Preparing School Leaders to Work With and in Community

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Abstract

We used Q methodology, a form of factor analysis, to explore and establish correlations across the perceptions of key stakeholders (i.e., deans, faculty members, doctoral students) about how doctoral programs in educational leadership engage in work with diverse communities. Four distinct viewpoints emerged suggesting the ongoing need to: develop prerequisite skills (listening and dialogue); situate learning in the community rather than in the college classroom; move towards student- and community-led curriculum; and provide doctoral students with the hands-on experiential learning they request and require. Implications include the implementation of practical innovations of learning within diverse communities.

Key Words: school leaders, diverse communities, educational leadership preparation programs, community engagement, Q methodology, administrators

Introduction

Well-prepared leaders must have the content knowledge, skills, and dispositions to engage community members and stakeholders to address educational issues and improve outcomes for all students (Auerbach, 2009; Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 2008). Yet, the academy and community continue to debate the most effective ways to accomplish advanced school leadership preparation in general (Crow, 2006; Levine, 2005; Murphy,

2007; Murphy & Vriesenga, 2006), and family and community engagement in particular (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Guajardo, Guajardo, Janson, & Militello, 2015). Leadership preparation programs' efforts to prepare leaders for community engagement continue to be described as "haphazard," with deans and department chairs acknowledging inadequate coursework and ill-prepared graduates (Epstein, 2013). Few programs include dedicated courses on how to work successfully *with* families and communities, and in one large scale study, less than 1% of coursework overall included instruction on parent relations (Hess & Kelly, 2007). In addition, field practice experiences may fail to provide candidates with opportunities to develop strong skills to work effectively with families and the community (Miller, Lines, Sullivan, & Hermanutz, 2013).

At the doctoral level, traditional preparation programs effectively prepare leaders as scholars (i.e., reading, synthesizing, analyzing, performing research); however, such programs may not prepare candidates effectively as practitioners capable of applying research to practice in real world settings with real world problems (Hochbein & Perry, 2013). Bridging the gap between the two and forming scholarly practitioners is one of the central aims of professional education doctoral programs (Shulman, Golde, Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006). In addition, given shifting demographics in schools (Miller & Martin, 2014) and renewed emphasis upon family and community engagement at the national level (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Superville, 2014), addressing the theory/practice gap in this area remains relevant.

In this study, we employ Q methodology (see full description below) because it is a research methodology that was designed for and thus uniquely suited to measuring subjects' point of view or "subjectivity" (Brown, 1996; Stephenson, 1953, 1980). Often described as a hybrid method that combines quantitative and qualitative aspects, Q methodology attempts to understand subjective judgements objectively and permits us to analyze individual data and determine shared views of diverse stakeholders.

Context

The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) consists of over 80 institutions nationwide with a mission of strengthening the education doctorate. The work of the consortium is guided by six interrelated working principles. The professional doctorate in education:

1. Is framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice.
2. Prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities.

3. Provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships.
4. Provides field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions.
5. Is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, that links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.
6. Emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice. (CPED, 2014, para. 12)

At the June 2014 CPED convening, networked learning communities were formed around each principle to build shared understanding and engage in a continuous cycle of inquiry into how principles were operationalized in practice and how they might be changed or improved (Bryk, 2009). Learning community 3, led by the authors as research fellows, focused on exploring and describing the perceptions of deans and professors about how their programs "provide opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships" (Principle 3). In July 2014, the research fellows explored and collected the perceptions of an incoming cohort of doctoral students on how they would like to be prepared to work with community members.

Purpose

This exploratory empirical study sought better understanding of the perceptions of key stakeholders (deans, professors, and candidates) about how community engagement *should be* (expectations) and *is* (current state of affairs) enacted in professional doctoral programs in education across the country. Like many projects in the early stage, there was a clear need to understand the work. Before asking people to change their practice, they need capacity (common understanding), will (motivation), and they must be able to see relevance and examples (see Rogers, 2003). The purpose of this study was to develop a set of essential elements that describe CPED Principle 3 and to uncover perceptions of these elements in order to develop a normative language around CPED Principle 3 and create an anchor point for subsequent conversations around practices that elucidate CPED Principle 3. Our research questions included:

1. What are the specific elements that comprise the principle?
2. What are the perceptions of practitioners and school leadership trainers of the principle elements?

The study will help scholars and practitioners better understand the perceptions and values of those who seek to teach and practice community engagement

in authentic settings. These perceptions can be used to facilitate conversation, vis-à-vis the transparency of thought and development of normative language, and provide a guide to action. Q methodology afforded us the opportunity to collect and analyze the perceptions and current best thinking of those closest to the educational leadership preparation process (teachers and learners), providing baseline data upon which to plan, implement, and measure future program change and innovation. Finally, the anticipated end result of such an inquiry cycle would be the positive impact upon the leadership practice of those who seek the relationships and collaboration fundamental to equitable schools.

Theoretical Framework and Literature

Given the results discussed below and CPED's emphasis on family and community engagement and leadership for social justice, this paper draws on recent models of equity-related leadership preparation, which imply working *with* diverse families and communities. For the purposes of this paper, we adopt Furman's (2012) definition of social justice leadership as being concerned with "the experiences of marginalized groups and inequities in educational opportunities and outcomes" and capable of "identifying and undoing these unjust practices and replacing them with more equitable, culturally appropriate ones" (p. 194).

Capper, Theoharis, and Sebastian (2006) argue that socially just leadership preparation calls for intentional development of "emotional safety for risk taking," (p. 6), knowledge, skills, and critical consciousness through curriculum, andragogy, and assessment, as well as systematic inquiry around the effectiveness of such preparation. Capper and colleagues (2006) stipulate that aspiring school leaders must be able to position themselves (identity development) and the families and communities they serve (critical consciousness) within inequitable systems. Further, socially just leaders must know about and be able to perform evidenced-based practices to create equitable schools. Faculty in preparation programs must design curriculum and utilize pedagogy which will cultivate such knowledge and performances.

Furman (2012) proposes socially just leadership preparation as praxis (the development of practice through reflection) across five dimensions: the personal, interpersonal, communal, systemic, and ecological. She contends many recommendations for preparation programs remain stalled in the development of the first dimension. Furman suggests aspiring leaders locate learning in their own schools, especially as doctoral candidates build individual and community relationships.

In the review of relevant research, we briefly outline literature highlighting the importance of preparing candidates to engage with families and communities.

Next, we consider the skills and dispositions prerequisite to candidates' successful work in and with families and communities. Then we discuss current pedagogical approaches that shift from learning *about* family and community engagement in the classroom to learning *by engaging with* families and communities beyond the classroom. Finally, we explore the paradigm shift from *faculty-led* to *candidate- and community-led* experiential learning.

A robust literature base illustrates the association between effectively engaging parents, families, and community members and positive outcomes for students (Epstein, 2013; Fan & Chen, 2001; Goodall & Vorhaus, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2012), particularly racially and ethnically diverse students (Boethel, 2003; Jeynes, 2003). Family and community engagement dispositions, knowledge, and skills matter for all educators, including teachers, counselors, and school- and district-level leaders (Auerbach, 2009; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Sanders, 2014). Leaders at both the school and district levels influence the strength of programs that seek to involve families and community members (Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). Recent reviews of school leadership programs identify a need to prepare candidates to lead externally (Hess & Kelly, 2007) and to "engage [all] stakeholders in student success" (Hawley & James, 2010, p. 4). Khalifa (2012) argues that leading *in* the community, as well as in the school, constitutes a key practice of successful urban principals.

The skills and dispositions to engage with families and communities include: expanding definitions of what constitutes family and community engagement (Weiss & Lopez, 2009); becoming conscious of one's own identity and positionality (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005); shifting from a deficit (Valencia, 2012) to a resource-rich perspective (Yosso, 2005) of families and the community; and learning to listen to and dialogue with family and community members (Furman, 2012). Block (2009) contends that community transformation begins with shared and democratic conversations between and among concerned citizens who show up by choice, not by obligation.

Traditional notions of parent and community involvement often reflect White, middle-class values such as individualism and competition, as well as school-centric practices such as attending school events or volunteering at school (Ferrara, 2009). Current definitions embrace dynamic demographics in America's public schools and offer expanded understandings of engagement (Weiss & Lopez, 2009). Extended definitions recognize the importance of engagement that spans the child's school career, value how diverse families may already support children at home, and aspire to engage families and communities in democratic ways across multiple settings.

Community members themselves hold the knowledge and capacity to decipher and act on areas of development (Guajardo et al., 2015; Horton, Kohl, & Kohl, 1990). However, our purpose was to focus on the organizational level of university-based programs. Guajardo and colleagues (2015) stated:

> We embrace the need for strategies that honor the local wisdom of community members. We do not see community work as missionary work; on the contrary, we see these strategies as empowering local people in their own spaces in order to find solutions that are organic to meet the needs of the people that will live in and sustain healthy communities. (p. 11)

There are certainly systemic and institutional barriers that often stymie processes for local empowerment. However, local context and knowledge, neighborhood by neighborhood, community by community, has the potential to overcome such barriers (see Freire, 1997).

America's teachers, principals, and school superintendents continue to be predominantly White and middle class in contrast to the racial and ethnic diversity of the nation's school children (Lichter, 2013). Educators of color continue to be underrepresented at all levels (Capps et al., 2005) and their unique viewpoints and capacities for socially just leadership underutilized (Santamaría, 2014). Those in positions of leadership tend to "tap" potential candidates who share their race or gender (Myung, Loeb, & Horng, 2011). The "hidden curriculum" and race-alike admissions processes (Karanxha, Agosto, & Bellara, 2014) may further contribute to a leaky pipeline for aspiring leaders of color. This "mismatch of the demographics of profession and clientele" (Marshall, 2004, p. 6) points more urgently to the need to prepare all candidates to reflect upon racial identity, advantage, and just action (Gooden & O'Doherty, 2014).

First, an effective school leader needs to be aware of, locate, and describe his or her own positionality within a system as well as the positionality of others, namely families and community members. Yet, deficit perspectives of parents and neighborhoods (Shields, 2004; Valencia, 2012) remain deeply embedded in current narratives (Arzubiaga, Ceja, & Artiles, 2000; Schutz, 2006). In a yearlong study of four urban middle school principals, Flessa (2010) relates how four hardworking school leaders described and ultimately pathologized families and communities. Flessa (2010) questions at what point enumerating conditions/challenges turns into a focus on deficits (what families and communities lack) and an exercise in handwringing (how this lack constrains what school leaders can do).

Next, an effective school leader needs to be able to listen to and dialogue with families and communities. Shields (2004) argues for the centrality of relationships and dialogue to the work and just action of school leadership. This

dialogic leadership challenges silences and seeks to create shared spaces to make sense of students' and families' lived experiences. Apple and Beane (2007) advocate for fully democratic schools that value the voices of all stakeholders and strive for true collaboration rather than contrived consent.

The physical locus of learning must shift from academic to family/community spaces if aspiring leaders and their professors are to move beyond learning *about* engagement to engaging. Locating community engagement in the halls of academia rather than *in* and *with* the community teaches college students *about* engagement, not to engage. We argue that this approach is akin to using outdated models of second language teaching (Catford, 1965) such as the grammar-translation method to teach students *about* the language, rather than to speak the language. Kuh (2008) argues that learning in community constitutes a high impact practice, one which allows students to apply knowledge in real-life settings and to prepare for life as democratic citizens. Yet even when students learn in community, Schutz (2006) critiques practices that limit reflection and position community members as clients in need of services.

For learning in and with community to succeed, we refer to Kolb's (2014) model of experiential learning as including the opportunity to reflect upon, reconceptualize, and revisit experiences. Similarly, Mezirow and Taylor's (2011) conception of transformative learning includes experience, critical reflection, dialogue, honoring of context, and nonhierarchical relationships. Moore (2013) argues that such situated learning will remain at the margins until the capacity of higher education faculty is built to relinquish the academic reins and to bookend community learning with expert facilitation from the classroom.

Methods

Research Design

Q methodology requires participants to make meaning by ranking a set of statements about a particular topic from most to least significant—in this particular study, how preparation programs should prepare leaders to engage families and communities. This sorting and scaling by subjects moves measurement from externally to internally referenced and allows statistical analysis of intraindividual and interindividual differences in perceptions (McKeown & Thomas, 2013).

Adapted by Stephenson (1953) from R factor analysis, a data reduction method of examining traits, characteristics, or attitudes to determine underlying latent variables, Q factor analysis *inverts* the data matrix and examines persons as variables and viewpoints as samples or populations (Watts & Stenner, 2012). R factor analysis reveals which statements or items cohere, while Q

factor analysis reveals which participants appear to hold similar (or dissimilar) views. Put another way, the two methodologies differ in *what* is being factored (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Next we provide a step-by-step description of the Q process we used in this study.

Development of Statements

The development of statements for a Q study begins with a concourse. *Concourse* represents the quantity or bulk of discussion related to the topic, and the ensuing statements supply both the "raw material" for and the "self-referent" nature of the study (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953). Q researchers assist a group in developing a comprehensive yet manageable set of statements that fairly represents the variety of opinions in the group. Watts and Stenner (2012) employ the analogy of using just enough "carpet tiles" to cover the ground, and each final item must make a unique contribution (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

For this study, the task was to develop a set of normative statements (*concourse*) that would represent CPED Principle 3. Working with a group of 18 faculty members and deans at the annual CPED conference (in Denver, CO, June 2014), we brainstormed a total of 141 initial statements. We posed the question: *What does Principle 3 look like in action at your institution?*

Facilitators and members used an iterative process to examine statements for redundancy, ambiguity, and wordiness, then edited for concision to generate the final Q set. Members worked in small groups and shared individual statements, clarified meaning, and looked for gaps and overlaps. Working in the large group, members began to coalesce individual statements around a series of affinities or categories. Highly similar or repetitious items were eliminated, statements with multiple clauses were simplified into single statements, and potentially confusing negative statements were rephrased positively. From the original affinity grouped list of statements, facilitators generated a set of 39 statements (*Q sample)* that reflected the central ideas of the group (see Appendix B). This set of statements was also vetted with the extant literature summarized above. The literature review helped to clarify statements and to assure that the set was representative of the elements of CPED Principle 3.

Sorting Statements: Who and How

Participants who sort the statements are considered the P sample (person sample). Although R methodology derives its power from sample size, a Q study requires *enough* participants to permit factor comparison. Participants may be selected purposively for their interest, specialized knowledge, or depth of data (Patton, 1990). Due to the intensive nature of inquiry, sample sizes

ranging from a single case to groups of 30–50 persons are considered adequate (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Fifteen faculty members and three deans of education of CPED member institutions participated in the first sort of the statements generated.

Participants placed Q sort statements into a forced or prearranged frequency distribution (Stephenson, 1953) using a matrix (see Figure 1) to array items. Often, statements are sorted in response to the same condition of instruction or an umbrella question, such as "What is the most _____" (Donner, 2001). Those statements with which participants most agree are placed in the +4 category, and those with which they least agree in the -4 category. The administrator may advise participants to presort into three piles, one of agreement, one of disagreement, and one of neutrality (Smith, 2001). Sets may be sorted by hand using file cards or digitally using software such as Flash Q (see www.hackert.biz/flashq/home/). In this study, participants sorted based on the prompt: "What do these elements look like in your program now?"

After participants completed their sorts, we asked them to review the statements and to consider whether or not there were any statements missing. If so, they were asked to discuss what the statement would have said, where would they have placed the statement, and why.

In early July 2014 we collected additional data from doctoral candidates, all of whom were practicing professionals and aspiring educational leaders entering an educational leadership program in a northeastern university (an institutional member of CPED). Thirteen incoming doctoral candidates sorted the elements in response to the question: "What should these elements look like in your EdD program in Educational Leadership?" In data analysis, we used ten completed sorts and discarded three incomplete sorts.
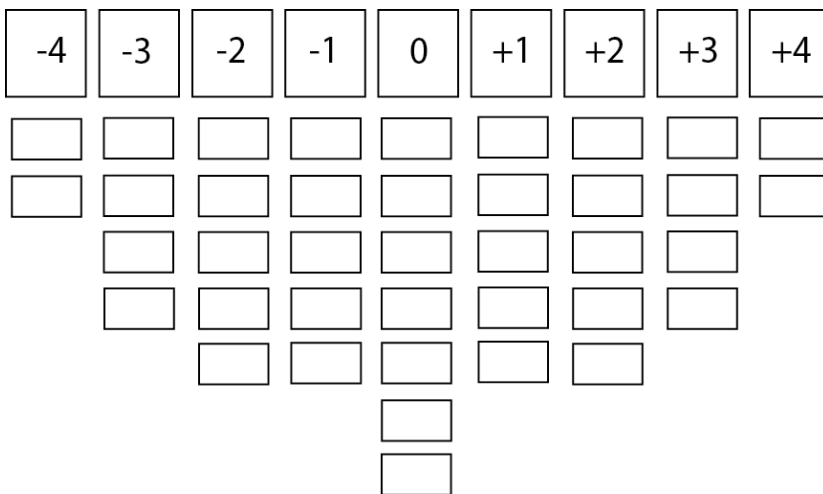

Figure 1. Sorting Distribution

Data Analysis

Q factor analysis begins by factoring and correlating persons rather than attributes. Upon data collection, researchers perform successive sets of statistical processes: the construction of a person-to-person correlation matrix, factor analysis, and calculation of factor scores. Most recently, freely available online software packages (e.g., PQ Method) perform necessary computations (Schmolck & Atkinson, 1997). The correlation matrix permits a person-by-person comparison of viewpoints. The factor analysis allows researchers to reduce the data of 30–50 individuals into a relatively parsimonious number of subgroups (Donner, 2001). As well, factor analysis helps identify contentious and consensus items and groups of participants whose viewpoints were significantly similar (or dissimilar) to the viewpoints of other groups (Davis & Michelle, 2011). Each factor represents participants with similar views on the question (Brown, 1996). Factor loadings are determined by the extent to which each Q sort is associated with each factor. Appendix C, which is available from the authors upon request, illustrates the factor matrix using participants' Q-Sorts (loadings) for this study.

Focus Discussions With Faculty and Deans After Sorting

After individually sorting statements, faculty members and deans worked in small groups of three to four people to discuss how leadership preparation for community engagement is enacted in their respective institutions and to discuss the differences between current and ideal conditions in doctoral programs. Participants responded to the following prompts from research fellows:

1. Look at your first sorts (*what your program looks like now*) and discuss why you each sorted them the way you did. Specifically, focus on the elements in the +4 and -4 columns.
2. How should these elements play out in the *admissions process*?
3. How should these elements play out in the *dissertation in practice*?
4. How should these elements play out in the *problem of practice*?
5. How should these elements play out in *inquiry as practice*?

Group discussions were not held with the incoming cohort of doctoral students.

Data Analysis, Part II

These group discussions were used to help analyze the initial factor analysis. Q methodology has been recently combined with a participant inquiry data analysis process. This process has been dubbed *InQuiry*—where participants are empowered to share with researchers what the factor represents (Balutski, Militello, Janson, Benham, & Francis, 2014; Janson & Militello, 2011; Militello,

Janson, & Militello, 2014; Militello, Janson, & Tonissen, 2016). This qualitative process allows the researcher to fully understand the emergent factor and the rationale behind it through the voices of the participant. This process requires a phased data collection via a representation of the original participants.

At a subsequent CPED convening in October 2014, 15 members of Learning Community 3 (12 faculty members and 3 deans) reassembled in four affinity groups (based upon factor loadings) to consider the Q sort findings. Participants were given the following tasks and prompts:

Task 1: Review the statements associated with your perspective
- What are the statements that are most important to this perspective?

Task 2: Name your perspective
- Based on the most important priorities above, what theme emerges?
- If you were to create a marketing slogan from this perspective, what would it be?
- If this perspective were a novel, what would the title be?

Task 3: What are the implications of the perspective?
- What are the key strengths and limitations of this perspective?
- How does this perspective potentially impact your current EdD program?

From group discussions and activities, each group decided upon a name, and most chose an image that best represented their perspective. In addition, each group used a large recording sheet to capture main ideas and themes. Facilitators observed groups, wrote notes on discussions, and took photographs of images produced. Appendix D, which is available from the authors upon request, illustrates statement placement for each factor and highlights the most and least important statements connected to each factor.

Findings and Implications for Schools of Education

A total of 28 (15 faculty members, 3 deans, 10 doctoral students) Q-Sorts were analyzed using responses to the question, "What should these elements look like in the program?" The Q-Sorts were processed and analyzed using the computer program PQ Method (version 2.33), which was specifically created to analyze Q-Methodology data (Schmolck & Atkinson, 1997). PQ Method computes factors, variances, and relationships between and among participants based on the input data from the Q-Sorts. After the statistical data was generated from PQ Method, the researcher analyzed the participants' (faculty members and deans) post-sort questionnaires and discussions to obtain qualitative data that would further develop and add to the statistical data. Participants'

subjective thoughts and opinions were used to aid in the interpretation and explanation of the emerging factors and to describe their perceptions of CPED Principle 3.

To fully examine the data, a three-factor Varimax rotation was run in order to highlight and separate the factors as they emerged (see Appendix A and note very small correlations among the three factors). Varimax rotation allows each Q-sort to be loaded on a factor with a correlation score. In order for a factor loading to be significant in this study at a .01 level, the factor score had to exceed 2.58 (SE) = 2.58 x 5.916 = .4360. In order for a factor loading to be significant at the .05 level, it had to exceed 1.96 (SE) = 1.96 x 5.8309 = .3312. Appendix B details how each participant (P-sample) loaded on the four factors.

Of the 28 participants, 27 loaded significantly in this study. Participant "Student 1" was not significant on any of the four factors. As a result, this participant was not further analyzed for this study.

The rotated factors represent 36% of the variance, with Factor One representing 14%, Factor Two representing 12%, and Factor Three representing 10%. On Factor One, 11 participants (3 faculty members, all 3 deans, and 5 students) loaded significantly at the $p < .01$ level. On Factor Two, 9 participants (5 faculty members and 4 students) loaded significantly at the $p < .01$ level. On Factor Three, 7 participants (4 faculty members and 3 students) loaded significantly at the $p < .01$ level. On Viewpoint 4 (opposite of factor 3), 3 participants (3 students) loaded significantly at the $p < .01$ level. One of the 28 participants did not load on any of the factors (as noted above), and one participant's sort was rejected due to confounding loading. Thus, 93% of the participants in the study loaded significantly on one of the three factors representing four distinct viewpoints.

While there were three factors extracted, there were actually four distinct viewpoints generated from the data. Participants 25, 26, and 27 were significant negative loads on Factor 3. This means that these three participants have the opposite viewpoint of the four others who loaded significantly on this factor (participants 2, 3, 5, and 11). Appendix B provides a list of the placement for each statement for all four viewpoints (A, B, C, and D).

Factor A: "Dancing Beyond the Edge"

Participants named this perspective "Dancing Beyond the Edge" to denote leaving the predictability of the classroom in advanced leadership preparation programs. Group members chose the image of an elephant as a focal point for discussing "the elephant in the room" (see below for further explanation).

Eleven of 28 participants loaded significantly on the first factor, and this group represented members from all three stakeholder groups. Three faculty,

all three deans, and five students hold this viewpoint of doctoral education. Factor A accounts for 14% of the explained variance.

Table 1 details the highest and lowest placed cards. Statements placed at the boundaries of the sorting grid are most representative of Factor A and those participants who loaded significantly. These extremes are important markers for Factor A and representative of participants' perceptions of how community engagement is enacted in leadership preparation programs.

Table 1. Factor A High-Positive and High-Negative Statements

Score	Card	Statements
+4	14	Students learn to engage with diverse groups and hear a variety of perspectives.
+4	27	Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized.
+3	3	Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.
+3	4	Students are asked to work outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.
+3	25	Students develop cultural competency through their course work.
+3	26	Students engage in outreach projects with the diverse populations that are unique to their contexts.
-3	11	Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities (before, after school, and weekend programs).
-3	22	Faculty collaborate and co-teach with K–12 practitioners or community members.
-3	24	Students engage in activities to collaborate with K–12 students.
-3	37	The preparation program partners with professional schools (other colleges in the university) to improve student learning and engagement.
-4	29	Students learn how to work with and respond to the media.
-4	39	Dissertations in practice have defined elements of building partnerships.

This group conceptualized doctoral students and faculty working to develop prerequisite skills or the ability to listen to and dialogue with diverse communities. Statement 14 (Students learn to engage with diverse groups and hear a variety of perspectives) and statement 27 (Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized) represent the +4 or most important column. Two statements

in the +3 column indicate the importance of both faculty and students working outside of comfort zones: statement 3 (Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners) and statement 4 (Students are asked to work outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners). Two additional statements in the +3 column speak to the importance of linking coursework to community work: statement 25 (Students develop cultural competency through their course work) and statement 26 (Students engage in outreach projects with the diverse populations that are unique to their contexts).

This perspective generated more questions than answers among participants as they offered differing perspectives on "the elephant in the room." What is a diverse community? Who has been historically marginalized? What does a diverse community look like, and who defines it? Such questions suggest the importance of purposefully planning curriculum and pedagogy that provide opportunities for aspiring leaders to acquire the dispositions and practice the skills necessary to engage authentically in real world contexts *with* diverse community members. To accomplish these aims, faculty and students may need to move into the discomfort of discussing the "elephant in the room" and working "beyond the edge" or outside the traditional predictability and comfort of the classroom.

Factor B: "The Community Is the Laboratory in Which All of Us Work and Learn"

Participants in this group named the community as their laboratory but did not choose an image to represent this perspective. Nine out of 28 participants loaded significantly on the second factor, and this group represented members from two out of three stakeholder groups (5 faculty and 4 students). Factor B accounts for 12% of the explained variance.

This group conceptualized the community, rather than the college classroom, as the laboratory in which to learn and work together with community members, as shown in Table 2. Statement 2 (Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities) and statement 17 (Students use schools as laboratories for ideas—provide opportunities to examine the real ways we manifest collaboration and partnerships) represent the +4 column and underline the need to locate inquiry and action in K–12 schools and communities. Statement 16 (Students conduct a needs assessment in conjunction with a community partner as a first step in understanding a "problem") and statement 31 (Students learn to work with diverse stakeholders to create action plans for identified problems) in the +3 column highlight moving beyond listening and dialogue to action. As well, statement 36 (The program fosters a

network of educational leaders [graduates] around the state who work together, draw on each other as resources, and initiate change across contexts) and statement 38 (Dissertations in practice have defined elements of collaboration) suggest the emphasis participants place upon collaboration, even in dissertation work, and upon continuing to collaborate in networks upon graduation.

Table 2. Factor B High-Positive and High-Negative Statements

Score	Card	Statements
+4	2	Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities.
+4	17	Students use schools as laboratories for ideas—provide opportunities to examine the real ways we manifest collaboration and partnerships.
+3	16	Students conduct a needs assessment in conjunction with a community partner as a first step in understanding a "problem."
+3	31	Students learn to work with diverse stakeholders to create action plans for identified problems.
+3	36	The program fosters a network of educational leaders (graduates) around the state who work together, draw on each other as resources, and initiate change across contexts.
+3	38	Dissertations in practice have defined elements of collaboration.
-3	3	Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.
-3	5	Students work in contexts different from the ones in which they are currently situated.
-3	19	Students co-create and co-lead community meetings.
-3	28	Students provide resources for marginalized school and community populations.
-4	11	Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities (before, after school, and weekend programs).
-4	21	Students build partnership agreements with community organizations and K–12 schools with Memorandums of Understanding.

The statements associated with this perspective generated discussion in small groups around the need to push for change at all levels—institutional, community, and family. The most preferred statements indicate a willingness to "disrupt the practice of sitting in rows, of rote memorization, of doing the questions in the back of the chapter, and obligatory homework" (Guajardo et al., 2015, p. 8) and to locate learning in the community.

Factor C: "We Model, You Learn"

Participants in this group did not choose an image, but named the perspective "We Model, You Learn" to underscore the importance of faculty members collaborating with community. Seven out of 28 participants loaded significantly on the third factor, and this group represented members from two out of three stakeholder groups (4 faculty and 3 students). Factor C accounts for 10% of the explained variance.

This group also viewed working in collaboration, particularly in designing, teaching, and evaluating courses, to be vital elements of doctoral work leading to community engagement (see Table 3). The +4 statements included statement 22 (Faculty collaborate and co-teach with K–12 practitioners or community members) and statement 23 (Community members [including K–12 practitioners] are involved with design and evaluation of our preparation program) and suggested the importance of involving K–12 practitioners in program design and implementation. Statements in the +3 column include statement 3 (Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners) and statement 5 (Students work in contexts different from the ones in which they are currently situated) also point to the need to transcend barriers and work outside comfort zones. Two additional statements in the +3 category, statement 25 (Students develop cultural competency through their course work) and statement 35 (Students learn how to communicate with school-related stakeholders [teachers, administrators, and school board]) point to the school and academy-centric viewpoint of this factor.

The first viewpoint that emerged from this factor analysis reflects a strong preference for collaboration and a willingness to move beyond a more traditional and faculty-mediated program design and delivery. Practitioners and community members are invited into the academy to collaborate and evaluate. This viewpoint acknowledges that if students continue to learn *about* working in the community and learning continues to be located in the classroom, opportunities to explore notions of reciprocity (Dostilio et al., 2012) and to learn *in* the community will remain limited.

Table 3. Factor C High-Positive and High-Negative Statements

Score	Card	Statements
+4	22	Faculty collaborate and co-teach with K–12 practitioners or community members.
+4	23	Community members (including K–12 practitioners) are involved with design and evaluation of our preparation program.
+3	3	Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.
+3	5	Students work in contexts different from the ones in which they are currently situated.
+3	25	Students develop cultural competency through their course work.
+3	35	Students learn how to communicate with school-related stakeholders (teachers, administrators, and school board).
-3	8	Students engage in a service learning activity.
-3	9	Students work with under-represented groups in a community immersion experience.
-3	24	Students engage in activities to collaborate with K–12 students.
-3	27	Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized.
-4	2	Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities.
-4	11	Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities (before, after school, and weekend programs).

Factor D: "Engage to Make a Difference"

This group named their perspective "Engage to Make a Difference." They chose the image of hands to represent a willingness to do hands-on work.

An opposite viewpoint emerged from Factor C and was represented by participants 25, 26, and 28—all students. These participants loaded significantly on Factor C, but negatively. That is, these participants had a viewpoint that was the opposite of Factor C. We named this viewpoint Factor D.

This group viewed experiential learning to be fundamental to community-engaged practice. Five of the six statements in the +4 and +3 columns begin with the word "Students" followed by the verbs "work" or "engage" or "learn" (see Table 4).

Statement 2 (Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities) and statement 11 (Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities [before, after school, and weekend programs])

fall in the +4 column and reflect what doctoral *students*, rather than their teachers, will *do.* Statements 8, 9, 24, and 27 (Students engage in a service learning activity; Students work with under-represented groups in a community immersion experience; Students engage in activities to collaborate with K–12 students; Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized) fall into the +3 category.

Table 4. Factor D High-Positive and High-Negative Statements

Score	Card	Statements
+4	2	Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities.
+4	11	Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities (before, after school, and weekend programs).
+3	8	Students engage in a service learning activity.
+3	9	Students work with under-represented groups in a community immersion experience.
+3	24	Students engage in activities to collaborate with K–12 students.
+3	27	Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized.
-3	3	Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.
-3	5	Students work in contexts different from the ones in which they are currently situated.
-3	25	Students develop cultural competency through their course work.
-3	35	Students learn how to communicate with school-related stakeholders (teachers, administrators, and school board).
-4	22	Faculty collaborate and co-teach with K–12 practitioners or community members.
-4	23	Community members (including K–12 practitioners) are involved with design and evaluation of our preparation program.

Consensus Statements

Certain statements were preferred or not preferred by participants from the four factors groups. The consensus statements were statements not distinguished between any pair of factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012). This means that on each of the four factors, the consensus statements have ranked very similar or nearly the same. Identifying these consensus statements assists the researcher in determining participants' shared beliefs about educating aspiring leaders in preparation programs. Table 5 outlines the consensus statements.

Table 5. Consensus Statements

Statements	Factor One Values	Factor Two Values	Factor Three Values	Factor Four Values
10	0	1	1	1
18*	-1	-2	-2	-2
32*	1	1	1	0

Note. The statements with * are significant at $p < 01$. All other statements are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 5 illustrates the universality of several statements. Statement 18 (Students present with scholars and community partners) was universally rejected (placed in -2 or -1 columns) by everyone in the study. Such a collective dismissal suggests the need to reposition knowledge generation and dissemination. Similarly, two statements were universally accepted (placed in the +2 or +1 columns) by everyone in the study. Statement 10 (Students view communities as systems working together) and statement 32 (Students collaborate with school and community members on analyzing data to identify strengths and weaknesses) emphasize the need for students to develop community knowledge and skills in collaboration.

Discussion

This study examined the perceptions of key stakeholders (faculty, deans, doctoral students) in order to develop a normative language around how to prepare aspiring leaders to engage *in* and *with* the community. The results provide a sturdy base for ongoing discussions and action as CPED member institutions strive to prepare candidates to lead schools more effectively.

The elements highlighted by Factor A suggest the importance of providing doctoral candidates with in-school and in-context experiences to develop the cultural competence and skills to listen to and dialogue with diverse communities. The viewpoint expressed in Factor A corresponds to both the horizontal axis (dispositions and performances) and vertical axis (pedagogy) of the equity preparation framework outlined by Capper and colleagues (2006).

As well, this factor highlights the potential disconnect between aspiring leaders and professors in the academy and diverse community members, pointing to the need for students and teachers to work "outside of comfort zones." The image chosen by participants of "the elephant in the room" alludes both to a disconnect between those in the academy and those in the community and also to historical disconnects between privileged and disenfranchised community members.

The cluster of statements comprising Factor B suggests the importance of providing experiences for doctoral candidates to develop problem identification skills and to plan action in response to identified problems in concert with community members. This perspective, in contrast to the prerequisite skill development (listening and dialogue) perspective represented in Factor A, emphasizes the need to *act* in partnership with community members to effect change. This perspective most closely aligns with performance (skills) and pedagogy (opportunities to practice skills) recommended in the Capper, Theoharis, and Sebastian (2006) equity framework.

The viewpoint revealed by Factor C points to the need to move towards more student- and community-centered pedagogies. Aspiring leaders and community members need the spaces and opportunities that will allow them to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships (Fusarelli & Militello, 2012). This viewpoint requires the intersection of active, experiential pedagogies by faculty and equity-minded performance practice by students (Capper et al., 2006).

In sharp contrast to the faculty-mediated viewpoint expressed above, student responses coalesced around Factor D. Students expressed a strong need and desire for hands-on experiences, working in the community, and learning outside the classroom. Such a constructivist, experiential approach has long been advocated, if not practiced, in educational leadership preparation programs (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012). This viewpoint underscores the need to attend to the interpersonal and communal dimensions of Furman's (2012) framework and amend the intersections of pedagogy, knowing, and performance of Capper et al.'s (2006) framework. We need to take up this need for place-based education (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014) if we are to honor students' voices.

In summary, results indicated the need for aspiring leaders to (a) develop and practice prerequisite skills or the ability to listen to and dialogue with diverse communities; and (b) locate the laboratory of learning in the community, rather than the college classroom. Results also demonstrated faculty members' willingness to move beyond a more traditional and faculty-mediated program design and delivery which corresponded with students' strong desire for hands-on experiences working in the community.

Conclusion

Findings from the study support the need for aspiring leaders to dismantle deficit perspectives and develop prerequisite listening and dialogue skills to work *with* rather than *in* communities. In order to plan and implement

transformative learning experiences in the community, faculty members must be able not only to situate learning in a community, but also to view classroom experiences as bookending and extending learning in the community.

The inclusion of thoughtful community engagement in educational leadership doctoral studies has proven most difficult. Coursework and field experiences are idiosyncratic, not widespread (Epstein & Sanders, 2006), and are often based on a deficit model (e.g., audits; Valencia, 2012). At worst, practices in the community can be voyeuristic whereby students are "outsiders" to assess and then "fix" what is wrong (Schutz, 2006).

The promising practices of a systemic approach that is locally informed (Dantas & Manyak, 2010; Sandy & Holland, 2006), an engaged and trained faculty (O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006), and pedagogies that are asset-driven (e.g., asset mapping and inventories, not audits; Kramer, Amos, Lazarus, & Seedat, 2012; Parini-Runge, 2015) provide a university-based approach. However, true engagement will require a community-based approach where the expertise and wisdom of community members is honored. This requires a commitment from university faculty to develop relationships with community members, to listen to their stories, and to be invitational in the development and execution of practices of community engagement. Here faculty members will need to move from expert to learner.

An examination of community indeed warrants expertise. We submit that the expertise currently resides in the very neighborhoods we want candidates to learn from, not about. When thoughtfully engaged, communities themselves become the text from which we learn. That is, the texts that can provide the most vital and thoughtful learning experiences are located in the very communities in which educational administrator preparation programs reside. Effective community learning will require community-based experiences facilitated by faculty committed to learning with and in the community.

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Appendix A. Correlations Between Factor Scores

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1	1.000	0.1693	0.0914
Factor 2	0.1693	1.000	0.1008
Factor 4	0.0914	0.1008	1.0000

Appendix B. Statement Placement by Factor

Statement	Beliefs			
	A	B	C	D
1. Students meet with various political entities (legislators, state commissioners of higher education, etc.) to learn from and advocate for schools and communities.	-1	0	-1	1
2. Students engage in participatory action research/inquiry with schools and communities.	1	4	-4	4
3. Faculty model working outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.	3	-3	3	-3
4. Students are asked to work outside their comfort zones when engaged with diverse communities and partners.	3	0	2	-2
5. Students work in contexts different from the ones in which they are currently situated.	0	-3	3	-3
6. Students have the opportunity to collaborate or build partnerships with a global or international community.	0	2	-1	1
7. Students effectively use technology to communicate and collaborate with teachers, parents, and the community.	-2	0	1	-1
8. Students engage in a service learning activity.	-2	-1	-3	3
9. Students work with under-represented groups in a community immersion experience.	2	-1	-3	3
10. Students view communities as systems working together.	1	1	0	0
11. Students develop and implement extended learning opportunities (before, after school, and weekend programs).	-3	-4	-4	4
12. Students work with community partners to co-develop grant applications.	0	-1	-1	1
13. Students develop a school-community partnership program based on school need.	-1	2	0	0
14. Students learn to engage with diverse groups and hear a variety of perspectives.	4	2	2	-2
15. Students advocate with community partners.	-2	0	0	0

Statement	Beliefs			
	A	B	C	D
16. Students conduct a needs assessment in conjunction with a community partner as a first step in understanding a "problem".	1	3	-1	1
17. Students use schools as laboratories for ideas – provide opportunities to examine the real ways we manifest collaboration and partnerships.	0	4	0	0
18. Students present with scholars and community partners.	-1	-2	2	-2
19. Students co-create and co-lead community meetings.	0	-3	1	-1
20. Students build learning communities with diverse stakeholders.	0	0	-1	1
21. Students build partnership agreements with community organizations and K12 schools with Memorandums of Understanding.	-1	-4	-2	2
22. Faculty collaborate and co-teach with K–12 practitioners or community members.	-3	-1	4	-4
23. Community members (including K–12 practitioners) are involved with design and evaluation of our preparation program.	-2	-2	4	-4
24. Students engage in activities to collaborate with K–12 students.	-3	0	-3	3
25. Students develop cultural competency through their course work.	3	2	3	-3
26. Students engage in outreach projects with the diverse populations that are unique to their contexts.	3	-2	-2	2
27. Students learn to engage in authentic, meaningful dialogue with community members, especially those historically marginalized.	4	0	-3	3
28. Students provide resources for marginalized school and community populations.	1	-3	0	0
29. Students learn how to work with and respond to the media.	-4	-2	-2	2
30. Students learn how to draw on perspectives of diverse stakeholders to identify problems of social justice.	2	1	0	0
31. Students learn to work with diverse stakeholders to create action plans for identified problems.	0	3	0	0

Statement	Beliefs			
	A	B	C	D
32. Student collaborate with school and community members on analyzing data to identify strengths and weaknesses.	1	1	1	-1
33. Student collaborate with school and community members for program evaluation.	2	-2	-2	2
34. Students learn culturally appropriate use of language (written and oral).	2	-1	2	-2
35. Students learn how to communicate with school-related stakeholders (teachers, administrators, and school board).	-2	2	3	-3
36. The program fosters a network of educational leaders (graduates) around the state who work together, draw on each other as resources, and initiate change across contexts.	2	3	2	-2
37. The preparation program partners with professional schools (other colleges in the university) to improve student learning and engagement.	-3	1	-2	2
38. Dissertations in practice have defined elements of collaboration.	-1	3	1	-1
39. Dissertations in practice have defined elements of building partnerships.	-4	1	1	-1

Please note: Appendices C & D are available from the authors upon request.