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Inclusive Leadership: An Exploration of an Innovative Canadian Graduate Course

by

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Abstract

This exploratory case study investigated an innovative graduate course on inclusive leadership, being taught in a Master of Education program at a university in Canada. Inclusive leadership imbibes social justice awareness, essential in creating equitable organizational cultures that lessen the marginalization of disadvantaged groups. This study asked why one instructor developed the course; why senior leaders supported it; how it was taught; and in what ways it benefited the professional practice of course participants. The researcher found the course was developed and supported because global economic shifts and increasing population diversity have fueled a responsibility for educational leaders to create environments that foster learners to live together peacefully, and contribute in a society that needs to remain economically competitive. An engaging evidence-based instructional approach resulted in learners anticipating using inclusive leadership in their educational leadership roles. Study outcomes support the need for an inclusive leadership course in graduate leadership programs.

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Dedication

To my mother and father, Usha and Guru,

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and to Cari, for their support and

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Dedication	iv
Table of contents	v
List of tables	xi
List of figures	xii
List of acronyms	xiii
 CHAPTER 1: Introduction to the Study.....	 1
Theoretical framework	2
Background and context	2
Statement of problem	3
Purpose and research questions	4
Overview of research design	4
Key assumptions	5
About the researcher	6
Rationale and significance of study	7
Definition of terms	8
Chapter summary	9
 CHAPTER 2: Literature Review	
Introduction	10

Why constructivist theory frames this research?.....	10
Global economic power shifts	11
Impact of China and India on the global economy.....	12
Canadian demographic and immigration patterns	13
Immigration has diversified Canada’s population	13
Projections of Canadian population diversity	14
Drivers of demographic change	15
Increasing language diversity	16
Implications of population changes for public education	16
Responsibility of the public education system	18
Underrepresentation of minority educators in teaching positions	19
What is leadership?	20
Inclusive leadership	21
Benefits of including staff in organizational processes	21
Inclusiveness and democratic organizations	22
Challenges in creating organizational change	23
Barriers to organizational change and inclusive ways to minimize them	24
Policy making focuses on student assessment	25
Leadership preparation programs	26
Inconsistent leadership certification requirements.....	27
Chapter summary	28

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

Introduction	30
Rationale for research approach and case study strategy	30
Research design summary	31
Research sample	33
Research site	34
Data-gathering methods	34
Information needed to answer research questions (contextual, perceptual, demographic, theoretical)	34
Data-gathering methods for Research Question One	36
Data-gathering methods for Research Question Two	36
Data-gathering methods for Research Question Three	37
Data-gathering methods for Research Question Four	37
Analytic process	37
Ethics of the study.....	39
The quality of the inquiry	40
Construct validity.....	40
External validity.....	40
Reliability.....	41
Delimitations	42
Limitations	42
Chapter summary	43

CHAPTER 4: Findings

Introduction	45
Demographic characteristics of course participants	45
Findings for Research Question One	46
Findings for Research Question Two	48
Findings for Research Question Three	51
Interviews	52
Course documents	53
Class observations	54
University student course evaluations	55
Findings for Research Question Four.....	56
Interviews with course participants	56
Demographics	58
University student course evaluations	58
Overview of findings	59
Chapter summary	60

CHAPTER 5: Analysis, Interpretation, and Synthesis of Findings

Introduction	61
The motivation for course development by the course instructor and support from senior leaders (Addressing Research Questions One and Two).....	61
The changing nature of leadership	62

Education system brought to higher level of political importance	63
Inclusive leaders and moral purpose	64
Top-down leadership practices give way to participatory environments	65
Inclusive environments promote democratic ideals	67
Senior leader support for course implementation	67
Methods used to teach the course and how they were intended to foster student learning within the scope of the constructivist theoretical tradition (Addressing Research Question Three)	69
Methods used to teach the inclusive leadership course	69
Reading assignments	69
Group presentation	71
Portfolio assignment	72
Ways in which the inclusive leadership course informed the professional practice of course participants (Addressing Research Question Four)	75
Course instructor used evidence-based teaching strategy	75
Course participants anticipated using inclusive ways in professional practice	75
Course participants connected learning with previous experiences.....	76
Cultural background may bias social justice awareness	78
Bringing it together	78
Senior leaders recognized need for more inclusive ways of leading	79
Educational leaders need opportunities to learn about inclusive leadership	79
Inclusive leaders create equitable environments through a moral base	80
Chapter summary	82

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction	83
The motivation for course development	83
Methods used to teach the course	84
In what ways the inclusive leadership course informed professional practice	84
Recommendations for future research	85
Final thoughts	87
References	88
APPENDIX A: Certificate of Institutional Ethics Review.....	99
APPENDIX B: Letter of Introduction	100
APPENDIX C: Demographic Survey Sheet.....	101
APPENDIX D: Semi-structured Interview Questions	103
APPENDIX E: Demographics of Course Participants (raw data)	107
APPENDIX F: Coding Chart	108

List of Tables

Table 1	Information needed to address research questions	35
Table 2	Demographic summary highlights for 11 interviewed course participants	46

List of Figures

Figure 1	Recent immigrants to Canada, by region of origin 1971 to 2006	14
Figure 2	Proportion of visible minorities among the school-age population (ages 5 to 24), selected census metropolitan areas (CMAs), 1996, 2001, and 2006	17
Figure 3	Proportion of the school-age population (ages 5 to 24) with non-official home languages, selected census metropolitan areas (CMAs), 1996, 2001, and 2006	17
Figure 4	Analytic process used in study	38

List of Acronyms*

CFREB	Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board
CI	Course Instructor
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
CP	Course Participant (student)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IL	Inclusive Leadership
MEd	Master of Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
O. L.	Official Languages of Canada (English and French)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

*Note: To assist readers of this thesis, acronyms are re-introduced in each chapter.

CHAPTER ONE

Those who see all beings in themselves, and themselves in all beings, relinquish hatred. How can the seeming diversity of life delude the one who has seen its unity?
Fahri, 2004, p.56

Introduction to the Study

This study explored a graduate level course on Inclusive Leadership (IL) that is being taught by one instructor in a Master of Education (MEd) program at a university in Canada. The course was the first of its kind in Canada, and one of the first internationally. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain why an innovative IL course explored in this study contributes to leadership training, and in what ways course participants (CP) could benefit professionally from it. A belief the researcher had at the outset of this study was that CP's would find value in this course offering, because of its potential for supporting and improving their ability to lead in more complex learning environments. Research participants were purposefully selected, and comprised the course instructor (CI), two senior leaders from the organization, and students who took the course.

In this chapter, the context and background issues which set the stage for this exploration will be provided. Then, the theoretical framework that underpins it is briefly stated, followed by the problem, purpose and research questions. Next, the research approach, key assumptions, and researcher's background are described, followed by the rationale and significance of this study to theory and practice in the educational leadership field. A brief summary concludes this chapter.

Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by constructivist theory, which purports that educators encourage students to create knowledge through dialogue, the sharing of ideas with others, and by critically reflecting upon their own thoughts and professional experiences (Brandon & All, 2010). Within the pedagogical approach that encompasses this theory, conceptual ideas are favoured over large amounts of content, and students take responsibility for their own learning—which ultimately shapes their evidence-based practice (Brandon & All, 2010; Rollof, 2010). In the researcher's view, since CP's who take this course are typically current or future leaders in their respective educational environments, developing critical thinking skills and constructing new knowledge about how to lead in increasingly complex learning environments is an important consideration to be successful in their roles.

Background and Context

Leadership preparation programs have traditionally offered current and future educational leaders learning in administrative areas like finance, school management and organizations (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009). It has become widely recognized, however, that these programs have fallen short in meeting the needs of 21st century leaders (Marshall, 2004). A shift in global economic power from industrialized Western nations to the developing East, along with increasing population diversity in Canada has created more complex educational environments, and added pressure on leaders to meet organizational goals—while facilitating high student achievement (Bishop & Mahoney, 2010; Lugg & Shoho, 2006).

The public education system in Canada is responsible to provide learning opportunities for young people that ultimately enable them to live in peace with others, support democratic ideals, and enter the workforce with the knowledge and skills to help our country compete economically (Eggertson, 2006). To meet these obligations, educational leaders must be more inclusive in their roles, and ensure social justice equities are maintained for all; failure to do so almost inevitably leads to disengagement of learning partners and continued marginalization of groups such as visible minorities, ethnic groups, females, and those of lower socioeconomic status (Ryan, 2006).

It follows that leaders who receive IL training can better face challenges within their respective educational environments, ultimately benefiting student learning. Because of the importance in developing educational leaders today, this researcher searched for IL courses being taught in MEd programs across larger universities in Canada. At the time this research took place, only one course was found, being taught by the instructor who first developed it in 2008. As a result, the IL course being taught by this instructor became the focus of the study.

Statement of Problem

Global economic shifts and increasing population diversity in the 21st century have brought challenges for educational leaders to create learning environments that are inclusive in decision-making processes, and serve to reduce social justice inequities that can ultimately lead to marginalization of students (Johnson, 2007; Bishop & Mahoney, 2009). Leadership preparation programs have traditionally marginalized social justice

issues in favour of core administrative tasks, and have fallen short in educating leaders to meet 21st century educational challenges (Jean-Marie *et al.*, 2009).

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain how this inclusive leadership course fills a gap in leadership learning, and in what ways CP's anticipated using what they learned in their professional practice. The key research questions that defined this study were:

- 1) Why did the course instructor develop a course on inclusive leadership as part of a Master of Education program that specialized in educational leadership?
- 2) Why and how was this course offering supported by senior leaders in the faculty?
- 3) How did the instructor implement the course in terms of classroom teaching strategies and methods?
- 4) In what ways did this course inform the professional practice of course participants?

Overview of Research Design

This study lent itself well to qualitative research, which is "grounded in an essentially constructivist philosophical position, in the sense that it is concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 80). In-depth, semi-structured interviews using a digital recorder were conducted with the course instructor, two senior leaders from the Faculty of Education (one current and one

former), and eleven CP's. Transcripts were member-checked by each participant. All interviews were transcribed in whole by the researcher. Interviews were coded, analyzed, and interpretations made towards addressing the research questions. As per university ethics protocols, interviewees were each given a pseudonym, in lieu of using their own names.

The CI was observed teaching the IL course over one semester, and detailed field notes were taken as a source of data. Course documents and university student course evaluations were reviewed, including those from all previous offerings since the first course was taught in 2008. A demographic survey was completed by CP's to obtain their background information, as described in Chapter 3, Methodology. All data obtained and literature review information was considered for triangulation purposes.

Key Assumptions

Assumptions are statements that "reflect what you hold to be true as you go into the study and from which you believe you will be able to draw some conclusions" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 38). Key assumptions made by the researcher, whose professional experiences include secondary teaching, and human resources workforce development in public and private domains, were fourfold. The first assumption was that the course was developed by the CI with great foresight, by recognizing IL learning is needed for educational leaders to be effective in reaching organizational goals within the context of globalization and increasingly complex educational environments. The second assumption was that the senior leaders interviewed in this study were supportive of implementation of the course, in-line with that of the CI. Third, the methods and

strategies used by the CI in teaching the course would be effective in fostering student learning. Finally, the fourth assumption was that CP's would gain value from the course, that is, they would anticipate using what they learned in their own leadership practice.

About the Researcher

My interest in exploring the topic of IL in a MEd program is linked to a combination of working experiences and world events that helped shape the last decade. As an educator in the public K-12 system, I had the opportunity to teach in both rural and urban schools. In terms of diversity, most of my teaching experiences were unremarkable until I taught at an inner city school that had a mix of ethnically diverse students. It was then that demographic shifts within the Canadian population and school system began to make an impression on me. Compounded by the tragic events of 9/11, I wondered how perceptions towards people with ethnocultural differences on the whole might change. In particular, since I am 'not' a Muslim, I asked myself how those of the Islamic faith would be viewed, since one school I taught in had a significant number of students from this faith. As it has turned out, although problems with integration do exist, Canada has had less negative attitudes towards Muslims than in other countries—a 2006 Focus Canada poll showed 83% of people surveyed believed that Muslims contribute beneficially to Canada (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 9).

Having transitioned from teaching into the human resources profession, my role included coordinating, leading, and participating on project teams related to succession planning, career tracking, employee engagement, and other areas. As a result, I began to wonder what advantages and challenges might be created in the workforce by

demographic shifts occurring in the Canadian population. Connecting my school-based and business experiences, I thought about what difference a leader could make in leveraging the strengths that diversity brings, while recognizing and mitigating inequities for all. In this way, the leader could create an environment where employees would be more engaged in their roles, and inclined to work towards organizational successes.

In anticipation of this research project, I wondered, *“How could educational leaders leverage the strengths of staff members, students and the community, to create organizational environments that provided equitable opportunities for all, while achieving stated goals that ultimately lead to high student achievement”*? Since educational systems train students who are in essence ‘the future workforce’, and the workforce is changing, this relationship connected me with the following rationale and significance of the study.

Rationale and Significance of Study

The rationale for this study stemmed from the researcher’s interest in understanding why IL is a necessary way forward to leading in increasingly complex learning environments, what instructional strategies and methods maximize learning successes, and in what ways the course would benefit leadership practices of people who take it.

As for the significance of this study, if CP’s provided evidence that they connected theory and research on IL with their own practice through instructor facilitated learning, an implication would be that IL is a critical course to have in leadership preparation

programs, not only in the university where this study took place, but in graduate level programs at other universities as well.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of *this* study, the following definitions will apply:

Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) – a larger urban centre with a population of at least 50,000 at its core, and a total of 100,000 or more (Statistics Canada, 2009)

Ethics – conduct of good behaviour aligned with the values and morals as expected by [Canadian] society (Northhouse, 2007)

Inclusive Leadership (IL) – an approach to leading that emphasizes collaborative processes, empowerment, and social justice awareness in creating equitable, successful, and sustainable organizations

Master of Education (MEd) – a graduate level university degree requiring at least a bachelor's degree as a prerequisite

Morality – a personal quality of knowing the difference between right and wrong which imbibes ethical conduct

Senior Leader – a senior professorial faculty member making administrative decisions

Social Justice – an “overarching framework centered around (a) ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and (b) protecting the rights and opportunities for all. Translated to practice, a social justice framework combines empirically based practices and active consideration of the social, environmental, political, and cultural context in which these practices are implemented at both the macrolevels and microlevels” (Shriberg & Fenning, 2009, p. 4).

Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 began with the focus of this exploratory case study, followed by a brief description of its theoretical framework. Background and contextual information which led to the study focus were provided, followed by the statement of problem, purpose and research questions. An overview of the research design and key assumptions related to the research questions were given. Then, the researcher's professional background and personal interests linked him with the rationale and significance of the study—lending itself well in the next chapter to a more in-depth investigation of the literature surrounding current and historical concepts related to this research. A definition of terms ends this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain how this inclusive leadership (IL) course contributes to leadership learning, and in what ways course participants (CP's) anticipated using what they learned in their professional practice. In this Chapter, constructivist theory is described respective of CP's, who were current or future leaders in their respective educational environments. Then, global economic power shifts and population diversification in Canada that are creating more complex educational environments are discussed, in view of why educational leaders need to be more inclusive in facilitating organizational successes. Next, deficiencies in leadership preparation programs are linked to the need for an IL course to be included in graduate level studies. A summary then ends the chapter.

Why Constructivist Theory Frames this Research?

Throughout the study, the researcher focused on constructivist theory as the portal through which this research was viewed. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) contend that constructivism "is concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time" (p. 80). Philips (1995), in a comparison of six constructivists' views on learning, describes different ideas that exist about this theory—from von Glasserfield who believed that personal knowledge is the result of cultural influences, to Dewey who purported that knowledge without practice is not valid. The author sums up by saying that, although

some differences do exist, all constructivists agree that learning is built upon “active participation by the learner” (p. 11). This notion is supported by Merriam and Brockert (2007), who submit to Candy’s view that knowledge building is an active process of constructing meanings that are used to understand the world.

Educational leadership is “concerned with productive social and socializing relationships where the approach is not so much about controlling relationships through job descriptions or team processes but is about how the agent is connected with others in their own and other’s learning” (Gunter, 2006, p. 263). Course participants were current and future leaders in their respective educational environments, and in consideration of constructivist philosophy, it would follow that these learners would have constructed meanings and new knowledge throughout the course. The researcher was mindful of this position during the study, and revisits it accordingly in the chapters that follow.

Global Economic Power Shifts

During the 20th century, Western industrialized nations made up less than 20% of the world’s population, yet had the highest impact on the world’s economy. By the end of the 1990’s, the US was considered to be the primary economic driving force in the world (Gu, Humphrey, & Messner, 2008). This century, however, has been marked by a significant shift in the global economy, and Western democratic nations that traditionally led the rest of the world are now trailing behind the developing East. During the recent recessionary crisis, many countries accumulated excessive debt levels, prompting an increased need for foreign investment and trade (Bishop & Mahoney, 2009; Kaplinsky & Messner, 2008). Unlike Western developed nations, countries like China and India, which

make up over one-third of the world's population, continued to have positive increases in their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during this same period (Bosworth & Collins, 2008; Holscher, Marelli, & Signorelli, 2010). It follows that positive growth in the economies of these two nations during a time of worldwide recession would put them in a position to have more influence on the global economy than ever before.

Impact of China and India on the global economy.

It is projected that China may account for an increase of 37% global GDP between 2005 and 2020, greater than the contributions of all Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries put together. China has increased its imports of resources from countries in Africa, Asia and South America, spurring resource competition with the West and Japan. Large currency reserves have given this developing nation strong influence over global financial markets (Bosworth & Collins, 2008; Gu, *et al.*, 2008), and in the first half of 2009, Chinese banks lent out over a 1 trillion dollars to countries such as the US, who used these funds for their own economic recovery stimulus packages. Whereas the US had traditionally led the way to global financial recovery, this role has most recently fallen to China (Schwartz, 2009).

India's impact on the global economy has also been significant, and can be attributed to its advanced export service sector and growing investments. Like China, this nation also has substantial cash reserves derived from trade surpluses and foreign direct investment, and it is estimated that India will become the third largest economy in the world by 2016 (Kaplinsky & Messner, 2008). On a recent trip to India, American President Barack Obama underscored the need for Western countries to increase trade with East

Asian countries overall, and was quoted as saying that a partnership between these two democratic nations was “defining and indispensable” in the 21st century, as he sought to open up Indian markets to doubling US imports over the next five years (Pinglay, 2010). Obama’s desire to enhance and sustain trade relations with India suggests a need for greater understanding of cultural differences between these two countries in achieving this goal, and reflects a similar need for Canadians to understand our differences so we may live together harmoniously amidst rapidly changing diversity.

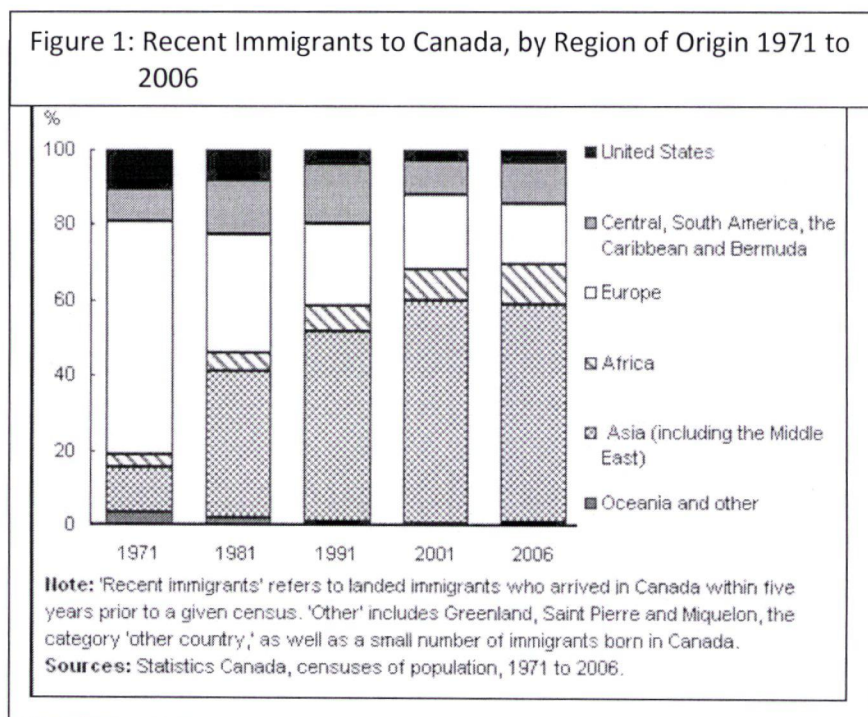
Canadian Demographic and Immigration Patterns

According to the 2006 census, Canada’s population was 31,241,030. Between 2001 and 2006, this nation led all other G8 partners in population growth, with a gain of 5.4% or two million. International immigration was the key contributor to this change and accounted for two-thirds of Canada’s population growth during this period (Statistics Canada, 2008a). It is for this reason that the following discussion on population diversity focuses on visible minorities.

Immigration has diversified Canada’s population.

Over the past four decades, immigration has markedly diversified the Canadian population to include peoples from many nations, cultures and religious beliefs. In 1971, 61.6% of immigrants came from Europe and 10.5% were from the United States. Immigrants from Asia (including the Middle East) constituted 12.1% of the total in that census year. A decade later, European immigration declined to 31.5% and to 8% from the USA. Asian immigration on the other hand had risen to 38.5%. By 2006, European immigration had declined to 16.1%, Asian immigration rose to 58.3% and African migrants

had grown to 10.6% of the total. Four decades of population change, illustrated in Figure 1 (Statistics Canada, 2008b), resulted in over two hundred different ethnocultural groups being identified in Canada, with visible minorities accounting for 16.2% of the population, or 5,068,100 (Statistics Canada, 2008c).



Projections of Canadian population diversity.

Rapid changes in the composition of the Canadian population are expected to continue into the near future. By 2031, it is estimated that between 29% and 32% of Canadians will represent a visible minority, which would place this population between 11.4 and 14.4 million, or two to three times the 2006 value of 5.1 million. Chinese and South Asians would still comprise the largest minority base, but it is projected that Arabs and West Asians will increase the fastest of all groups, together reaching a maximum of 1.7 million (Statistics Canada, 2010).

Drivers of demographic change in Canada.

Reasons for such significant demographic shifts described above can be explained by economic drivers and the liberalization of immigration policies following World War II. In 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King introduced the notion that increased immigration was needed to fill labour shortages and promote growth in a robust post-war economy. This was the first time immigration was tied to economic growth in Canada (Kymlicka, 2010; Triadafilopoulos, 2010). Concurrently, according to Triadafilopoulos (2010), a changing political climate and Canada's membership in the United Nations (UN) brought with it an "unqualified obligation to eliminate racial discrimination in its legislation" (p. 178). Between 1947 and 1962, approximately 250,000 refugees were allowed to immigrate. Most of them were from Eastern Europe and made up eighty-six percent of all Europeans admitted during this period. Although previous immigration policies favoured people from European countries, the Diefenbaker government enacted the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960, a landmark piece of legislation that abandoned discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, and skin colour (Canadian Legal Information Institute, 1992). The 1960 Bill of Rights was a progressive statute because it represented a shift in Canadian core beliefs towards a focus on human rights, reflected in changes to immigration laws that arose a few years later.

In 1967, the Pearson Government tabled an Immigration Act that introduced a points-system, devoid of previous selection criteria based on race, religion, or national origin. This new system took into account age, education, occupational skills, and language ability in assessing eligibility for immigration. A decade later, the Immigration

Act of 1978 contained revisions that allowed for easier entrance of nominated family members by awarding them extra points (Triadafilopoulos, 2010).

Describing changes in Canadian immigration policies illustrated ‘why’ our population is diversifying, and emphasized historical legislative events that reflected Canadian views on human rights, which will be visited later in this chapter. From here, the discourse turns to ‘how’ our population is diversifying in terms of languages, population projections, and their effects on the education system—lending itself to why IL is critical in ensuring the education system meets its responsibilities.

Increasing language diversity.

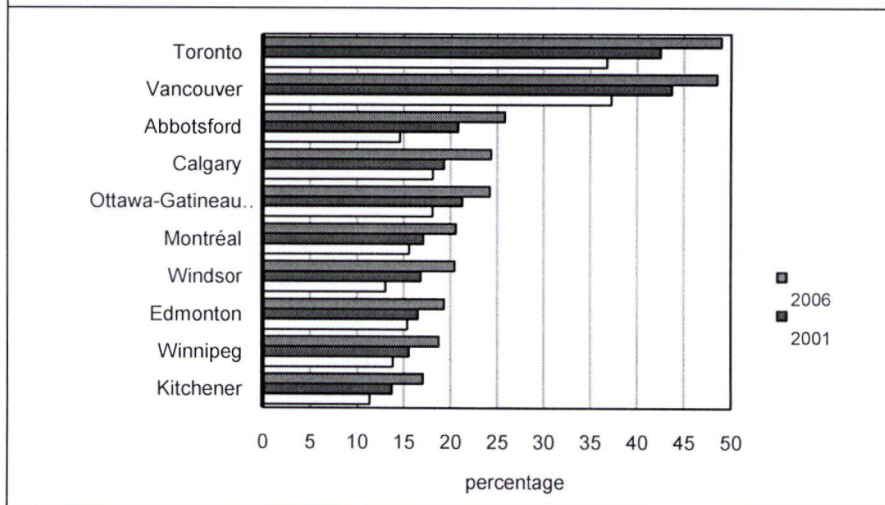
Ever increasing ethnocultural populations have continued to diversify languages in Canada. In the 2006 census year, English and French, Canada’s official languages (O. L.), were the most widely spoken, followed by Chinese. Between 2001 and 2006, the fastest growing language, however, was Punjabi (45%), followed by Tagalog (44%), Arabic (43%), and Chinese (29%). English and French increased marginally by 5.5% and 2.7%, respectively. Overall, 21% of mother tongues were non-official languages (Statistics Canada, 2008d).

Implications of Population Changes for Public Education

It is not surprising that changes in population demography have had a ripple-effect on the public education system. According to the 2006 official population census, an average of 26.8% of school-aged population between the ages of 5 and 24 in Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), were visible minorities (Figure 2). In total, across the

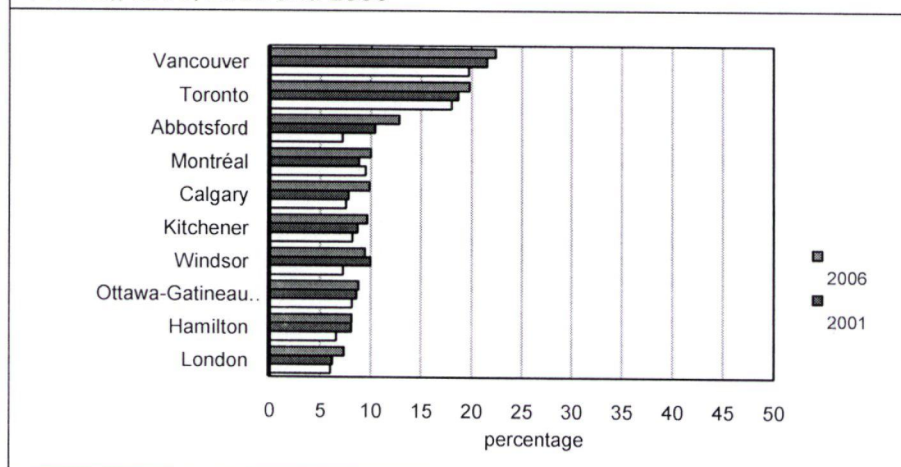
country, visible minorities accounted for 19.7% of the total school-aged population in this census year (Statistics Canada, 2008e).

Figure 2: Proportion of visible minorities among the school-age population (ages 5 to 24), selected census metropolitan areas (CMAs), 1996, 2001 and 2006



In 2006, the percentage of school-aged visible minorities with non-official home languages was 11% in CMA's, in non-CMA's 4%, and 9% overall in Canada (Figure 3) (Statistics Canada, 2008f).

Figure 3: Proportion of the school-age population (ages 5 to 24) with non-official home languages, selected census metropolitan areas (CMAs), 1996, 2001 and 2006



Responsibility of the Public Education System

The rapidly changing demography experienced in Canada has also occurred in other Western countries, and brought with it both challenges and benefits. Sporadically, significant social and civil unrest has resulted from multicultural issues in some parts of the world; however, Canada has experienced relatively less of these occurrences (Kymlicka, 2010; Policy Research Initiative, 2009). On the whole, recent national dialogues with Canadians indicate that many people consider multiculturalism to be of great value (Policy Research Initiative, 2009), seemingly consistent with changing immigration laws that began in the 1960's. So, in the interests of sustaining Canadian beliefs in human rights, we must face challenges that cultural diversity brings without creating divides, and ensure we do not chalk a path where visible minorities and other disadvantaged groups become marginalized or unduly accommodated (Kunz & Sykes, 2007). Schools, discussed next, play an important role in fostering unity amongst students from different backgrounds, and in bridging divides.

The public education system is responsible to "prepare young people for an international democratic way of life" (Starratt, 2011, p. 79), educate our school-aged population to live in a more diverse Canadian society, and prepare them to enter an increasingly diverse workforce (Eggertson, 2006; UNESCO, 2009). The role of the education system may best be emphasized by the rapidly increasing visible minority groups, who numbered 3,922,695 and made up 15.3% of the total labour force in 2006. Of this percentage, the largest group was Chinese, followed by South Asians, Blacks, Arabs/West Asians, and Filipinos (Statistics Canada, 2008g).

In Canada, it is estimated that approximately 70% of jobs will require knowledge-applicable, post-secondary education (Varghese & Puttman, 2011, p. 15). The workforce has also become more reliant on technology, and students must be prepared to have the knowledge and skills to function effectively in a globally-integrated Canadian economy (Anderson, 2009; Eggertson, 2006). In order for the education system to fulfill its responsibilities, educational leaders will need to create equitable organizational environments that not only reduce marginalization, but also encourage all students to pursue post-secondary studies.

Underrepresentation of minority educators in teaching positions.

According to Ryan, Pollock, and Antonelli (2009), one way to mitigate marginalization of minorities in the K-12 system is by having more people from these groups in teaching positions. Unfortunately, representation of minority teachers falls disproportionately below minority populations in Canada; Ryan *et al.* indicated that statistics on minority teacher representation were difficult to source for every province. However, a range from a low of 4.3% in Quebec in 2001 to a high of 28.8% in Vancouver in 2006 (p. 597) was found, and the gap is widening as population diversity increases in this country.

Underrepresentation also occurs in Canadian universities where in the year 2000, only 8.3% of professors identified themselves as visible minorities (Nakhaie, 2004, Analysis section, para. 7). Even if educators from visible minorities were proportionately represented in the public education system, it would be unlikely that this group could

single-handedly mitigate all marginalization that occurs, and inclusive leadership, discussed next, is a critical step forward in achieving this goal.

What is Leadership?

The attainment of goals in educational environments is fostered by supportive work environments which promote staff development and student learning, and this responsibility rests on the shoulders leaders (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

Considering the importance of leaders in organizations and different views of leadership that exist today, it is important at this point to define what leadership is, and establish a base-line understanding of its meaning. Then, inclusive leadership can be better discussed and understood.

Northhouse (2007), a notable professor who has taught leadership and communications for over 20 years, contends that leadership is “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). Bolman and Deal (2008) believe good leaders have a clear vision, make their expectations known, and direct organizations towards attaining desired goals; they must be goal-focused and keep their staff on track, despite distractions that may occur (such as policy changes)—and this is made easier if goals are shared by their staff. Coming to scholarly consensus on the definition of leadership has proved challenging; however, over a decade ago, 58 researchers representing 38 countries met at the University of Calgary in Canada, and agreed that “leadership is the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (McShane, 2004, p. 400).

Inclusive Leadership

The rapidly diversifying school-aged population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2008e; 2010) requires more than just visionary leadership or the ability to promote goal-focused behavior; it requires a paradigm shift towards more inclusive, socially just ways of leading. Inclusive leadership is an approach in which leaders include staff, community members, students, and stakeholders in organizational processes to create socially just organizations through ‘meaningful’ participation—not simply by integrating marginalized groups for the sake of the satisfying the status quo (Ryan, 2000).

Raynor (2009) remarks that IL is “an interactive management of diversity and difference in the school community” (p.438). In his view, IL focuses on learning, and encompasses all members of the learning community. He also draws a relation between IL and distributed leadership, considering IL to be a form of professional learning that promotes the well-being of the most marginalized. This notion of distributed leadership is also imbibed by Hollander (2009), who qualifies IL as “doing things with people, rather than to people” (p.3), in an environment where followers become leaders by virtue of their active involvement in the process.

Benefits of including staff in organizational processes.

It is logical to assume that the participatory aspect of having staff members included in organizational processes has a positive emotional impact on them. In a study of fifty K-12 teachers in Ontario who taught in rural and urban settings, Hargreaves (2004) found overall, that externally mandated changes from the government were looked upon unfavourably by teachers; they could become disengaged from accepting those changes

by virtue of not being involved in the process. Positive emotional responses, on the other hand, were elicited when teachers were included.

So, including staff members in organizational processes brings credibility to the desired change, and is congruent with the idea that leaders can inspire, motivate, and empower people by moving them emotionally to bring acceptance and good performance (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2004; Jogolu, 2010). Another consideration involved in building credibility is the issue of trust. According to Kouzes and Pozner (2003), gaining trust is the most important aspect of building credibility as a leader, and this goes hand-in-hand with their notion that modeling expected behaviours is one of the exemplary ways to lead.

Inclusiveness and democratic organizations.

The discussion thus far about the participatory nature of IL implies that people have a voice in organizational processes, just like one does in a democracy. According to Ryan (2000) and Raynor (2009), IL facilitates the creation of democratic organizations by the very nature of its intention to address social justice issues, its conception of shared vision and goals, participatory practices, common goal attainment, and learner-centred focus. For these components to be realized, people must be able to communicate effectively with each other, and this can be a challenging task considering the hierarchical structure of educational systems that can prevent effective communication from occurring. If leaders include staff, students, and community members in meaningful dialogue; are visible and approachable; display a sense of caring; and build trusting

relationships, they can begin to move forward in realizing the visions of their institutions (Ryan & Rottman, 2009).

In his book on creating healthy organizations, Lowe (2010) supports the practices listed above, and identifies six ways leaders can be more inclusive. These include: inspiring others to perform well and supporting them in doing so; caring about the well-being of employees; empowering employees and allowing them the autonomy to make decisions; self-reflecting on one's own actions; walking-the-talk; and showing employees respect for their abilities to gain their trust. In the next section, potential barriers to organizational change that leaders may face are discussed respective of IL practices that can overcome them.

Challenges in Creating Organizational Change

Schein (2004), in his book on organizational culture and change, writes that leadership is woven into the fabric of an organization to the point where leaders can create, transform, or destroy cultures by their own actions. Leaders must be able to perceive and understand organizational norms and problems, be motivated and resilient to change the culture, and convey those messages to employees. The motivation to illicit change is implicit in social justice leadership (and hence IL), where leaders who advocate for clients or groups "contribute to social and systemic change" (Arredondo & Perez, 2003, p. 287). Although leaders may have the best intentions in creating change, they can face challenges that prevent them from achieving it. In the following discussion, potential barriers to change and how IL practices serve to reduce them will be described.

Barriers to organizational change and inclusive ways to minimize them.

One reason administrators find it difficult to promote change is that they are unable to build strong learning communities within their organizations. In an examination of several Canadian research studies on school administrators, Sackney and Walker (2006) suggest that leaders must build learning communities through inclusionary leadership practices. This can be accomplished by focusing on teaching and learning development, establishing a shared vision, delegating responsibility, and by creating a culture of collaboration where everyone takes responsibility for learning. None of this can occur, however, without sufficient resources, and an administrator must make sure that needed supports are provided. Failure to do so would lessen credibility of the intended change, diminish trust in the leader, and decrease staff engagement in the change process (Ryan, 2006; Sackney & Walker, 2006).

Educational leaders are expected to create organizations that provide equitable learning opportunities for all, while under increasing societal and political pressures to attain high student achievement (Mulford, 2005). Leadership “. . . as a social practice is inclusive of all, and integrated within teaching and learning. Students and teachers are leaders of their own and other’s learning both inside and outside of the organization” (Gunter, 2006, p. 263). Inherent in this statement is the need for educational leaders to be aware of social justice issues, core to IL, which on the surface would seem like common sense. However, Blackmore (2006), in an article on social justice, leadership, and feminism, contends that educational administration casts aside social justice issues in favour of traditional areas that do not address the important aspects of teaching and

learning. Educational administration as a field must embrace social and cultural aspects of leading and learning by critically considering knowledge from other disciplines, spanning the social sciences to business management (Blackmore, 2006; Gunter & Ribbins, 2002).

Policy making focuses on student assessment.

Even policy makers tend to focus on assessment and academic standards, neglecting to integrate academic research, social justice methods, and strategies with the appropriate training (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Starratt, 2005). Failure of policies to reflect cultural issues may propagate further marginalization and exclusion (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Another issue adding to this problem is that policies are often developed without consultation of educators, so they feel distanced from the process and less likely to buy into them (Smith & Larimer, 2009). Leaders cannot act alone, and must establish shared values that build support by bridging the larger educational community towards a collective voice, even if some partners making up that voice may have some dissimilar views to the leader. Only by garnering shared support can the 'political will' be persuaded and policy change occur (Fossey & Shoho, 2006; Jogulu, 2010; Mclellan & Dominguez, 2006; Perez, Uline, Johnson, James-Ward, & Basom, 2011).

The attitudes of educational leaders towards social justice issues are also of concern. They need to be aware of personal biases and negative attitudes carried within (Schein, 2004), and develop the cultural competencies necessary to positively affect student achievement (Bustamante, Nelson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Some see social justice as being difficult to qualify, and therefore not important to incorporate

efficaciously into their leadership approach. Conversely, some are frustrated because they know that marginalization occurs in their institutions, but are unsure how to create positive change to rid the inequities amid traditionally held leadership practices and pedagogy (Childress, Elmore, Grossman & King, 2007; Marshall & Marcela, 2010).

It is clear there are a multitude of reasons why inequities may occur, and leaders must consciously find ways to overcome them—only through concerted effort can they accomplish this (Rorrer, 2006). It follows that IL, by virtue of its participatory nature and attention to social justice, can act as a self-reflective tool for leaders to recognize their own biases, beliefs in equitable practices, and act to create better organizations.

The discussion so far provides evidence that a critical gap exists in educational leadership administration, particularly in the area of social justice, and supports the need for IL learning. If leaders are going to create equitable organizations, they will need the knowledge and strategies to do so, and leadership programs are a typical way educational leaders can develop professionally. For this reason, the discussion will now turn to how well these programs accomplish this.

Leadership Preparation Programs

Leadership preparation programs aimed at supporting educational leaders are falling short in meeting the needs of 21st century learning environments, and have been shown to be particularly deficient in a focus on social justice issues—critical to mitigating marginalization of disadvantaged groups. According to Marshall (2004), traditional leadership programs have minimized:

. . . issues and concerns of social justice. Marginalization of social justice concerns not only affects those with unequal social, educational, and professional capital because they are poor, immigrant, female, gay, or different in race, abilities, ethnicity, religion, language, or culture but also limits the voices of allies within educational administration that would confront issues of inequality and injustice within our field. (p.4)

Jean-Marie *et al.* (2009), also found that leadership preparation programs downplay or negate social justice, in lieu of traditional curricular topics like educational administration, organizational theory, and finance. Social justice issues encompassing moral character, equity, ethnicity, religion, and disabilities are underemphasized or lacking.

Inconsistent leadership certification requirements.

Compounding the problem with leadership preparation programs are matters of leadership certification. Fossey and Shoho (2006) found that there are inconsistencies and increasing dissention about the way educational leaders are trained in universities, considering some states in the US have eliminated the need for certification requirements all together. In some cases, superintendants are being hired into their positions with no previous educational leadership experience. The authors also state that many educational leadership programs offer courses without a shared vision for leadership training, and some departments face internal struggles over which learning areas should have more resource supports. Nunan, George and McCausland (2000) also recognize these internal faculty disagreements, and state:

. . . addressing inclusivity is central to remaining an educational institution in an environment where technology and globalization—through creating markets for educational services—are reforming universities as corporations which adopt corporate, competitive values Universities that promote inclusion understand that inclusive education makes them, and the society that they serve, more economically and culturally productive because they use and extend the talents of all. They command public support because part of their mission is to support the public good. (p. 86)

The marginalization of social justice learning in educational administration, coupled with a lack of collective vision and resource competition in faculty's that provide leadership programs, prompted the researcher to investigate graduate level MEd programs in universities across Canada, to see how many IL courses were part of the curriculum. Considering the critical nature of IL in educational administration today, and clear evidence showing a lack of social justice concern in the field, the researcher expected to easily find courses offered. Surprisingly, the search yielded only one IL course being taught by one instructor, in the entire country. It followed then that this instructor's course would naturally become the focus of this exploratory case study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began by stating the purpose of the study. The theoretical framework of constructivism was then described. Global economic shifts and population demographic changes were provided, which laid the foundations for why educational environments are also changing, becoming more complex, and what responsibilities the

education system has. Inclusive leadership was then introduced as a necessary approach for educational leaders to create equitable organizations free of marginalization. This led to evidence showing that the educational leadership field and leadership preparation programs were lacking in social justice foundations, prompting the researcher to discover that only one IL course was being taught in the country. That course became the focus of this research, and Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain why the innovative inclusive leadership (IL) course examined in this study contributes to leadership training, and in what ways course participants (CP) benefited professionally from it. In this chapter, the rationale for the methods used to conduct this research is explained, followed by an overview of the research design, and a description of the research sample. The research site is discussed relative to the chosen sample. Then, information needed to address each research question is provided, which encompass contextual, perceptual, demographic and theoretical considerations. Data-gathering methods are described, including the analytic process. Ethical considerations are provided and the quality of the inquiry is substantiated by its validity and reliability. Delimitations setting study boundaries, and limitations are discussed. Then, a brief summary concludes this chapter.

Rationale for Research Approach and Case Study Strategy

A single exploratory case study design was used to conduct this research. According to Yin (2009), three conditions must be met to distinguish case study methodology from others: (a) the use of *how* and *why* questions during the research cycle, because they lend themselves to explanations that draw connections to professional practice; (b) the study must examine a current event; and (c) the researcher need not control behaviours in the study, as in a scientific experiment (p.8).

In this study, the researcher sought to discover why the course instructor (CI) developed the IL course, why and how senior leaders supported the course, how it was implemented, and in what ways CP's intended to use what they learned from the course in their professional leadership practice. Research questions developed for this study sought to answer the questions 'how' and 'why'. Also, this study explored an IL course being taught at a university in Canada, and no behaviours of the CI or participants were controlled by the researcher during class observations, or while conducting interviews.

Research Design Summary

The following steps were undertaken to carry out this study:

1. The researcher contacted the CI, provided her with a Letter of Introduction to the proposed study, and discussed the efficacy of conducting an exploratory case study that focused on the IL course itself.
2. Following the CI's consent to participate, a preliminary review of the literature was conducted, course documents reviewed, and a proposal drafted. Once approved, an ethics submission was developed and sent to the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB). The study was subsequently approved and a Certificate of Institutional Review issued to the researcher by the CFREB (APPENDIX A).
3. Observations of a one semester IL course began with the researcher giving a brief presentation about the study to CP's during the first class. At that time, the researcher handed out Letters of Introduction (APPENDIX B), and sought volunteers to complete both a demographic survey (APPENDIX C) and

participate in interviews. Those who volunteered were required to sign a consent form. Interviews in this study were only conducted with CP's from the class observed.

4. The researcher obtained agreement from two senior leaders (one former and one current) to participate in an interview. The former senior leader was directly involved in the original IL course approval, and the latter was in a position to support its continued offering. Both senior leaders were provided with a Letter of Introduction, and signed a consent form to participate.
5. The study protocol called for observations of eight classes throughout the 13 week semester, to see what teaching methods, strategies, and resources were being used by the instructor. Field notes were kept for all observations, formatted by date, subject of the class discussion, teaching strategies and methods used, and a summary of highlights that addressed the research questions.
6. The researcher interviewed the CI eight times during the semester. Eleven CP's (out of 19 in the course observed), and the two senior leaders, were each interviewed once, due to time constraints of collecting data during a single semester, and their limited availability. Transcriptions were returned to all interviewees by post for their confirmation of accuracy. Participants who required amendments notified the researcher, who then revised transcripts and resent them for final confirmation. See APPENDIX D for interview questions.

7. The intent of the researcher was ideally to have observed all IL courses offered by the faculty since it was first taught in 2008. Since this did not fit with the practicality of the study, the researcher reviewed not only university student course evaluations from the course he observed, but all student evaluations received by the university since the course was first offered in 2008. In total, 103 evaluations considered 'valid' by the university, out of 126, were reviewed.
8. Course documents that could be obtained from all IL courses offered to the date of this research, and materials either handed out by the CI in classes observed by the researcher, or made available online, were reviewed with respect to addressing the research questions.

Research Sample

Purposive sampling was used to ensure selected study participants had a close association with the IL course. These included the CI, CP's, and two senior leaders—one former and one who was with the faculty at the time of this study. The CI had developed the course, and was the only one who had ever taught it. One senior leader, formerly with the faculty, was chosen by virtue having been directly involved in supporting the original approval of the course. The other, who worked in the faculty during the time of the study, was selected for an interview because the researcher would be able to gain insights into why this participant continued to support the IL course offering. Course participants that agreed to be interviewed, and who provided demographic information, comprised a cross-section of teachers, curriculum leaders, and administrators from K to 12, in addition to a corporate human resources trainer and health care profession trainer.

All were educational leaders or had aspirations to be. The CI and CP's made up a nested sample, because they were participating within the course event itself (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Research Site

Since this exploratory case study focused on the IL course being offered at a large university in Canada, the CI, CP's of the class observed by the researcher, and one senior faculty member were interviewed on-site. The other senior leader, formerly with the faculty, was interviewed off-site.

Data-gathering Methods

Yin (2009) believes that good case study research includes obtaining as many data sources as possible. In this study, five methods of data-gathering were used: semi-structured interviews, class observations, a demographic survey, review of course documents, and university student course evaluations from all IL courses offered to the date of this research. The benefit of using multiple methods allowed the researcher to delineate and understand the theoretical, perceptual, contextual, and demographic types of information that were collected. Multiple methods also made triangulation possible, allowing for the corroboration and interpretation of results, enhancing the reliability of this case study (Krathwohl, 1998). In addition, by combining collection methods, limitations of any one in particular could be balanced by the strengths of the others (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Information Needed to Address Research Questions

Data-gathering methods used in this research served to obtain contextual,

perceptual, demographic, and theoretical information needed to address the research questions, which are, according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), four key areas of attention in most qualitative studies. Links between the study's research questions, data-gathering methods, and these four areas are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1		
<i>Information Needed to Address Research Questions</i>		
Research Questions	Data-gathering method	Type of Information Obtained
1) Why did the course instructor to develop a course on inclusive leadership as part of a Master of Education program that specialized in educational leadership?	Interview	- Theoretical - Perceptual - Contextual
2) Why and how was this course offering supported by senior leaders in the faculty?	Interview	- Perceptual - Contextual
3) How did the instructor implement the course in terms of classroom teaching strategies and methods?	Interview Course document review Class observations Student course evaluations	- Theoretical - Perceptual - Contextual
4) In what ways did this course offering inform the professional practice of course participants?	Interview Demographic Survey Student course evaluations	- Perceptual - Demographic - Contextual

Data-gathering methods for Research Question One.

In *Research Question One*, semi-structured interviews were used to ascertain the CI's motivation to develop the IL course. This method uncovered the theoretical rationale behind course development, and its applicability to the context of leadership in educational environments. Interviews also allowed for the researcher to draw upon the CI's own educational leadership experiences, constituting personal perceptual information.

Holstein and Gubrium (2004) consider all interviews to be active interviews and state:

Treating interviewing as a social encounter in which knowledge is actively constructed suggests the possibility that the interview is not so much a neutral conduit or source of distortion, but rather a site of, and occasion for, producing reportable knowledge. (p. 141)

Actively constructing knowledge is congruent with the theory of constructivism (Fosnot, 2005), the lens through which this study was conducted. Keeping in mind the need to obtain reportable knowledge, semi-structured interviews were conducted that allowed the researcher to probe and gain study participants' full expression of their thoughts.

Data-gathering methods for Research Question Two.

Research Question Two was addressed through semi-structured interviews with the two senior leaders, who drew upon their personal views of why the IL course was

important to have in their leadership preparation program. It also related contextual importance in terms of this course's applicability in educational environments.

Data-gathering methods for Research Question Three.

For *Research Question Three*, interviews with the CI, a review of course outlines, university student course evaluations from all courses taken to date, and class observations of the CI teaching classes throughout one semester helped the researcher to establish how teaching methods were interwoven with constructivist learning, and the CI's perceptions of how and why those teaching methods were effective in relation to the contextual experiences of CP's.

Data-gathering methods for Research Question Four.

Research Question Four was addressed by conducting interviews with eleven CP's, plus a review of all university student course evaluations dating to the inception of the first inclusive leadership course. This allowed the researcher to elucidate their perceptions of how they might anticipate using what they learned from the IL course in their own leadership practice. The demographic survey provided information on the CP's gender, age, educational, and ethnic backgrounds that will contribute to the discussion in Chapter 5.

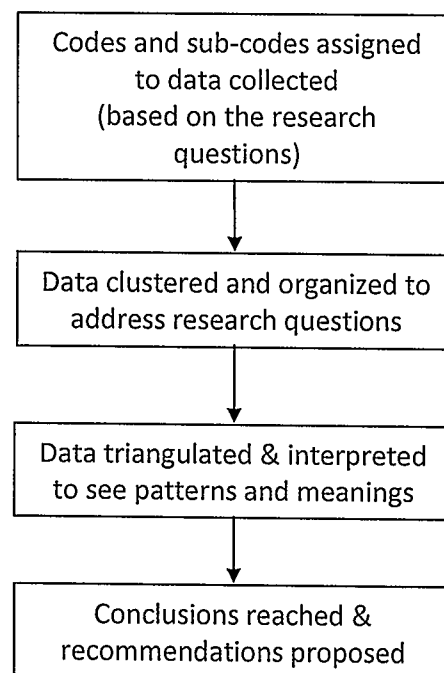
Analytic Process

To address the research questions, codes and sub-codes (See Appendix F, Coding Chart) were assigned to data as it was collected from five different methods used in this study. This process allowed the researcher to cluster data segments, which were then organized into findings that addressed the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Once findings were elucidated respective of each research question, data was interpreted and patterns were drawn out to discover meanings and come to conclusions. During the interpretive process, triangulation was used to overcome limitations of using just once source of data to make conclusions. "Interpretation means attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order" (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 162). The authors go on to say that a researcher should draw on pertinent data which further highlights the questions that need to be answered in the study. This researcher attempted to follow in this spirit of 'interpretation', within the theoretical framework of constructivism which underpins this study, and existing research literature supporting it.

The following diagram depicts the analytic process used in this study.

Figure 4: Analytic Process Used in Study



Ethics of the Study

The proposal for this study was approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Calgary. An application of ethics review was submitted to the CFREB, and a Certification of Institutional Ethics Review approval was obtained. All participants were invited to take part in the study through a Letter of Introduction, and were given a consent form to complete, which indicated that their participation was completely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential.

Participants were informed that their organization would not be cited in the thesis, and that a pseudonym would be used in place of their names. Consent forms were number coded, and once signed by the participant, stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure room at the University of Calgary. The number on each consent form was transferred to participants' interview transcripts, respectively, so their names would remain anonymous.

No one except the researcher and his supervisor were allowed to see or hear any of the answers to the interview questions or recordings. Interview transcripts were kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence, only accessible by the researcher and his supervisor. All participants were asked to review the researcher's interview transcripts to ensure agreement and accuracy. To prevent the ability to cross-reference the code number on the transcripts with the consent forms, the documents were kept in separate filing cabinets. All digital voice recordings were stored on University of Calgary password protected computer, and along with documentation, voice recordings and computer files were only accessible by the researcher and his supervisor. All paper and electronic

research data will be stored for a period of three years following completion of this Master of Arts degree, and then destroyed as per university ethics protocols.

The Quality of the Inquiry

Since the rationale for using an exploratory case study met three conditions espoused by Yin (2009), it follows that the quality of this inquiry should also be based on criteria set out by this author, which includes construct validity, external validity, and reliability (p. 40), discussed next.

Construct validity.

Construct validity is satisfied if data is obtained through multiple sources, the information gathered is linked together in such a way that it addresses the research questions and conclusions, and study participants are involved in reviewing the case composition (Yin, 2009). Data for this study was gathered through semi-structured interviews; observations of the IL course captured in detailed field notes; a review of course documents; university student course evaluations; and through demographic information obtained from course participants. Research questions were addressed with each of these methods in combination, as previously shown in Table 1. Semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher, and all interviewees were given the opportunity to cross-check their transcripts for accuracy.

External validity.

Yin (2009) states that external validity is a test of whether “a study’s findings are generalizable beyond the case study” (p. 43). The greater degree the study may apply to another situation, the more externally valid it is. Since this study explored a unique

course on IL—the only one being taught in a MEd leadership program in Canada— five methods of data collection ensured triangulation could occur, allowing for coded data to be interpreted to derive analytic generalizations, a characteristic of case studies (Yin, 2009).

Reliability.

Reliability of a study relates to the possibility that if another researcher were to replicate it using the same methodology, they would obtain similar results. So, it is important for the researcher to reduce biases and errors during the study (Yin, 2009) to ensure repeatability. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) contend that in qualitative research, reliability may be better be reflected if the study's findings are congruent with the data collection methods used, and the researcher must demonstrate consistency in coding practices throughout the research.

In this study, the researcher provided specific details of the research methodology, used five methods of data collection to ensure triangulation, and applied consistent coding methods throughout that allowed interpretations to be made. The researcher also attempted to reduce biases by transcribing interviews verbatim; had interview participants confirm transcriptions for accuracy; reviewed all university student course evaluations to obtain a broader spectrum of data than would have otherwise been possible through the observation of only one course; and kept detailed field notes of all class observations.

Delimitations

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) submit that delimitations of a study define its boundaries, and relate to how the focus of the study was determined. This study explored an IL course being taught in a Master of Education program at a large university in Canada. At the time the research proposal was developed, this IL course was the only one being taught in the country. As a consequence, it became the focus of this research, and lent itself to study participants being closely associated with the course.

Limitations

This study contains certain limitations which the researcher was aware of and attempted to mitigate during the research. Due to time considerations, interviews were conducted with CP's during a one semester course offering, and this restricted the sample size of interviewees. However, university student course evaluations from the IL course observed, and from all others offered to the date of this research, augmented information obtained from a one semester observation.

The study was conducted at a university located in one area of Canada, and the perceptions of CP's reflected educational challenges faced there, which may not necessarily have been the same perceptions held by people in other regions. However, since increasing population diversity is impacting all of Canada, and the responsibilities of the education system are applicable across the nation, interpretations and conclusions arrived at in this study could reflect a broader regional context. In addition, evidence garnered in this study indicating leadership preparation programs have traditionally marginalized social justice, an essential component of inclusive leadership, makes it

plausible that perceptions of educational leaders across all regions of Canada would share some significant similarities.

Another limitation rested with the researcher, who is a former K to 12 educator. Throughout the observations of the IL classes, the very nature of subjectivity in this task could have potentially biased the researcher's perceptions of what was noted. Being aware of these potential biases, and taking detailed field notes in consideration of addressing the research questions, served to keep the researcher focused. In addition, recognizing his professional background as a potential bias in analyzing the data, pseudonyms were used on interview transcripts, so that coding was accomplished without knowledge of which participant's responses were being scrutinized. Also, during the interview process, the researcher attempted to establish a comfortable atmosphere in the interview room so that participants would feel free to answer questions candidly, without being directed in a way he felt they should be answered. Human resources recruitment interviewing experiences allowed the researcher to draw on previously practiced skills to minimize this potential limitation.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the research methodology used in this study. It began by providing the rationale for choosing an exploratory case study approach. Then, a summary of the research design was provided, followed by the research sample and a description of the research site. Five methods of data-collection used in this study were described, along with information needed to address research questions. Data analysis supporting interpretations were then discussed. Ethical considerations were described

respective of study protocols used to protect data and anonymity of participants. The quality of this inquiry was then affirmed by its construct validity, external validity, and reliability. Finally, delimitations and limitations concluded this chapter. In Chapter 4, data obtained through the five collection methods are used to address the research questions that guided this study.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain why the innovative inclusive leadership (IL) course examined in this study contributes to leadership training, and in what ways course participants (CP's) benefited professionally from it. This chapter begins by describing the demographic characteristics of the IL course participants observed by the researcher. Then, the research questions are listed, and samples of collected data are used to provide findings that address each one respectively. Next, an overview of the findings are stated, followed by a chapter summary.

Demographic Characteristics of Course Participants

The student demographic survey contributed to findings that described the ethnic, academic, and professional backgrounds of CP's in the IL course observed by the researcher. Out of 19 CP's who took the course, 16 provided their demographic information, of which 11 agreed to be interviewed. These participants made up a cross-section of teachers, curriculum leaders, and administrators from K to 12, as well as a corporate human resources trainer and a health care profession trainer. All had previous leadership experience, were currently educational leaders, or had aspirations to be. They all had bachelor degrees, spoke English as a first language, and were of white Caucasian, European heritage. Of note, these CP's were considered to be expert level educators, having had over five years of instructional experience in their respective learning environments (Berliner, 1998). A summary of demographic information for 11 CP's who

provided both demographic information and agreed to be interviewed are shown in Table 2, and are referred to again when findings are presented for Research Question 4 later in this chapter. Raw data may be seen in Appendix E.

Table 2				
<i>Demographic Summary Highlights for 11 Interviewed Course Participants</i>				
Gender	Female	9	Male	2
Age Range (all participants)	(30 – 34)	7	(35 – 39)	1
	(40 – 44)	2	(51 – 54)	1
Occupation	(K – 12 Educators)	9	(Training & Development Consultant)	1
	(Informatics Consultant)	1		
Level of Education Completed	Bachelor	11		
English	As a first language	11		
Ethnic Origin	White Caucasian European Descent	11		

Having provided demographic findings of the CP's above, the researcher will now attempt to balance perspectives of interviewees and integrate the broad range of data collection methods used during this study to address the research questions.

Findings for Research Question One: *Why did the course instructor develop a course on inclusive leadership as part of a Master of Education program that specialized in educational leadership?*

This research question was addressed by a selection of comments made by the CI throughout eight interviews conducted by the researcher during the semester in which the IL course was observed. As interviews progressed, it became apparent the CI was

motivated to develop the IL course because increasing population diversity has challenged our democratic values and peaceful coexistence with one another. Educational leaders who include staff, community members and stakeholders in organizational processes, and recognize social justice inequities, can create organizations that achieve educational goals. If these goals are achieved, learners in organizations will be more knowledgeable and competent to function within an economy that needs to remain competitive, and be able to live in harmony within the freedoms that democracy brings.

The following quotes below demonstrate the CI's motivations to develop the IL course:

Inclusive Leadership came about because the external environment globally and locally is changing dramatically as immigration changes and the fabric of society, particularly Canadian society, becomes richer. So too, do our understandings of how people behave, as we take on a greater understanding of each other. Now that's a very healthy thing, and part of complimenting the wealth that different people bring, that diversity often offers, is by becoming an inclusive leader.

It's about changing the efficacy of citizenry, of businesses and other organizations in the West, so that young people in particular, are positioned to be extremely articulate, extremely good conceptual thinkers, who are able to negotiate and hold to the principle of being peaceful, as well as wanting sovereignty and a decent world for all.

Inclusive leaders, I suspect, will be able to ensure that greater numbers of employees and students experience prosperity because there will be active attention to making sure that the interests of the stakeholders, whether they are students, teachers, or allied school employees are addressed . . . Inclusive leaders understand the disadvantages more clearly than leaders who have no sense of that being an issue to pursue.

An additional interesting finding gleaned from the CI's interviews was that IL also supports the development of younger leaders, and that they should be encouraged to take on more responsibility earlier in their lives.

It [IL] matters because we can all play a small but important part in encouraging young people to become leaders earlier on, leaders who will not get shackled by racist ways of thinking, sexist ways of thinking-all those negativisms that create exclusive opportunities for some and lock out others, or else stall opportunities available to others . . . that's a change of thinking from a notion that there are particular people who are the deserving, and the rest are not.

Findings for Research Question Two: *Why and how was this course offering supported by senior leaders in the faculty?*

Each of the two senior leaders included in this study were interviewed once, and their comments supporting the second research question are provided below. One of the senior leaders interviewed, who was on the faculty leadership team that approved the original IL course in 2008, said there was an in-depth discussion about the need to

introduce several courses to fill gaps that existed in the program, while also satisfying government quality standards. One important course they considered was IL, which this interviewee felt went beyond transformational leadership strategies, because it addressed issues of social justice, inclusion, and equity in learning environments. This belief is expressed in her quote below.

When we would meet as a leadership group, we talked about a number of issues—current contextual issues . . . We looked at what other people were writing about, and talking about as key issues. So, we actually developed several courses over the time I was there, including inclusive leadership to try to fill the gaps we thought existed in the program . . . because inclusive leadership was something that people had been . . . starting to talk [about] far beyond transactional leadership and even beyond transformational leadership . . . there was a lot of focus in literature about the needs of diverse populations to be included . . . and we felt that something on inclusive leadership helped to address those needs.

This senior leader also commented that the core leadership team in the faculty, being educators themselves, understood the merits of social justice and inclusion in leadership training, and that belief helped garner support for the IL course implementation. The following quote from her illustrates this point.

. . . there was a core of us who really valued and supported ideas about social justice, about equity, about diversity, inclusion, those kinds of things . . . and I think it's really important to have champions for those kinds of causes . . . So, it helped

that I was [in a senior leadership position] and a leadership team member, because I was doing both things at once . . . it helps to have people in leadership positions who support those ideas.

The other senior leader interviewed, who was with the faculty at the time of this research, provided comments in support of courses which promote participatory leadership styles, in general. This interviewee indicated if faculty members, students and stakeholders are included in and contribute to organizational changes, they will accept those changes more readily. Comments from this senior leader supporting inclusionary principles within course offerings are provided below:

From my perspective, you know, we've learned a lot over the years about different approaches to leadership, organizational structuring, and collegial governance . . . It's quite important for us now to understand that we live in a participatory environment. People expect to participate in the creation of procedures, policies, and decisions that will influence their workplace. So, any kind of a university-based course that provides some theoretical, conceptual research or practical information with regard to inclusivity within organizations is extremely important to a Faculty of Education.

Inclusive Leadership means that on the day that we're making policy decisions, programmatic decisions, decisions about process at our official councils, the entire community needs to believe that they know why we're making them, they know how we've made them, they know that they've been involved in making those

decisions and recommendations, and while not everybody will agree with every recommendation or decision, they will generally understand, and that's the important part.

Findings for Research Question Three: *How did the instructor implement the course in terms of classroom teaching strategies and methods?*

Findings addressing this research question arose from the following data sources: interviews conducted with the course instructor; course documents including the course outlines from all IL course taught to the date of this study; learning materials provided by the CI; and eight classes observed by the researcher during the semester. In addition, university student course evaluations from all previous IL courses to the date of this research contributed data to address this finding. In all, 126 evaluations were reviewed, of which 103 were considered valid by the university. Seventeen valid evaluations came from the course observed by the researcher, out of a total of 19 CP's who took it.

In combination, data collection methods used to address this research question showed that the strategy used by the CI in teaching the IL course was evidence-based (theory, research and practice). Teaching methods used during the course were a combination of didactic discourse; instructor facilitated discussions based on assigned readings from course material; group presentations on topics selected by students related to inclusive leadership practices within their educational contexts; individual professional portfolio assignments designed to get students to review and reflect on their educational leadership experiences in anticipation of moving forward with their leadership practices;

and individual round-table presentations in which CP's were given the name of a credible researcher and asked to present key research to smaller peer groups.

Evidence addressing this research question is provided from interviews, course documents, class observations, and university student course evaluations.

Interviews.

Interview quotes from the CI are as follows:

. . . the resources I drew on in particular obviously relate to my research, my PhD and Masters in Educational Leadership and so I have a strong sense of what's good data to bring to bear in an Inclusive Leadership course, complemented in some respects . . . by years in the schools as a principal and teacher. That that gave me a sense of how some of these things can and can't easily play out when people are trying to be inclusive of particular children or particular teachers and so on. They're really the key drivers in what I brought to inclusive leadership.

The common thread, I think, in every course, except possibly one, was . . . the Blackmore and Sachs text . . . Now Blackmore and Sachs text is top quality . . . Performing and Reforming Leaders show how difficult and tense changing organizations can be, particularly in the education sector, and I wanted students to get a sense that this is, in practice, hard work . . .

I'm usually pretty didactic on the first night . . . because I have a duty of care obligation to explain the course outline, make sure students understand that, to

alleviate mistakes on their part that might disadvantage them, and to make sure that they've got a sense as to where the course is going. But also, in being didactic, I set the scene and hopefully allow the students to feel that they've got a comfortable place in the course and that we're going to move ahead in a positive way. After that, it's less me; it's more me at the start or me for an hour and a half of a class.

I try to design the course typically so that people can do a presentation. This allows some of the people who have enormous contributions to make to set forth and share ideas, to provoke people, to probe a particular line of argument about something that may contribute to an inclusive form of leadership . . . The portfolio assignment was consistent [between courses], and the opportunity to give voice to the students right from the start as it is with most professors and courses here . . . but I think I've tried to get more variety in this last course, just because I am trying hard to give a stronger voice to the students, so that they can share and learn from one another . . . and they have come through, every time . . . in earlier classes and in this class.

Course documents.

A thorough review of all IL course outlines to the date of this research indicated the CI consistently stressed an evidence-based approach in teaching the class. The Blackmore and Sachs text, *Performing and Reforming Leaders*, was used in each course offering. The researcher is familiar with this book and understands it challenges readers

to reflect critically on critical issues facing educational leaders. The CI also used a variety of teaching methods described above, as was also mentioned in each course outline.

Class observations.

Field notes taken from eight class observations throughout the semester showed that the CI used a variety of teaching methods during the course to encourage students to critically reflect on what they learned. On the first day of class, for example, the CI started off with a short didactic component to set course direction and expectations. Successive observations noted that the CI was well-able to encourage critical dialogue amongst course participants. This was accomplished by the CI first and foremost modeling IL with the class, which set the students at ease and opened the door for honest discussions about critical issues facing educational leaders today.

The CI was also able to engage dialogue by assigning key readings from the literature, and incorporate them either directly through probing questions and / or in case study scenarios reflecting IL, that the class would discuss at length. In a similar way, class presentations lent themselves to open dialogue between CP's. Key in the presentation assignment was that groups were able to choose their own topic related to IL, and interwoven was an expectation by the CI that theory, research, and practice needed to be addressed by each group. This ensured consistency in the evidence-based approach and credibility of the presentations themselves in addressing contemporary educational leadership issues.

The same flexibility that applied with group presentations was also apparent in the portfolio assignment, and CP's were allowed a wide-breath as to what they could include.

In this way, decisions on what materials and experiences to draw from appealed to their own contexts of practice, from the K-12 learning environment to the private sector, and added meaning to the assignment as a practical tool that could be used by the CP's for career purposes.

University student course evaluations.

Evidence of the CI modeling inclusive practices was illustrated in the following written quotes from course participants:

The [CI] was very informative and set a positive welcoming tone on the first day of class. [The CI] is very articulate, well spoken and genuine. I welcome [the CI's] feedback. I appreciated [the CI's] feedback.

The [CI] is an extremely knowledgeable and respectful instructor that encourages critical thinking and demands a high standard of work. [The CI] is inclusive and supportive to students, and this is greatly appreciated.

I think [the CI] represents the qualities of an inclusive instructor, which is a perfect fit for a class on inclusive leadership—strong, direct, and decisive, yet caring and approachable.

Furthermore, CP's attested to the benefits of the CI's teaching methods that encouraged critical thinking about leadership issues.

I appreciate that the grading/ tasks/ assignments/ expectations are reflective of real workplace experiences, and that they are collaborative.

Doing a portfolio assignment was very useful for me because it helped prepare me for my next steps in leadership.

Through the reading, activities, assignments, and discussion, I have gained a deeper sense of myself as a leader, what I stand for and the field of social justice.

[Aspects beneficial to this course participant were] Presentations from the instructor and from student groups; very useful textbooks and additional suggested readings; lots of other additional resources (books brought to class [by the CI]; insightful presentations [by students]—stimulus for discussions; preparing the professional portfolio; reflective journal—great tool to highlight new ideas and state further questions/ issues to be explored . . . ROLE MODEL to being an inclusive leader.

Findings for Research Question Four: *In what ways did this course inform the professional practice of course participants?* Research Question Four is addressed by interview quotes, demographic data provided by CP's in the classes observed by the researcher, and written feedback obtained from university student course evaluations.

Interviews with course participants.

The majority of CP's interviewed (9 out of 11, or 82%) anticipated using of what they learned during the IL course in their current and future leadership practice. They collectively commented that the course raised awareness of the need to address inequities in their learning environments; to actively encourage colleagues who may not

otherwise apply for leadership positions to do so, regardless of ethnicity or physical disabilities; and to consider the issues of globalization related to diversity in their professional practice. The following interview quotes from course participants address this fourth research question:

I think the one thing that I'm hearing over and over again, from the course instructor as well as the leaders in my own building and my colleagues . . . are things like being sensitive to . . . gender, equality, a voice . . . and I know we talked a little bit about poverty, and community [in class], and so . . . I don't think enough about [it] outside of my building . . . as I move forward, I'm going to think a lot more about the voice that isn't just in the building . . . what community needs . . . I'm going to try and incorporate as much as possible.

I think the sense I have, is encourage others who aren't maybe feeling like leadership is a place for them to go into those sorts of places. I know I've worked with colleagues who are visible minorities who don't often feel that that's something that they'd like to pursue, and it could quite possibly be a personal preference, but I think that welcoming them and giving them that opportunity to be involved in that, because I think that they have as much to bring to it as anybody else does. I think with our own school board, cultural diversity, cultural and linguistic diversity is huge that we need those role models both in terms for teachers and for children, but also for families and communities to see that those people are involved in our schools. So, I think that would be something I'd do now

that I might not have . . . I have a colleague that works on another team who has a sensory impairment and she works primarily with children who are deaf and who are hard of hearing, but I think for her to feel that she has the same possibility of moving into a leadership position as anybody else . . .

Demographics.

As previously stated at the beginning of this chapter, of the eleven CP's interviewed, nine were K-12 educators, and two were involved in training and development in the private and health care sector. All were white Caucasian of European heritage, and all were considered expert educators (Berliner, 1988). Of note, all but two of the K-12 educators stated they anticipated using what they learned in the IL course observed by the researcher in their own leadership practice. One of these was a private sector human resources trainer who felt that the course reaffirmed what she was already doing in her leadership practice; she planned to continue promoting inclusivity with the managers she works with. The other was a K to 12 administrator who also considered himself to be an inclusive leader, however, his notion of inclusiveness differed from what was taught in the course.

University student course evaluations.

In consideration of all 103 valid university student evaluations reviewed by the researcher, collaboration with peers, being able to discuss different leadership perspectives, and the practical nature of the learning in concert with the literature were found to be useful in CP's using what they learned in the course.

Illustrative quotes written by CP's are provided below:

. . . learning specific core values and skills needed to be an effective, inclusive leader. I also learned about research and current leaders in the field of inclusive leadership. Through the reading, activities, assignments, and discussion, I have gained a deeper sense of myself as a leader, what I stand for, and the field of social justice.

I had the opportunity to learn more about leadership . . . and the relationship that strong educators have on the global aspects of peace and freedom.

The aspects of critically thinking about the material in the contexts of the school system, leadership, and the patriarchal paradigm governing policy development is important for leaders to know in striving for and recognizing gender issues, for example, in the workplace. The application of what was learned in this course is apparent in its application to leadership practice.

Overview of Findings

An overview of findings in this exploratory case study are provided and related to each of the four research questions.

- 1) The CI was motivated to develop an IL course because increasing population diversity and global economic power shifts have created a need for educational leaders to be prepared to lead in more complex learning environments
(Addressing Research Question One).

- 2) Both senior leaders were motivated to support the IL course for similar reasons to the CI. They recognized that collaborative leadership styles and social justice were critical to the successes of educational leaders today (*Addressing Research Question Two*).
- 3) Teaching strategies and methods used by the CI encouraged students to critically reflect upon their own ideas of leadership and practices (*Addressing Research Question Three*).
- 4) The majority of CP's anticipated using of what they learned during the IL course in their current and future leadership practice. Demographically, all were of white Caucasian European descent (*Addressing Research Question Four*).

Chapter Summary

This chapter began by stating the purpose of the study, followed by providing demographic characteristics of CP's who agreed to be interviewed. Then, each research question was addressed with data obtained from the various collection methods used in this study. Next, an overview of findings addressing each research question was provided. In the following chapter, findings that have been presented will be analyzed, interpreted, and synthesized.

CHAPTER 5

Analysis, Interpretation, and Synthesis of Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain why the innovative inclusive leadership (IL) course examined in this study contributes to leadership training, and in what ways course participants (CP) benefited from it professionally. In this chapter, the findings are analyzed, interpreted, and synthesized respective of each research question within the framework of constructivism—where knowledge building is an active process of constructing meanings that are used to understand the world (Merriam & Brockert, 2007). It should be noted that there were similarities in the findings for research questions one and two. Hence, they will be addressed together under one category in this chapter. In what follows, the research questions will be discussed sequentially, and then brought together to understand their interrelated meaning. The chapter then ends with a summary.

The Motivation for Course Development by the Course Instructor and Support from Senior Leaders *(Addressing Research Questions One and Two)*

Research Question One asked: *Why did the course instructor (CI) develop a course on inclusive leadership as part of a Master of Education (MEd) program that specialized in educational leadership?* In this question the researcher sought to understand what motivated the CI to develop a course on IL, at a time when no such course existed in an educational graduate program in Canada.

Research Question Two was: *Why and how was this course offering supported by senior leaders in the faculty?* In this question, the researcher wanted to determine why and how the senior leaders interviewed in this study gave their support for the course, and what alignment there was with the CI's motivation to develop it. Existing congruency would suggest cohesiveness and awareness within the faculty to promote IL learning in educational leadership training.

The changing nature of leadership.

Overall, interview comments obtained from the CI indicated that with globalization accounting for increasing diversity and economic shifts from West to East, the nature of leadership is changing. According to Starratt (2011), "the complex problems in a globalizing world, however, are not simply economic. They are also political, cultural and environmental" (p. 79). Educational leaders are being called on to be more accountable, not only to school communities and local governments, but to society as a whole (Eggertson, 2006). How so? There is an expectation that the education system should produce learners who, as the CI put it, "*are encouraged to bring their thinking to problem solving*". In this way, organizations can prosper by having people who are able to generate creative and innovative ideas—necessary aspects of competing in a global economy. Further, the CI felt that governments are realizing that using IL practices creates opportunities for all people to prosper, and this reduces their reliance on government supports, which can be expensive. The CI elaborated this point in the following comment:

... there's a position within governments and society that we need to be more inclusive. Governments' know some forms exclusion cost money. It means if people are left on the margins, they become vulnerable, alienated, and usually become dependent in some respect with governments in ways that empowered and independent people usually are not What's different for Canada at this point is that it's taking a different position, which is a paradigm shift [away] from exclusive forms of leading to saying we ought to be looking at more inclusive ways . . .

Education system brought to higher level of political importance.

As the CI stated, a paradigm shift away from exclusive ways of leading is occurring. An implication here is that since governments in the Western world are embracing more inclusive ways of leading (Peters & Pierre, 2001), and the expectations on the school system are to produce highly productive citizens (Blackmore, 2000; Eggertson, 2006), then the education system is being brought into a higher level of both political importance and 'will'. Mulford (2005) contends that there is a need for economic competitiveness, and equity issues that have arisen as a result of globalization have cast educational institutions into the political forum, as expectations rise for them to play a part in society's ability to face new challenges. As he states, ". . . there is no doubt that 'Education has moved up the political agenda . . . [and is seen as] the key to unlocking not just social but also economic problems'" (p. 140).

It follows in the scope of higher societal expectations alongside the backdrop of globalization, that educational leaders must take on, as the CI purported, "*a broader view of the complexities involved in leading*". In addition, Mulford (2005) believes that rapid

societal changes across the globe attributed to scientific discoveries, technological advancements, and population demographics have had an effect of “. . . blurring of boundaries, growing gaps between people, groups and countries, and the end of certainty, including a diminution of credibility of traditional knowledge and authority of expertise, especially in professions such as education” (p. 139). This brings into question how well traditional ways of leading are meeting the needs of students, and that society’s views on education have changed. One thing is for certain, roles for educational leaders are more challenging today (Fullan, 2001).

Inclusive leaders and moral purpose.

During a class observation, the CI made reference to the need for inclusive leaders to have a strong moral purpose, or doing what is right because it is simply the right thing to do. On the grounds of morality, one strives for an idealized view of humanity, where all people in an organization have a fair chance at opportunities—not just the privileged few. The CI reinforced this later in an interview when she stated, *“Leaders who have ‘favourites’ and thus exclude others not only contribute to loss of meaning within an organization, but they also dramatically heighten the organization’s exposure to risk”*. Likewise, she remarked that the senior leader, formerly with the faculty, who was instrumental in supporting the implementation of the IL course *“understood how important it was to be ‘included’ in schools as a child, or adult, as well as in other organizations”*.

In an essay on the implication for educational leaders about morality in teaching and learning, Starratt (2005) argues that the moral character of learning contributes to

the authenticity of learning; students actively construct meaning and are engaged in the process of learning, versus feeling they are simply being told they need to know something. Further, Starratt believes that in order for teachers to draw on a more in-depth, virtuous understanding of the curriculum, educational leaders who:

. . . lead in collaboration with teachers in cultivating the many dialogical relationships implied in studying the worlds contained in the academic curriculum, nurture those virtues of presence, authenticity, and responsibility in themselves, not only as adult models for students, but in all organizational support activities they engage in to make learning come alive for their young charges. (p.410)

In further support of the need for a moral base in teaching, the former senior leader who was involved in approving the original IL course said, *“part of the equity in thinking about how we treat staff is ‘being fair’, but in a way that that draws on people’s strengths, and helps them gain more knowledge and capacity . . .”* It follows that if a leader has a strong moral purpose, and is inclusive in practice with staff and community members, learners will be more engaged and benefit from the modeling shown by the leader.

Top-down leadership practices give way to participatory environments.

Traditional knowledge, seen as lacking credibility, suggests that educational leaders must be provided with opportunities that allow them to lead in new and more informed ways. According to the CI, it is important for inclusive leaders to be adept at including the community in organizational processes, and in mitigating *“historical cleavages between the privileged and the marginalized”* that have traditionally barred

groups of people such as minorities, women, the underprivileged, and people with disabilities from accessing opportunities open to others. For this to happen, traditional, top-down leadership practices will have to give way to more collaborative and participatory environments that also encourage the traditionally disadvantaged to seek leadership positions. In fact, one of CP's held the same view as the CI, stating:

I have a colleague that works on another team who has a sensory disability, and she works primarily with children who have the same disability, but I think for her to feel that she has the same possibility of moving into a leadership position as anybody else [is good].

This interviewee was not clear about why people from marginalized groups may not apply for leadership positions, even if they are working in inclusive organizations—an investigative point that fell outside the scope of this research.

Also, the senior leader (with the faculty) had views reflecting the CI's beliefs in participatory practices:

From my perspective, we've learned a lot over the years about different approaches to leadership and organizational structuring, and collegial governance. It's quite important for us now to understand we live in a participatory environment. People expect to participate in the creation of procedures, policies, decisions, that will influence their workplace. So, any kind of university-based course that provides some theoretical, conceptual research, practical information,

with regard to inclusivity within organizations is extremely important to a Faculty of Education top-down leadership styles, absolutely, will not work!

Inclusive environments promote democratic ideals.

Creating inclusive environments promotes democratic ideals which need to be maintained in our society (Ryan, 2000). The CI's notion that a democratic future is supported by inclusionary leadership practices implies that all people in an organization should have the opportunity to lead, and feel comfortable in seeking leadership positions. As she stated:

. . . if the western world wants to look forward to a democratic future it will have to look more closely at some of its basic assumptions, one of which is to say only certain people could lead in an organization or a country. In the last 20 years, those forms of inclusion and exclusion are important to take account of, and as for inclusive leadership, I think we are just at starting point of that.

In support of the CI, Ryan and Rottman (2009) contend that not only must inclusion occur for good decision-making processes to take place, but all people must be allowed to communicate with each other effectively, so that the traditionally disenfranchised can have a voice in governance issues that they might otherwise have not had without inclusionary processes.

Senior leader support for course implementation.

The former senior leader interviewed in this study, who was involved in approving the original IL course in 2008, remarked that the leadership team within the faculty

“supported ideas about social justice”, equity, diversity and inclusion, and that “inclusive leadership helped address those needs”. She suggested that having champions within the department who supported forward ways of thinking, in-line with educational needs of the day, and current leadership theory, was important in considering this course to be a valuable addition to the MEd leadership program.

Interestingly, these values held by this former senior leader were important to the CI as well. In reflecting on the support received for introducing the IL course, the CI said (of her former senior leader):

Her life and professional ‘politics’ reflected a generosity and she was a very confident leader. That combination of leadership qualities and values was very important in getting the course approved. Not many leaders bring that combination of progressiveness and active support for leadership learning that offers an alternative to the dominant leadership paradigm.

This former senior leader’s beliefs are congruent with the need for leadership programs to have an integrated versus ad hoc approach to offering courses in isolation, and without strategic design. Integrated program supports have been shown to have positive impacts on the quality of leader preparation (Orr & Orphanos, 2011), and student achievement (Fuller, Young, & Baker, 2011). So, there is an indication that the educational leadership program in the faculty where this study took place indeed had an integrated program that supported a holistic view to learning, at the time the original IL

course was implemented in 2008—in alignment with strong and progressive leadership program planning. A discussion that addresses Research Question Three now follows.

Methods Used to Teach the Course and How They Were Intended to Foster Student Learning Within the Scope of the Constructivist Theoretical Tradition that Underpins this Study (Addressing Research Question Three)

Research Question Three: *How did the instructor implement the course in terms of classroom teaching strategies and methods?*, sought to understand what methods the CI used to deliver the course, and what underlying strategy informed the methods that she used—both of these being important in understanding the impact on student learning.

Methods used to teach the inclusive leadership course.

The findings indicated that the CI used a variety of methods to teach the IL course. These learning experiences included a mix of didactic, small and large group discussions based on readings and key questions, an individual research assignment, group presentations, and a portfolio assignment. The methods used by her had been fairly consistent since its inception. In addition, as the CI indicated, *“it was important to stress the use of an evidence-base—theory research and practice”*.

The ensuing discussion will address the learning experiences facilitated by the CI that showed the intention of promoting critical reflective thinking with her students.

Reading assignments.

A key resource that was used for reading assignments in every IL course offered since its inception was *Performing and Reforming Leaders*, by Blackmore and Sachs (2007). The CI said this text was used because the authors had *“captured the*

complexity facing leaders in ways that few authors have done". In this book, the authors critically discuss:

. . . the experience of women leaders in three Australian education sectors . . .
[and] . . . demonstrate the impact of globalization and the perceived shift to
knowledge-based economies that . . . have provided the justification for radical
educational reform in Australia and other Anglophone nation-states. (p. 1)

In addition, the CI felt this text, being a challenging read, required CP's to think very deeply, and that *"most students are happy to have it, and enjoy learning from the tensions and dilemmas in it"*. As a CP stated on a course evaluation, *"The selected readings were very appropriate, and [the CI] was able to supplement those readings by sharing information from [a personal] (clearly extensive) knowledge base!"*

Class readings lent themselves well to small and large group discussions, which afforded the opportunity for meaningful face-to-face discussion, as the following quotes from university student course evaluations indicate:

"Discussions face-to-face were beneficial".

"Excellent discussions in large and small groups".

"I found all of the major assignments highly meaningful".

"The discussions with students in class about the content of the reading and how our experiences are related to our reading".

An individual research assignment was given by the CI that allowed CP's to research specific 'credible' authors in the educational leadership field. As stated in the course outline, CP's were required to "provide analysis and synthesis of their work and lead a discussion to small groups" of peers. In this way, CP's had the opportunity to facilitate meaningful discussions with colleagues about pertinent issues in the educational leadership field.

From the university student course evaluations, it was clear that CP's enjoyed the opportunity to learn about and discuss leadership issues face-to-face, as opposed to on-line:

Being in-class, we have amazing discussions that I have not experienced in my other on-line courses. The quality would have been lost on-line.

The most essential aspect of this course was the FACE-TO-FACE contact . . . the networking and conversations that occur in a face-to-face course cannot be replicated on-line.

Group presentation.

The group presentation related to a topic on IL, was another effective method used by the CI. According to the course outline, this assignment required students to use an evidence-base (theory, research, and practice) to support their claims. Group presentations were seen by the CI as an important means of having group members reflect and discuss their own experiences—as they researched and developed their presentations. In reading the university student course evaluations, this appeared to have

happened for the students, as demonstrated by the following comment: *“the information that [the CI] relayed was eye-opening and caused reflection and growth”*. Another example of this assignment having real-life meaning occurred when a CP was preparing for her group presentation:

I saw myself in the research. So, I saw that my career had patterned what was very typical of women [in the educational field] . . . it was reassuring, and it was also a little disturbing to realize that things hadn’t changed a whole lot in that I was following a pretty well-known pathway.

The CP’s comment above is an example of a learner-constructing meaning based on personal lived experiences. The preparation for the group presentation led her to connect the research, theory with practice, and the merits of this assignment are apparent; this CP realized that her feelings of not being taken as seriously as her male counterpart in the same role were supported by the evidence provided in the research she had done, which drew her comfort in knowing that she was not alone. As Cobb (2005) states, “ . . . students actively construct their ways of knowing as they strive to be effective by restoring coherence to the worlds of their personal experience” (p. 39).

Portfolio assignment.

The CI indicated that *“the teaching methods used during this course have remained fairly consistent”* throughout the years. However, the emphasis on the professional portfolio assignment has increased recently. A key reason for this was, *“Portfolios are seen by people like Linda Darling-Hammond as a way of doing authentic assessment,*

something that's meaningful to people . . . that was highly regarded . . . I can recall many people saying how grateful they were to do a portfolio".

From the course outline, the portfolio assignment requirements were to:

develop a hard copy professional portfolio which shows evidence of theories, research and practices that actively embrace inclusive ways of leading and showed a detailed understanding of gender and leadership issues. Each student's portfolio will be linked to his or her career history, achievements, and/or future plans. The portfolio will also include explanations about the underpinning values and attitudes which inform practice.

The researcher noted during a class observation that, when the portfolio assignment was discussed and students asked questions about it, the CI did not place strict parameters on the portfolio's contents and organization; CP's were granted a wide-breadth in the design, allowing them to cater the portfolio to individual experiences. This flexible approach is supported by Hurst, Wilson, and Cramer (1998), who contend that professional portfolios " . . . serve as visual representations of teachers, their contents should be determined by individual teachers and should vary significantly, depending on each teacher's philosophy, values, and viewpoints as well as on teaching and collegiate experience" (p. 1).

Tillema (2001) sees the greatest benefit of portfolios as "the insight it provides into performance as well as the way it helps track progress in learning" (p. 126). This benefit is demonstrated by a comment from a university student course evaluation, where a CP stated that the portfolio *"helped me to re-evaluate what was most important*

to me in teaching". Another example of this was illustrated during an interview with another CP, who was a school administrator working on the portfolio assignment at the time. As the interview progressed, this CP began to reflect on his personal beliefs about leadership and made connections with IL; he was able to link his own leadership practices to the evidence-based learning espoused by the CI. So, the portfolio catalyzed a reflective process for him, and he realized that IL practices with staff and community members ultimately result in 'student' successes. As he stated:

Inclusive leadership . . . it's [about] getting stakeholders together to move your school forward. But what's the bottom line? The students are at the center of any decision that should be made at the school, because it's the children at the end you're impacting. So when I think of IL . . . like I'm doing that portfolio [assignment] . . . what are inclusive practices that in the end will impact students as a leader?

The self-reflection that occurred while doing the portfolio assignment also illustrates how this CP constructed meaning from his own lived experiences. "When you have invented an idea for yourself, it is much more part of you than when you memorize a description of it from someone else" (Dykstra, 2005, p. 242). In this instance, the CP did develop his own understanding of IL by drawing connections with his own practice, what he learned during the course, and his belief that successful learning outcomes for students in his school should be the focus of his leadership efforts.

Ways in Which the Inclusive Leadership Course Informed the Professional Practice of Students (*Addressing Research Question Four*)

Research Question Four asked: *In what ways did this course inform the professional practice of course participants?* This question sought to understand how CP's might anticipate using what they learned in the course in terms of new knowledge obtained and practical applications in their professional practice. It also served to determine if the course was indeed effective in improving the professional practice of CP's.

Course instructor used evidence-based teaching strategy.

As stated in the course outline, "issues about inclusive leadership will be broadly examined, using an evidence-base regarding contextual and social issues associated with the need for inclusive leadership within educational settings". Further, emphasis was placed on "key contextual and social justice issues that are often associated with . . . inclusive ways of leading". Practices that include or exclude women, minority groups, the underprivileged, indigenous peoples, and other socially relevant and organizational issues were specifically addressed in the course offerings.

Course participants anticipated using inclusive ways in professional practice.

The majority of CP's interviewed (9 out of 11 or 82%) indicated that they anticipated using what they learned during the IL course in their current or future leadership roles. Their comments showed an ability to connect what the CI was teaching with experiences at work, reflect on personal beliefs, and consider ways forward in leading. The following interview quotes from CP's illustrate these points:

I think one thing I'm hearing over and over again, from the course instructor as well as leaders in my own building, and colleagues in there, are things like being sensitive to gender, equality, a voice . . . and I know we talked [in class] about poverty and community. . . so I don't think about it enough outside of my building. So, as I move forward, I'm going to think a lot more about the voice that isn't just in the building, [about] what community needs . . . I'm going to try and incorporate as much [IL] as possible.

I think the course instructor has put a real focus on foresight, and not necessarily being a leader for right now, but in being a leader for where we're going, and I think that's a really important thing to consider . . . I think she's helping us to prepare for that, or even just to reflect on that a little bit. I think that would be something I would take [away from the course] with me.

Through the readings, activities, assignments, and discussion, I have gained a deeper sense of myself as a leader, what I stand for, and the field of social justice

Course participants connected learning with previous experiences.

The connection made between instructor-facilitated learning, students' experiences at work, collaborating with peers, reflecting upon their own beliefs, and deciding for themselves how to move forward with leadership practices, demonstrates CP's building on previous experiences. As Rollof (2010) put it,

Constructivism assumes that learners construct knowledge as part of a process of making sense of their experiences: Learners, therefore, are not empty vessels

waiting to be filled, but rather active organisms seeking meaning. Constructivist goals include development of skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and personal inquiry . . . (p. 291).

A CP from the private sector, with a human resources training background, stated that the course reaffirmed what she already believed and was doing in her own practice:

Well, I think what I have learned so far in this course has solidified the way I have lead in my previous role. So when I was in HR, I was actually a leader, and I taught leadership development . . . So, for example, one huge thing is trust, and I believe that's the foundation of absolutely everything you do. Because, if you do not have trust of the people that work for you, you have nothing, and you will never be able to effectively lead them—essentially, they are robots, just doing what they tell you to do because they sign your pay checks . . . this has really put the icing on the cake for me in terms of what I preach in my teaching.

The belief that one is already an inclusive leader was held by another CP.

However, in this case, on the issue of equitable opportunities for women attaining leadership positions, this person felt that *“women’s issues have already been addressed in society and it was now time to sit back and monitor them”*. An important point raised here is that, lacking awareness of social justice issues may preclude the full-embodiment of being able to lead in inclusive ways. It must be noted that this CP was the only one that provided this response and his comments were not reflective of any other CP’s interviewed.

Cultural background may bias social justice awareness.

Lack of social justice awareness raises a question on how one's own cultural background may create personal biases espoused in the workplace (Bielby, 2000). Of note, all 11 of the CP's that agreed to be interviewed in this study were white Caucasian of European origin. This is not unusual considering visible minorities in the teaching and professorial ranks of K to 12 and post-secondary are grossly underrepresented (Ryan *et al.*, 2009; Nakhaie, 2004). Interestingly, of the 19 students in the class being observed, two individuals, who were foreign-born visible minorities, chose not to be interviewed. However, one did complete the demographic survey. This example where, having similar cultural backgrounds further supports the need for educational leaders to seek opportunities to enhance their abilities to recognize and address personal biases they may bring to the workplace, as a result of similar lived-experiences (Bustamante *et al.*, 2009; Schein, 2004).

Bringing it Together

This chapter endeavored to interpret findings that addressed the research questions, and a fusion of the discussion up to this point will now follow. The CI's motivation to develop the IL course stemmed from a well-founded belief that the *"external environment globally and locally is changing dramatically"* as a result of increasing immigration and shifting economic power from the West to the East (Bishop & Mahoney, 2009). This degree of globalization has necessitated 21st century educational leaders to be more adept in facing challenges that diversity brings, while producing learners who can solve problems and function within an economy that needs to remain

competitive (Blackmore, 2000). Higher expectations of accountability on the education system have put pressure on leaders to meet organizational goals that ultimately serve society and the state (Eggertson, 2006; Mulford, 2005). By meeting these goals, society is better served and economic viability sustained.

Senior leaders recognized need for more inclusive ways of leading.

Like the CI, senior leaders interviewed in this study also recognized the need for educational leaders to be more inclusive, and that traditional top-down hierarchical structures *“must give way to more horizontal participatory environments”* for this to occur. Top-down leadership approaches found in educational institutions create hierarchies that hamper effective communication (Ryan & Rottman, 2009), and have been seen as lacking credibility, because they continue to foster environments of exclusionary practices that bar the underprivileged and typically overlooked groups from participating in organizational processes.

Educational leaders need opportunities to learn about inclusive leadership.

As the need for inclusive ways of leading grows, educational leaders must have opportunities to learn about them, and develop skills to create collaborative environments where all staff, students, and community members are empowered to be a part of organizational processes. Leadership preparation programs at the graduate level are a way to obtain these professional development opportunities. Unfortunately, these programs have typically both neglected and/ or minimized social justice awareness and IL strategies in favour of traditional content, such as finance and administration (Jean-Marie *et al.*, 2009). As Orr (2011) states:

The US Department of Education . . . characterized conventional programs as lacking vision, purpose and coherence [in 2005]. In its portrait, students self-enroll without consideration of their prior leadership experience and then progress through discrete courses that lack connection to actual practice or local schools. (p. 115)

Orr & Orphanos (2011) contend that holistic, integrated programming promotes quality educational leadership training. The CI's foresight in developing this IL course in 2008, when no other existed in Canada, combined with senior leadership understanding and support for its implementation, speaks to the integrated leadership programming efforts at that time. Inherent in this cooperative effort was a necessary moral dimension of learning, espoused by Starratt (2005).

Inclusive leaders create equitable environments through a moral base.

Inclusive practices not only create equitable environments and foster goal attainment, but are aligned with leaders who do what is morally right. Perhaps this notion of moral servitude may best be portrayed in this quote by the senior leader, formally with the faculty, who was directly involved in approving the 2008 IL course:

"There was a core of us [on the leadership team] who really valued and supported ideas about social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion".

It became apparent while analyzing and interpreting the data that the majority of CP's anticipated using what they learned during the IL course in their professional leadership practice. As one CP remarked, *"as I move forward . . . I'm going to try and incorporate as much [IL] as possible"*. It follows from the evidence gleaned in this study

that the learning successes of educational leaders in this IL course were attributable to the CI. Overall, CP's benefited from the teaching approaches that she used, and gained a much better sense of what IL was, how they viewed it, and how they would use it in their professional practice; CP's were able to connect research, theory and practice, in line with "evidence-based" learning intended by the CI. Course participants were also encouraged to critically examine personal belief systems, life experiences, and build upon their current leadership practices towards more inclusive ways of leading. This was a confirmation that meaningful learning that occurred was built upon "active participation by the learner" and an indication of constructivist learning (Philips, 1995, p. 11).

In suggesting that 'most' CP's truly benefited from the IL course, one anomaly was noted by the researcher, in that one male student held the opinion that women's equity issues had already been addressed in the world. This emphasizes the importance of leadership training in raising awareness of biases, conscious or unconscious, in creating equitable environments. Whether these biases are personal or systemic, educational leaders must be critically reflective of their practices, have the moral fortitude to implement change (Starratt, 2005; 2011), be resilient in the face of resistance to change (Bielby, 2000; Schein, 2004), and be intrinsically motivated to advocate for clients or groups to "contribute to social and systemic change" (Arredondo & Perez, 2003, p. 287).

The motivation and support obtained from senior leaders in offering the IL course, fits with needs of educational leaders today. Leaders who are aware of social justice issues and overcome personal biases can create equitable organizations that mitigate the marginalization of traditionally disadvantaged groups. Educational leaders who are able

to take high caliber IL training, such as the course taught by the CI in this study, will benefit by being able to build upon life experiences, obtain meaningful leadership knowledge, and share experiences directly with peers in a safe learning environment where they can critically discuss issues.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, findings which addressed the research questions were analyzed, interpreted and synthesized. First, the motivation for course development by the course instructor and support from senior leaders addressing Research Questions One and Two were discussed. Then, methods used to teach the course and how they were intended to foster student learning within the scope of constructivist theoretical tradition, addressing Research Question Three, came next. Ways the IL course informed the professional practice of students, addressing Research Question Four, then followed. Finally, a synthesis of the discussion in this chapter was provided. In the next chapter, conclusions and research recommendations stemming from the discussion will be given.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions and Research Recommendations

Introduction

This study explored a graduate level course on inclusive leadership (IL) that is being taught by one instructor in a Master of Education (MEd) program at a university in Canada. The course was the first of its kind in Canada, and one of the first internationally. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to ascertain how this IL course contributes to leadership learning, and in what ways course participants (CP's) anticipated using what they learned in their professional practice.

Since findings were organized and discussed according to research questions, conclusions stated will maintain this consistency. Then, recommendations for future research will be provided, followed by final thoughts about this study.

The Motivation for Course Development by the Course Instructor and Support from Senior Leaders *(Addressing Research Questions One and Two)*

The course instructor (CI) was motivated to develop a course on IL because changing diversity and global economic shifts have increased the need for leaders to be more inclusive in their practices, so they may better create equitable learning environments. Senior leader support for the implementation and continuation of the course was aligned with the CI's motivations.

A conclusion that may be drawn here is that alignment between the CI's motivation to develop the IL course, and senior leaders' beliefs that the course was valuable, was critical to having IL included in the MEd leadership program at this university.

Methods Used to Teach the Course and How They Were Intended to Foster Student Learning Within the Scope of the Constructivist Theoretical Tradition that Underpins this Study (Addressing Research Question Three)

Several methods used by the instructor to teach this IL course were effective in facilitating student learning. With an underlying evidence-based approach (connecting theory, research, and practice), and by modeling inclusive practices in class, CP's experienced meaningful learning experiences.

A conclusion that can be drawn here is that the CI's evidence-based approach, use of various teaching methods, and modeling of IL practices while teaching the course was effective in: encouraging CP's to critically analyze their own beliefs and notions of leadership, raising their awareness of the nature of inclusive leadership practices, and thinking about ways forward to leading in their own professional working environments.

In What Ways the Inclusive Leadership Course Informed Professional Practice of Students (Addressing Research Question Four)

Course participants' ability to reflect upon their own beliefs and leadership practices, along with comments from interviews and course evaluations, suggested they intended to use what they learned during the course in professional leadership practice—students felt they would either apply their new found knowledge or continue with their current practice if they felt they were already being inclusive.

A conclusion drawn here is that the IL course is a necessary addition to the training and development of current and future educational leaders, and that this course meets a critical need, such as social justice, traditionally absent from leadership preparation programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

The conclusions from this exploratory case study are encouraging and provide an impetus for more work to be done in the area of IL. This researcher recommends future studies be undertaken to gain a more in-depth understanding of how IL course offerings play a role in leadership development, and why Western nations would benefit by such a course in leadership programs.

The following is a list of recommendations for future research:

- 1) A single IL course was explored from its inception to the present time. It would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study to explore the long-term effects for the CP's. That is, to follow-up, on how CP's have implemented what they have learned.
- 2) Currently, Ernst and Young, a well-known global financial institution, believes that leading in inclusive ways is critical to its success. The company has a 'Diversity and Inclusiveness Steering Group' to ensure diversity and inclusiveness are woven into the fabric of its business. Ernst and Young also has a Chief Inclusiveness Officer, Inclusiveness Leader, and Inclusiveness Coordinator. A comparative look at the cross-sector applicability of IL as a *bona fide* paradigm shift from transformational leadership practices is warranted to investigate the importance of IL, not only for educational leadership within learning environments, but to a much broader degree in the workplace.
- 3) An extension of the second research recommendation is to investigate other IL courses found in educational leadership programs, where they exist, across

Western demographic nations such as the US, Western Europe, and Australia. In this way, it may be possible to compare (with the IL course explored in this study) the rationale behind such course offerings, how these courses are integrated into leadership preparation programs, and what impacts they are having on educational leaders in other parts of the world.

- 4) A comparative investigation of intergenerational attitudes towards IL may elucidate why this leadership approach may be readily embraced or resisted in organizations, in consideration of generational shifts that are occurring in the workplace.
- 5) A policy study comparing IL practices in higher education or corporately, both in Canada and internationally, could be undertaken to understand the extent to which this leadership approach is being considered a critical way forward by organizations.
- 6) A comparative policy study exploring equity issues amongst faculty in higher education could be undertaken. More specifically, the purpose of such a study could be to explore how policy and practice connect when considering the underrepresentation of marginalized groups making up the ranks of faculty or senior administration.
- 7) With bullying being an issue in any organization, it would be interesting to explore the role IL can play in mitigating inappropriate behaviours within the education system or other work environments.

Final Thoughts

I was excited to explore the first inclusive leadership course offered within a MEd program at a university in Canada. It was indeed an honour to be the first researcher in the country to conduct such a study on a unique and innovative course. This endeavor could not have been completed without the support and collaborative efforts of my supervisor, the course instructor, course participants who lent me their opinions based on expert professional experiences, and key administrative support from the Faculty of Education, for which I am ever grateful.

In my view, the course instructor, who developed and has taught the inclusive leadership course since its inception in 2008, showed great foresight in developing and proactively advocating for it to be integrated into the MEd leadership program at this university. This course promotes a paradigm shift towards more inclusive, socially conscious practices critically needed by 21st century educational leaders. Leaders who use inclusive approaches can create equitable, sustainable, and successful organizations, while meeting rising societal and governmental expectations of the education system. Currently, this study suggests that this innovative course makes a positive difference in encouraging leaders to consider more inclusive and progressive ways forward in their professional practice. Being mindful of the need for inclusive leadership, continued research focus is warranted in this area.

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APPENDIX A: Certificate of Institutional Ethics Review



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

MEMO

CONJOINT FACULTIES RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
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Main Floor, Energy Resources Research Building
3512 - 33 Street N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2L 1Y7
Telephone: (403) 220-3782
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Email: csjahrau@ucalgary.ca
Wednesday, September 01, 2010

To: Vasudeva Rao
Graduate Division of Educational Research

From: Dr. Kathleen Oberle, Chair
Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)

Re: Certification of Institutional Ethics Review: The Rationalc, Design, and to What Effect Did One Instructor Develop an Innovative Leadership Course for a Master of Education Program in Canada

The above named research protocol has been granted ethical approval by the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board for the University of Calgary.

Enclosed are the original, and one copy, of a signed **Certification of Institutional Ethics Review**. Please make note of the conditions stated on the Certification. A copy has been sent to your supervisor as well as to the Chair of your Department/Faculty Research Ethics Committee. In the event the research is funded, you should notify the sponsor of the research and provide them with a copy for their records. The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board will retain a copy of the clearance on your file.

Please note, an annual/progress/final report must be filed with the CFREB twelve months from the date on your ethics clearance. A form for this purpose has been created, and may be found on the "Ethics" website, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/compliance/ethics/renewal>

In closing let me take this opportunity to wish you the best of luck in your research endeavor.

Sincerely,

Cari Jahraus
For:
Kathleen Oberle, Ph.D., and
Chair, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board

Enclosures(2)
cc: Chair, Department/Faculty Research Ethics Committee
Supervisor: Helen J. Mahoney

APPENDIX B: Letter of Introduction (example)

University of [REDACTED]

Subject: Letter of Introduction

Dear [REDACTED],

My name is Vas Rao and I am a Master of Arts student in the Faculty of Education, Educational Leadership Specialization. The focus of my research is to understand the rationale, design, and to what effect a course on Inclusive Leadership has on the professional practice of class participants. Inclusive Leadership is a process by which a leader creates an organizational culture that encourages input from staff members, stakeholders, the community, and other interested parties who all contribute to group successes.

I have obtained Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board approval for this study and would like to conduct my research with [REDACTED], who is instructing the Inclusive Leadership course ([REDACTED]). According to my research, no other major university in Canada offers this specific course within their graduate education program, making this an intriguing research study.

My intention is to ask [REDACTED] if I may attend [REDACTED] first class to give a five minute informational session to her students on the purpose, nature, and benefits of this research work. Following the session, students will be invited to participate in the study. My actions throughout this study will be to

- Observe the majority of [REDACTED] classes during the term
- Invite students to participate in short interviews of 10 to 15 minutes each
- Interview [REDACTED] prior to commencing the term, and following each class period observed
- At the end of the term, provide the class with my research findings to-date
- Maintain confidentiality of all observations and interviews.

I would also like to interview you, [REDACTED], to gain your insights on Inclusive Leadership and this unique course. The interview would take approximately forty-five minutes and your input would be both appreciated and a valuable addition to this research study.

If you would like to participate in this study, please read and sign the attached Consent Form, place it in the envelope provided and return it to me, c/o Dr. Helen Mahoney [REDACTED]. If you have any questions while completing it, please do not hesitate to contact me at vbrao@ucalgary.ca, or 403.808.7923. Should you agree to participate, I will provide you with a copy of the signed form before our interview, and will contact you to set up a date. My research supervisor is Dr. Helen Mahoney, Faculty of Education, and her contact details are hmahoney@ucalgary.ca, or 403.220.3181. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vas Rao
Master of Arts Student
Office of Graduate Programs - Education
Policy, Leadership, and Change
University of Calgary

APPENDIX C: Demographic Survey Sheet

Student Demographic Information Sheet

Upon researching graduate education programs at all major universities in Canada, I have found that your course on Inclusive Leadership is the only one of its kind. Inclusive Leadership is a recognized and significant leadership approach and I have decided to embark on a thesis entitled, "Inclusive Leadership: An exploration of an Innovative Canadian Graduate Course."

I am interested in studying Inclusive Leadership, a process by which leaders create organizational cultures where the input of staff, stakeholders, community members, and other interested parties all contribute to group successes.

This research study being conducted uses case study methodology. The demographics collected here will be compared to the demographic makeup of the graduate student body in the Faculty of Education and the university as a whole, and will serve as background information in developing the case study. **This research will be used in such a way that class participants will not be personally identifiable in the Researcher's reports.**

Your participation in this research would be most appreciated and will help to contribute to the literature on Inclusive Leadership in Canada.

Please note:

- 1) Completion of this form is completely voluntary.
- 2) You will not put your name on this form and the information you provide will remain anonymous.
- 3) You may choose to answer all or some of the questions.
- 4) Completion of this form will indicate your consent to participate in this aspect of the study.
- 5) Both complete and incomplete forms should be put in the covered collection box located at the front of the classroom, so that no one, including the course instructor, will know of your participation or lack thereof.

Thank you,

Vas Rao
Master of Arts Student
Office of Graduate Programs - Education
Policy, Leadership, and Change
University of Calgary

PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET

Please respond to the following demographic questions. If there are any questions you do not wish to answer, leave them blank.

1) Gender Male _____ Female _____

2) Age range 20 – 24 _____ 25 to 29 _____ 30 to 34 _____ 35 to 39 _____

40 to 44 _____ 45 to 50 _____ 51 to 54 _____ 55 to 60 _____ Over 60 _____

3) Employment Status Full Time (30 or more hrs per week) _____

Part Time (less than 30 hrs per week) _____

Student (not currently employed) _____

Student (on leave of absence) _____

Other (please describe) _____

4) Occupation _____

5) Level of Education Completed Bachelor _____ Masters _____ PhD _____

6) English is my first language _____ English is not my first language _____

7) Ethnic Origin (predominant cultural and ethnic origin of your ancestors). Please self-identify your predominant ethnic origin.

Thank you,

Vas Rao
Master of Arts Student
Office of Graduate Programs - Education
Policy, Leadership, and Change
University of Calgary

APPENDIX D: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured Interview Questions for [REDACTED], Course Instructor, Inclusive Leadership

- 1) What was your motivation for developing a course on Inclusive Leadership for the Educational Leadership specialization in the Faculty?
- 2) What resources did you draw on to develop the Inclusive Leadership course? Why did you decide to use the resources you chose?
- 3) What methods have you employed that you have found effective in teaching Inclusive Leadership to graduate students?
- 4) How do you anticipate Inclusive Leadership might influence the professional practice of class participants?
- 5) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence an employee's perception of diversity in the workplace?
- 6) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence 'organizational culture'?
- 7) Why do you think the Faculty of Education at this university is the only program with this unique course on Inclusive Leadership in Canada?
- 8) Do you anticipate more interest will grow with external parties who desire training on Inclusive Leadership? Please explain your answer.

APPENDIX D: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions for senior leader currently in the faculty [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], University of [REDACTED]

- 1) As a senior leader, what are the merits of offering a class on Inclusive Leadership in this Faculty?
- 2) What methods do you think are effective in teaching Inclusive Leadership to graduate students?
- 3) How would you anticipate Inclusive Leadership might influence the professional practice of course participants?
- 4) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence an employee's perception of diversity in the workplace?
- 5) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence 'organizational culture'?
- 6) Why do you think the Faculty of Education at this university is the only program with this specific course on Inclusive Leadership in Canada?
- 7) Do you anticipate more interest will grow with external parties who desire training on Inclusive Leadership?

APPENDIX D: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions for [REDACTED], former senior leader on leadership team that approved original inclusive leadership course offering

- 1) As a former senior faculty member who supported the implementation of this Inclusive Leadership course, what was the rationale for granting approval for this course?
- 2) What methods do you think are effective in teaching Inclusive Leadership to graduate students?
- 3) How would you anticipate Inclusive Leadership might influence the professional practice of class participants?
- 4) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence an employee's perception of diversity in the workplace?
- 5) How do you think Inclusive Leadership might influence 'organizational culture'?
- 6) Why do you think the Faculty of Education at this university is the only program with this specific course on Inclusive Leadership in Canada?
- 7) Do you anticipate more interest will grow with external parties who desire training on Inclusive Leadership?

APPENDIX D: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions for course participants - Inclusive Leadership

- 1) Could you please tell me what your current position title is in your organization?
- 2) Are you currently in a leadership position in your workplace? Yes _____ No _____
- 3) What do you think are the benefits of graduate students taking a course in this Faculty on Inclusive Leadership?
- 4) How do you feel about taking this course with people that are not all from the K-12 teaching world?
- 5) As a current or future leader,
 - a) Are there elements of Inclusive Leadership that you may transfer into your leadership practice?
 - b) How would you anticipate using Inclusive Leadership in your professional practice?

[illegible]

APPENDIX F: Coding Chart

CODING CHART		
RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ) CONCEPTS	MEANING OF CODES	TYPES OF CODES
RQ 1 & 2: MOTIVATION (MOT) FOR COURSE IMPLEMENTATION	Code Descriptions	Class/ Levels of Codes/ Sub-codes
MOT - CI	Motivation of CI to implement course	DESC - INT
MOT - SL1	Motivation of SL1 for support of IL course	DESC - INT
MOT - SL2	Motivation of SL2 (Former Senior Leader) for support of IL course	DESC - INT
MOT - CP	Motivation CP's to take IL course	DESC - INT - CL to MOT - CI
RQ 3: TEACHING METHODS (TM)		
TM-DIDA - CI	Didactic teaching method of course instructor	DES - CI
TM-PORT - CP	Portfolio forces CP's critical thinking about inclusive practices	CL to MOT-CP & MOT-CI
TM-DISC - CP	Discussion based on key questions	DES - CI
TM-PRES - CP	Presentation - group work	INT
TM-SHAR - CP	Sharing of research papers	DES - CI
TM-RES - CI	Resources used by course instructor	DES - INT - CL to MOT - CI
	Reasons for using resources	CL to MOT
RQ 4: Informing Professional Practice (VAL) of Course Participants		
VAL - ADM	Value to administrator	PATT - CL to MOT-CI
VAL - SUBADM	Value to AISI leader	PATT
VAL - LL	Value to Learning Leader	PATT
VAL - TD	Value to Training and Development Leader	PATT
Legend		
Code Categories	Sub-codes - Research Participants	Class/ Levels of Codes
MOT - motivation	ADM – administrator	DES - descriptive
TM - teaching methods & strategies	CI - course instructor	PATT- Pattern or Inferential
VAL - value to course participants	CP - course participant	INT - Interpretive
Sub-codes – Teaching	LL - learning Leader	Sub-code: CL - Links
DIDA - didactic	SL 1 & SL 2- senior leader 1 and 2	
PORT - portfolio	SUBADM – sub-administrator	
DISC - discussion	TD - training & development leader (non-K to 12)	
PRES - presentation		
SHAR - sharing		
RES - resources		