of democracy which exists in a country, in the literature the ‘democratic’ role of the principal is sometimes described as ‘authentic
leadership’ – a hopeful, open-ended, visionary and creative response to social circumstances, as opposed to the more short-sighted, precedent-focused and context-constrained practices typical of management (Johansson and Begley, 2001). This form of leadership acknowledges and accommodates in an integrative way the legitimate needs of individuals, groups, organizations, communities and cultures – not just the organizational perspectives that are the usual preoccupation of much of the leadership literature. Authentic leadership is, therefore, by definition, both shared and distributed. It is clear, then, that both as a leader and as a manager, principals work within several arenas inside and outside of the school. Within these different arenas principals will play different roles.

The five arenas that this chapter will identify can all be viewed as different aspects of democratic leadership: i) Combining demands for educational success with educational values; ii) Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Parent Community; iii) Building a Sense of Identity; iv) Building Culture – Values, Beliefs and Ethics; and v) Creating and Sustaining Trust.

**Arena 1: Combining Demands for Educational Success With Educational Values.**

It is not enough to think of all important learning as academic. Schools in democratic countries also have to achieve the civic mission – what might be called social goals or social learning. There are variations in the relative emphases which relate to the cultural and political histories of the societies in which they live. However, the illustrations from successful principals in four of the countries in our studies show that both academic achievement and educational values in the form of social learning are firmly on all their agendas. In England, for example,

> The exam results matter but in terms of relationships and the social learning, I think that is far more important. I think it’s measured by the way the staff feel about the place. I mean the whole staff. It’s a working community…I worry now that I am churning out little robots that can do exams but they can’t think, they can’t apply what they know. They can’t go out there and relate to literature and art and music. These have all been squeezed out….

(England Secondary 1)

In Australia, the integration of high academic rigor and care was also the real challenge:

> I think we have mistakenly believed that you can’t have high expectations, rigor and care and support and trust running together and integrated and that has been a mistake that we have made in the way that schools have been managed…I think the real challenge is to have the two integrated and I think that is what I have tried to do. (Australia S1)

This combination of concerns was equally well demonstrated by successful principals in such diverse cultures as those in Sweden, Poland, Portugal and Norway.
We are nice to each other in this school. If someone does something bad he or she gets a yellow card and after three remarks one has to see the principal. That is good because then you have to pull yourself together. The yellow notes are good because you don’t want to have a second one, ‘cause then you get sad and disappointed. And when the teachers put down their foot, they do it in a nice way so we understand what they mean. (Pupil Swedish primary)

This ethic of care and achievement was applied equally to students, regardless of ability, social background, language or ethnic grouping:

Teachers are engaged. They take care of the weaker pupils as well as the very good ones. They try to make them reach the higher level when children don’t want to work, and, for example, play truant, they contact such children’s parents. The relationship between parents and teachers is very close here. The teachers are interested in every child. (Parent, S2 Poland)

I think it was the students from the gypsy communities that brought...a very troublesome climate into the school. I think that the (Headteacher) dealt with it with tenacity. I think that at least, the problem was solved. There are deaf students here, ones in wheelchairs, and they all get support and are able to have a normal learning experience. This is a school that welcomes special needs students. (...) Here we have deaf students, ones with motor skills problems, some with severe mental disabilities... We’ve been doing some important work here; these students had all the support they need on the pedagogical side. (...) We also do not reject those students who exhibit serious problems with discipline. We take them in. (...) Normally, those students are sent off to Vocational Training. The more pertinent support comes in the form of what is called Increased Pedagogical Support, which is the help that is given to increase a student’s chances of success inclusively in certain academic areas, such as Portuguese and maths, given by teachers who will reinforce learning those concepts that are necessary in the discipline. This is a healthy school. It’s one that can be called close, one with a lot of affection. The children really like the school. They really do and this gets passed on to the parents and guardians. (...) There’s a lot in the teacher-student relationship, a lot of fondness. (Portugal S1)

We have a clearer focus upon the fact that we need to have high expectations of the minority language students, of their parents and of the teachers who give this type of tuition. We are on our way to reaching that goal, but we have very clear ambitions in getting better every day in that area. I think that this distinguishes us from the majority of schools who treat this area as an appendix in relation to what they do ordinarily. And they have, in my opinion, a wrongly formulated objective. (Norway LS1)

Our data show, then that this balance between social and academic learning is particularly prevalent in schools that are situated in challenging circumstances, but
that the two are seen to be in a symbiotic relationship rather than ends in themselves. We find that successful principals are keen to build schools that combine demands for educational success with educational values.

**Arena 2: Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Parent Community**

One of the key issues is the high degree of faith headteachers have in the importance of establishing a meaningful dialogue between home and schools. For schools in challenging circumstances especially, the necessity to raise expectations and self-esteem of the parents is central to the task of raising pupil performance. The key to empowering people is to identify the mental barriers which result in parents feeling intimidated and alienated from the life of the school. Through diverse links with their communities the schools seek to communicate their values, especially those concerned with their belief in learning being an engine for change. (England S6)

Parents are a very particular category of local stakeholder group associated with the learning community of a school. Their interests are primarily focused on their own children’s well-being and academic training. Accommodating parental needs and concerns has always been a part of the principal’s workday. However, in recent times we see more parents organizing themselves in formal and informal groups to represent and achieve their special interests. Teachers and principals increasingly must acknowledge these parental collectives – the parent-school arena (Johansson, 2003). For example, in Ontario, Canada parent councils are now formally recognized and mandated school governance bodies. If a school has a tradition of active, collective parental involvement, teachers and principals in the school are more likely to value the parents’ interaction. But if there is an implicit understanding among the teachers and the principal, (i.e. a silent agreement that parents should not participate in school-based change processes) then this prevailing school culture can dominate or neutralize every external pressure for change (Kristoffersson, 2008). This occurs in a variety of ways including; delaying processes launched by the educational professionals, educators showing no interest in collective roles for parents; deliberately placing obstacles in the path of the policy implementation process; or posing ethical or other arguments in opposition to the proposed change (Parker, 1998). These neutralizing strategies are far from the visions of successful principals who serve disadvantaged communities of practice and who want to achieve success for all children.

From the beginning she’s included the parents in every decision that’s being made around here…she opens the door and lets the parents come in…it makes you feel good to be welcome because before this (we) were told that you couldn’t come in. (Principal, USA Academy)

In a school in England there were a majority one-parent families, high unemployment and a lack of home support for pupils. Yet there was strong community participation in the life of the school:
We have parents coming in to do community courses – science, literacy and numeracy – so that they could help with the children. (Teacher, England Primary)

The principal had established a parents’ room and employed a home – school liaison worker. Another principal ran a course in personal success, and all made a sustained investment in regular contact with parents. In each school parent’s spoke of the genuine welcome, the time given to them unreservedly, and their appreciation of the facilities and opportunities to contribute to the pupils’ and their own learning. For example, one parent said:

I can come to see the principal or any of the other teachers and they will always take time out and go through things with you! (Parent, England Primary 2)

Parental involvement was particularly challenging in schools where a significant proportion of children entered school with ‘below average ability in English vocabulary and experience’. A Deputy Principal spoke of how parental attitudes had changed under the early years of the principal:

There was a lot of work done…to let them know what was required in the British system…and they’ve seen the outcomes in terms of success for their children all the way through primary and secondary…and there’s a lot more confidence that what the school is doing is good, and opportunities for parents to be involved in the school are increasing all the time…and there have been more parent governors from the community…the English classes set up three years ago have been really successful in providing people with the idea that there is an opportunity to learn as adults. (Deputy Principal, England Primary 3)

Community education was a recurring theme, and all the heads were actively and directly involved:

He tries to bring all aspects of the community to the school, and he’s involved in lots of things in the community, and it never seems like too much trouble for him. (Parent, England Secondary 2)

The head of this school was, ‘passionate about schools preparing young people to make a difference in the community that they work in’, and saw parents as, ‘part of our team’; and he ensured regular feedback on the school through questionnaires and the school’s website. According to one governor, the principal spent, ‘a colossal amount of time with parents.’

What these principals did was different from “relationship” and “internal” marketing, which are the direct consequences of the policy agenda: The motive for the emphasis given to inclusiveness lies in these heads’ broader sense of identity and moral purposes, and change agendas which included but transcended short term performativity concerns:
It seemed self-evident to me that if we were going to radically change things we had to get a relationship with the parents that was more than just a friendly one but where we actually get them really involved in the process of their children’s education and that they had some comprehension of what we were trying to achieve together. It was about getting a real partnership going rather than a superficial one… I was very open, right from the start, that I was going to be very ambitious… I think that’s taken eight years to get that message through to greater numbers that we used to do. The vast majority now understand where we’re coming from and have jumped on board with us and have suddenly seen their children’s aspirations rise considerably. (England P4)

Principals in disadvantaged schools in Portugal and Finland, among others, told the same story:

The challenge is really for participation to be maximum with the outside community. (Portugal P1)

Principals in these schools spoke of the importance of ‘community sensing’ in order to gain the confidence of the broader range of students and their parents, recognising, also, that, ‘the school is not the only place to learn. (Finland P1)

It’s really important. We can’t turn our backs on the community or on families… When we feel that problems or difficulties are surfacing in such-and-such an area, we call in the families to resolve the situation all together, whether it’s something academic or behavioural. (Portugal P1)

What is clear in the principals’ statements is the energy and importance they devote to working on the school-parent arena. In their mind they know that they need good relations with the parents for improving the results in the school but they also need to convince the parents in the disadvantage areas that good schooling is an opportunity for their children to improve their life expectations. On top of that successful principals talk a lot of the importance of parents understanding the school as an arena for social mobility.

Arena 3: Building a Sense of Collective Identity, High Expectations and Pride

Another key arena of focus for the principal in a disadvantaged context is the identity building process. This arena is very much linked to the school-parent arena but has a broader focus. If a principal can create a narrative of a positive image of the school identity to which many stakeholders can relate then its reputation is likely to spread more widely. One strategy used by principals to achieve this identity marker is to speak proudly about what is going in the school:

The principal speaks proudly of the school, through its diversity of nationalities ‘representing the world’, of it being a strength to have ‘real diversity’, and ‘being able to reflect together with people of different
backgrounds and experiences’. At the same time, the development work needed to handle a multicultural situation is described with words such as: ‘Thanks to young people like this we are absolutely forced to develop’, ‘forced to find new strategies’; ‘it is perhaps worse to have 25% immigrant pupils than 98%’, and it is ‘not easy’ to achieve a well-functioning multicultural school ‘since you then have to do things in several languages. (Sweden S1)

Success required the commitment of the parents, also, and relied upon the extent to which the school could establish a collective sense of identity:

‘Her greatest success was in getting people to become more committed to the school, more involved in and with the school…people have taken on the school, saying, ‘It’s our school’…people become more attached and the parents become more involved…for example, something needs to be done with the building and the parents are already getting to work on it. They sent a petition to City Hall. When this type of thing happens, the parents rally together…Before, the parents only came to complain, to argue about things. There were event scuffles with parents and teachers. This is thing of the past… (Portugal P2)

The responsibility of the families is emphasized. A principal is a key person to tell to the parents that they should be committed to their children’s’ school attendance. For example, the vacations should not been arranged during the school year. The school is not to be seen as a pastime but as a whole. The school is not a place to pop in and out. There are many things competing with the school nowadays. The principal underlines the importance of community’. (Finland S2)

Each school, each principal, had their unique sense of communal identity – what Thomson in her work on ‘Schooling the Rustbelt Kids’ (2002) has called the ‘thisness’ of schools – within the discontinuities of the environment. Each principal had constructed, with others, a coherent sense of purpose and direction out of the multitude of policy reforms, fragmentation and intensification of work and changes in society which threatened to engulf them.

She gives 101% and I think that’s what she expects of us as well. It’s a busy school. But you want to give because you like it, as things are improving. You will give it if you know that you are going to be appreciated for giving it. And you are. (Parent, Primary 6)

I think he wants to see it as the best school in the region. When I came…this school was an educational backwater…we became a language college, and there was the business of re-organising the 11-18 curriculum so that people are encouraged to stay in school longer…If you are in front it’s a lot more exciting than if you are just trying to keep up with the others…. (Governor, Secondary 3)
These words illustrate the kinds of energy, drive, ambition, standards and assertive professionalism typical of the principal. They had pride in achievement and a willingness to defend the work of their teachers, when necessary, based upon a close knowledge of what goes on in classrooms, staff rooms and in the community.

One of the major changes since my arrival is that we have knowingly done much more cooperation with the youth work in the city. The parish has also been involved. The school has really become a school of the area…cooperation with the parents has also increased with the founding of a parents association. (Finland S1)

I think she really cares about the school, it’s a real passion for her. I think it’s a very big part of who she is…She’s very proud of the school and that comes across. I think we all are we are proud to work here. It’s important, because you need the children to be proud to be here and you’ve got to create that sense of identity and hopefully, they go away with a sense of being proud to have been here. (Newly Qualified Teacher, English Primary)

In this arena we have seen how successful principals have used catch words as; THE school, the best school in the school district, being proud of your school, mapping the success of the school etc. Building this form of identity, high expectations and pride in the school helps creating good conditions for children’s learning of both academic and social skills.

**Arena 4: Building Culture - Values, Beliefs and Ethics**

Values are basic concepts that govern the desire to carry out specific actions and reach specific goals. They become the mental map that guides an individual’s actions and thoughts and they serve as the foundation for these processes (Hodgkinson, 1991). They also affect actions, which in turn, influence the thoughts and actions of others. Many researchers also stress the importance of values, attitudes, and actions in the creation of school cultures. These studies demonstrate that good and effective leaders are able to communicate values and create a common culture (Begley & Johansson, 1998). Leadership in a school always means that the leader must make decisions, most of which deal with different types of problem solving. All such decisions involve a choice among different values. Some will be rejected and others will be embraced. It is assumed that leaders with visions for the school’s development and improvement are able to create a culture and a structure of expectations that others can also grasp. By articulating and defending their own or the curriculum’s core values or moral purpose, leaders can communicate them to teachers and other personnel in the school as ‘levels of requirement’ or ‘quality’ that they envision for work with the school’s primary objective, i.e. creating good learning opportunities for all children (Starratt, 2004). Begley and Johansson (1998) discuss different reasons why principals should be well acquainted with the purpose of values in an educational context.
In addition, there is increasing research and practice based evidence that administration theory has overemphasized the practical and rational aspects of leadership. There has been an unwillingness, for example, to discuss and analyze the non-rational, moral, and ethical aspects of leadership. Thus, it has become more and more commonplace for principals to work in situations in which value conflicts are regular occurrences. Students who live and work in changing youth cultures need to be welcomed and integrated into the world of school. Furthermore, because of the growing number of students with different ethnic and religious backgrounds, the potential for value conflicts is increased. For example, the school’s long-range goals, determined through democratic principles, may not always coincide with the goals that various interested parties have for the school. Principals must be well prepared and able to formulate and explain their decisions about educational questions based on the school’s value system and the curriculum (Norberg, 2004).

Successful principals recognize the importance of being able to create a common culture.

For me, what I find the great positive feature of the school is the focus on dealing with heterogeneity…the richness of the interaction in and amongst the students…it’s the diversity’ (Portugal P2)

The principals in schools in England also drew sustenance from a set of core personal and professional values. Thus, their practices, like those of the authentic teachers described by Ball (1999, p1) were based upon, “the values of “service” and a shared moral language which provides for reflection, dialogue and debate”:

A lot of what I do is values about what you’re trying to achieve. And those values are the same ones for children whatever the background. You may have to amend how you do it and how you talk to parents and the way that you work with the children. (Principal, England P4)

I used to have a vague belief in the goodness of people. It’s not a belief any more; it’s based on empirical evidence. If you treat people decently and support them, they will give you as much as they possibly can. I think as a sort of rule of life, that’s absolutely brilliant. If people are intelligent enough to become teachers, don’t treat them like idiots. So I try not to do anything in an underhand way. I just think it’s insulting to start with and at the end of the day it’s an inefficient way of organising yourself. So I think you treat people with respect because they deserve it. (Principal, England S4).

These principals were all uniformly optimistic about the ability of their staff to support the learning and achievement of all students, and they were hopeful for the educational endeavour to which they and their staff were committed:

There is a team, but it’s his leadership and his drive that has made the team successful…if he went tomorrow, he would be sorely missed…(but)…he has left us with a very good foundation…but he is the one who built it. He is the one who has formed the relationships…and he still enjoys it…and that
enthusiasm is instilled in all the staff, the teaching staff and other staff and the pupils. One of his successes is enthusiasm. (Governor/Board Member)

There are lessons to be learned from the priority which these successful headteachers gave to being activists in mediating reforms ensuring that they make sense in terms of overall vision and culture and establishing and sustaining a coherence of purpose throughout the school community:

He’s got the vision…can see the whole picture…can see ahead….includes us.
He shares everything with us. (Teaching Assistant)

What separates effective from ineffective leaders are not only the quality of vision, but also how much they, ‘really care about the people (they) lead’ (Kouzes and Posner, 1998, p. 149, cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 55). These principals were clearly:

…bound by a sense of the ethical dimensions of the relations among professionals and clients, the public, the employing institution, and fellow professionals…(based on) a conception of what constitutes the profession’s purposes and characteristic activities. (Macmillan, 1993, pp. 189–90)

Such ethical dimensions were driven not by codes, rules or regulations about how to act or what was ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ but by the ideals, values and aspirations of these principals. Their thinking and decision making about, for example, issues of social justice, and equity was not a matter of following the rules. Rather, they invested much time and effort in building a shared sense of ethical norms within their school and external communities. Their ethical values pervaded all aspects of their schools’ policies and practices, and it was clear from the data that they regarded the students as their primary moral responsibility. There was an expectation among everyone that, ‘all professionals in the school community not only uphold the principles themselves, but also that they assume the responsibility of helping each other to honour the ethical norms…’ (Campbell, 2003, p. 121)

To my mind, one of the most important and challenging parts of the principal’s job is the welfare of the pupils. Our pupil care team is very important. It is a multi-professional team consisting of a doctor and nurse of the school, the special education teachers, the student counsellors and me. We come together once a week for an hour or more to solve pupils’ problems related to their learning and school attendance. (Finland S1)

Whilst successful principals in all schools count this as a priority, it is particularly important for principals in schools serving disadvantaged communities where a sense of care, trust and respect, key elements in a sense of community, are paramount for students whose lives outside the school may be uncertain.

I think this (school) is a place where the students count the most…where there is a concern not only to teach the materials from the curriculum but…[to provide]…an education to become good citizens. (Portugal P1)
In our school we offer various forms of help for children from problem and poor families. We try to do as much as it is possible to arouse their educational aspirations – and this is the right key to the success. Very often these children don’t see how important their education is, we want to assist them in seeing that their future depends on them and on how much time they will devote to their general development. (Poland S2)

These successful principals saw their schools as a system in which values, commitment, abilities, social relations and experience were key conditions for reaching the goals in this arena.

**Arena 5: Creating and Sustaining Trust**

These principals all stated that if positive developments were to happen and be sustained, they needed to exercised trust in their staff. Figuratively speaking, their work assignments were the blades of a mill wheel, where the speed of the wheel – the water pressure – is determined by the principal’s clarity and leadership regarding visions, ideology, interpretation of the curriculum, translation of policy, support for ideas, the organization’s learning and encouragement. Because they were active, learning and communicative, the mill wheel of tasks turned faster and the possibilities for change increased. To achieve this state they enacted in all of their interaction with staff trustful leadership.

I think it is important to invest some time in care and trust. To care, and to have a theoretical reasoning for our actions, and find maybe the ten principles that enables us to pull them in. Personalised education, we can that when we work with students. Knowing where to start. And then I think it is important, when it comes to inclusion and that is…it has something to do with religiosity. Because, and especially for the group we discuss now, they belong to…most times they belong to other religions. (Principal, Norwegian P1)

She trusts you implicitly. She will let you deal with things for as long as you can and for as long as it’s appropriate and then when there’s a need for someone else of a higher authority to step in, she will. You don’t feel as if you’re being infringed in anyway. (Teacher, England S5)

Successful principals such as these are confident of their own school agendas and of their own and their staffs’ ability to maintain and enhance standards of teaching, learning and achievement and tired of what they saw as too much external interference. They want more trust to be exercised in their ability to exercise judgements just as they exercise trust in the discretionary judgements of their colleagues:

He can see into people and see their strengths. He gives the children and the staff the opportunity to show what they can do. In that he’s a visionary because he can look at someone and say: ‘Yes, you’ll be able to do that’, and they can. (Deputy Principal, England S1)
‘In our school we mainly work in various teams, then we discuss various matters with our principal, deputy principal and the whole teaching staff. It’s a very good way to work because it increases the feeling of autonomy and responsibility’ (Poland S1)

The first thing we need is a lot of respect for each other. (Portugal P1)

The principal talks with key persons in the religious communities. He creates trust. That benefits the school in the long term. (Finland P1)

The renewal of trust which these heads and their colleagues seek is that which can be established through sustained dialogue. Giddens (1994, p. 127) suggests that in activist professionalism, trust, obligation and solidarity work together in complementary ways:

Trust in personal relations depends on an assumption of the integrity of the other. … Trust in others generates solidarity across time as well as space: the other is someone on whom one can rely, that reliance becoming a mutual obligation … When founded on active trust, obligation implies reciprocity.

Trust for a principal is created through clear leadership with a learning focus on improving children’s learning and school achievements through dialogues constitute a democratic leader. That means being active and understanding that the principal has and will continue to exercise democratic authority over the school’s development agenda. A principal who works through a democratic, values-based learning and communicative leadership understands that nourishment for leadership and creating trust is available in many arenas: in practical work, in theoretical work and in research. The points of intersection among these arenas are particularly important, because the challenge consists in combining them. Those principals who successfully acquire trust from their personnel have consciously or unconsciously accepted a model for thinking that can be explained as a combination of practice, theory and research (Johansson, 2000). They have understood that an important part of their leadership is leading the educational discussions in an organization, and that, in order to be successful, knowledge must be replenished.

CONCLUSION – ADOPTING AN ARENAS PERSPECTIVE ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

This chapter has sought to present the analyses of data from successful principals in a variety of schools, contexts and countries through the lens of each of five ‘arenas’ in which they work. Conceptualizing school leadership practices in this way provides a simple metaphor for conveying the social dynamics, of the multiple functions of the school leadership role. It also reveals the complex nature of the management of relationships within and among stakeholder groups competing for attention and bidding for the scarce resources within the educational enterprise. By implication successful principals need to possess and use a range of personal qualities and professional skills on a daily basis. Yet underpinning these, below the
tip of the leadership iceberg, are core sets of values and virtues which are founded in notions of democracy and a deep sense of equity and care. These provide a centre of stability which informs the principals’ use of different strategies which are appropriate to their analysis of and response to contemporary contexts, what we have called ‘arenas’. In effect, they enable these principals to act in principled ways, regardless of context. We believe that the use of arenas as metaphor for locating key areas of principal’s work, may enable principals and those in training programmes related to leadership of schools in challenging contexts, to analyse and reflect upon their practice in new and powerful ways.

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CHRISTOPHER DAY AND OLOF JOHANSSON

Submitted to *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*.

*Professor Christopher Day*
*University of Nottingham*

*Professor Olof Johansson*
*Umeå University*