



I. Module Overview

Introduction

Educational leaders are increasingly confronted with issues of social justice within their organizations. K-12 school administrators in particular wrestle with developing cultures that include all students, guaranteeing literacy for all learners, creating environments in which all students are empowered to learn, and ensuring that family and community perspectives are reflected in school environments. Clearly, administrators struggle to provide equal and just opportunities for all students. In framing these challenges, basic questions emerge around what constitutes sufficiently equal footing in schools, what is meant by just schooling, and for whom? These are important questions that strike to the heart of defining social justice in educational organizations.

As Bogotch¹ maintains, there are no fixed meanings to social justice. However, Marshall and Ward² have suggested several meanings and rationales of social justice within the field of educational leadership. The first meaning has a more legalistic flavor. “For many, social justice means simply ensuring that laws for individual rights are observed so that access to educational services is available to children with disabilities, children who speak little or no English, children of color, and other legally protected groups” (p. 34). One response to this, according to Marshall and Ward, has been attempts to fix those who experience inequitable access. As many social justice theorists have pointed out, this results in a kind of deficit model of justice, which ignores the assets that individuals bring to education.³

Marshall and Ward also identify broader meanings of social justice that have resulted in calls for school restructuring to bring about greater fairness. They point to differences in meaning depending on the sphere of the situation—local, national, global and the type of injustice.⁴ Marshall and Ward point to the attention given in the literature to issues of

¹ Bogotch, I. (2002). Educational leadership and social justice: Practice into theory. *Journal of School Leadership* 12(2): 138-156.

² Marshall, C. & Ward, M. (2004). “Yes, but...”: Education leaders discuss social justice. *Journal of School Leadership* 14(5): 530-563.

³ McKenzie, K. B. & Scheurich, J.J. (2004). Equity traps: A useful construct for preparing principals to lead schools that are successful with racially diverse students. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(5): 601-632.

⁴ Adams, M. (1997). Pedagogical frameworks for social justice education. In M. Adams, L. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.). *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*. (pp. 30-43). New York: Routledge; Griffin, P.



disability, poverty, race, and diversity and the lesser attention given to issues of gender, language, and religious difference, and to injustice faced by gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered individuals. “Further, few have learned to see these issues in the deeper context of democratic leadership, inclusion of a range of community stakeholders, or the moral and ethical stance for school leaders to make schools inclusive, inviting of diversity, and instruments for pursuing democratic society” (pp. 533-534).

Clearly though, two concepts that are central to the meaning of social justice are oppression and privilege. Grant and Sleeter⁵ (1989) argued that these concepts are important in order to recognize one’s own positionality in terms of oppression and privilege and to understand how power relations affect social justice. These concepts involve power relationships that are both overt and subtle. Thus, professors in educational leadership programs must focus social justice on both overt and subtle evidences of injustice.

Larson and Murtada⁶ (2002), in their review of the literature on leadership for social justice, identified three strands or themes, which expand the meaning of social justice. First, social justice theorists have focused on “deconstructing the established logics in leadership theory and practice.” (p. 137). In this work, social justice authors have challenged the idea of organizations being objective entities rather than human constructions and the belief that organizations, such as schools, are inherently good and just. Second, Larson and Murtada identified the strand of “portraying alternative images of leadership theory and practice.” (p.139). Feminist images of leadership that focus on ethic of care, African American scholars emphasizing community caring, and authors focusing on spirituality, love and leadership have all expanded the understanding of leadership beyond techno-rational images and demonstrated components of social justice. Finally, Larson and Murtada identified work that is involved in re-constructing/constructing theories, systems, and processes of leadership for social justice. This involves “rethinking leadership for poor and marginalized school communities” (p. 145); “organizing multicultural communities through democratic leadership” (p. 148); and “developing human capacity and life chances through education” (p. 151).

As reviewed above a great deal of conceptual work has framed how social justice is understood and defined within the context of educational organizations. By comparison, this contrasts with a strong tradition of measuring justice issues within other organizational settings, particularly among private sector firms.⁷

(1997). Facilitating social justice education courses. In M. Adams, L. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.). *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*. (pp. 279-298). New York: Routledge; Furman, G. C. & Gruenewald, D.A. (2004). Expanding the landscape of social justice: A critical ecological analysis. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 40(1): 49-78

⁵ Grant, C.A. & Sleeter, C.E. (1989). Turning on learning: Five approaches for multicultural teaching plans for race, class, gender, and disability. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

⁶ Larson, C.L. & Murtadha, K. (2002). Leadership for social justice. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *The Educational Leadership Challenge: Redefining Leadership for the 21st Century*. One Hundred-first Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. (pp. 134-161). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

⁷ Fields, D. L. (2002). Organizational justice. In *Taking the measure of work: A guide to validated scales for organizational research and diagnosis* (pp. 163-196). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.



In an attempt to bridge the limited empirical work on the measurement of social justice issues in educational organizations, this module offers an introduction to the measurement of and assessment of organizational justice more generally. Research and scholarship in this area tends to be quantitative in nature, with a strong focus on the assessment of perceptions and behaviors of employees/personnel working within organizations rather than those being served by them. Topics include general procedural fairness, performance feedback, promotion issues, work-related problem resolution, involvement in decision making, as well as basic issues of distributional justice.

Module Description

The module is designed to provide educational administrators with the competencies necessary to: 1) select measurement tools such as existing survey items or scales that may be used to assess different aspects of justice within their organization; 2) develop and implement plans that use these tools to collect data from relevant groups (e.g., teachers) within their schools or communities. Specifically, the module includes:

- A. A study guide that leads instructors through a sample lesson, including study questions, core student competencies, reading assignments, and classroom activities;
- B. Presentation materials designed to review core concepts in survey methods and introduce students to a range of existing survey instruments and scales that assess issues of procedural and distributive justice issues in organizations; and
- C. Background readings and references to supplemental resources that might be used to build upon the materials provided in this module.

The module is appropriate for courses that include surveys of research methodologies, particularly foundational courses on measurement and quantitative analyses. The course is tailored for introductory educational leadership and administration courses. However, the module is paced at an intermediate level, and presumes that the instructors will be able to abbreviate or expand upon the content to better meet the background characteristics of their students. With this design, we feel the instructors can balance their review of survey methods without making the focus on organizational justice secondary.

II. Guide for the Instructor

Introduction

The study guide for this module includes a description of the core competencies that may be expected of students who complete this module, study questions to guide the module's content, suggested reading assignments for the instructor and students, a lesson plan and classroom materials appropriate for a three-hour seminar, and a list of additional resources and readings that may be used to supplement instructor or student knowledge.



Competencies

Students who successfully complete this module will be able to:

- Identify existing survey instruments, scales and measures that assess various aspects of social justice within their organization.
- Assess the “fit” between and “quality” of different tools that measure organizational justice and their questions of interest.
- Recognize the elements of a sound a research plan for implementing a survey within their organization.

Study Questions

The following questions were designed to guide student learning and inquiry.

- What constitutes organizational justice?
- What kinds of instruments, scales and measures might be used to assess various aspects of organizational justice within educational institutions?
- What criteria should educational leaders use to judge the “fit” and “quality” of different tools for measuring organizational justice?
- What considerations should educational leaders take into account when implementing surveys within their organization?
- In what ways do issues of procedural and distributional justice influence your understanding of social justice?

Suggested Reading Assignments

Readings on topics related to organizational justice and its measurement and survey research are recommended for this lesson. In an effort to minimize faculty and student reading assignments, readings have been labeled as “required” or “optional” and the number of pages of text for each reading is identified.

1. Organizational Justice.

An overview of the measurement of organizational justice in organizational research:

Required Readings:



Fields, D. L. (2002). Organizational justice. In *Taking the measure of work: A guide to validated scales for organizational research and diagnosis* (pp. 163-196). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

2. Survey Research & Measurement.

Fowler, F. (1995). *Improving Survey Questions*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Optional Reading:

Chapter 5 – Presurvey Evaluation of Questions (31 pages)

Litwin, M. (2003). *How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Required Readings:

Chapter 1 – Psychometrics (4 pages)

Chapter 2 – Reliability (21 pages)

Chapter 3 – Validity (10 pages)

Peterson, R. (2000). *Constructing effective questionnaires*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Required Readings:

Chapter 1 – Questions & Answers (10 pages)

Chapter 2 - The Process of Questionnaire Construction (13 pages)

Salant, P. & Dillman, D. (1994). *How to conduct your own survey*. John Wiley & Sons: New York.

Required Readings:

Chapters 3 – Deciding What Information You Need (6 pages)

Optional Readings:

Chapter 4 – Choosing a Survey Method (16 pages)

Chapter 5 – When & How to Sample (16 pages)

3. Examples of empirical research on the measurement of organizational justice



Required Readings:

Dulebohn, J. H., & Ferris, G. R. (1999). The Role of Influence Tactics in Perceptions of Performance Evaluations' Fairness. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(3), 288-303.

Jones, F. F., Scarpello, V., & Bergmann, T. (1999). Pay Procedures---What Makes them Fair? *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 72, 129-145.

4. Additional materials for the study of survey research methods

General

- *The Survey Kit*. Second Edition. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA. Consists of nine volumes on topics related to various aspects of survey design, administration, and analysis.
- Dillman, D. (2000). *Mail and internet surveys: the tailored design method*. (2nd Ed.). John Wiley & Sons: New York, NY.

Survey Research Planning

- Fink, A. (2003). *How to design survey studies*. (2nd Ed.). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA. This is volume 6 of The Survey Kit referenced above.
- Fink, A. (2003). *How to manage, analyze, and interpret survey data*. (2nd Ed.). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA. This is volume 9 of The Survey Kit referenced above.
- Kalton, G. (1983). *Introduction to survey sampling*. Sage University Paper (#35). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Salant, P. & Dillman, D. (1994). *How to conduct your own survey*. John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken, NJ.

Survey Questions & Questionnaires

- Converse, J. & Presser, S. (1986). *Survey questions: handcrafting the standardized questionnaire*. Sage University Paper (#63). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- DeVellis, R.F. (1991). *Scale development: theory and applications*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.



- Fowler, F., (1995). *Improving survey questions: design and evaluation*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Peterson, R. (2000). *Constructing effective questionnaires*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Evaluating & Testing Survey Measures

- Presser, S., Rothgeb, J., Couper, M., Lessler, J., Martin, E., Martin, J., & Singer, E. (2004). *Methods for testing and evaluating survey questionnaires*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.: Hoboken, NJ.

Lesson Plan & Classroom Materials

The following sections describe a lesson plan and supporting materials for three-hour lesson.

Lesson Outline

The lesson's outline is organized around the module's four study questions. Lecture notes and a PowerPoint presentation for this lesson are provided as Attachments A and B (respectively).

- A. What is organizational justice?
 - a. Procedural justice
 - b. Distributinal justice
- B. What kind of tools might be used to assess various aspects of organizational justice within educational institutions?
 - a. Three general types of existing measures – Survey instruments, scales and items
 - b. Examples of measures of organizational justice that might be used in educational agencies
- C. What criteria should educational leaders use to judge the “fit” and “quality” of different tools for measuring organizational justice?
 - a. “Fit”
 - b. “Quality”
 - c. Criteria for judging “fit” and “quality”
- D. What other considerations should educational leaders take into account when implementing surveys within their organization?
 - a. Who is eligible to participate in the survey
 - b. How will the survey be administered



c. How will the survey's data be analyzed & reported

E. Examples of Organizational Justice

- a. Description and discussion of measurement items
- b. Reliability
- c. Validity