

Transformative Leadership: The Role of Private Schools' Managers in Promoting Social Justice

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Abstract:- Private schools are by definition independent schools that are wholly supported by either private organizations or individuals rather than by the state. There is a commonly held view that seems to suggest that issues of transformative leadership, social justice and Paolo Freire's (1970) dialogical tenets of love, humility, faith, trust, solidarity and critical thinking often take a back seat at private international schools. Proponents of such view believe that private school's principals are expected to prioritize profit over social justice by leading and managing such schools like businesses. The aims of this paper are twofold: One, it is to provide evidence that presents a contrasting view to that by uncovering a female transformative leader from a private school in South Eastern Asia who does not only espouse those Freirean tenets, but has been an agent of social change throughout her illustrious career as a leader and a doyenne of IB (International Baccalaureate) curriculum. Two, to clear the blurred lines that often exist between the role played by educational leaders as *transformational*, *transactional* and *transformative* leaders in the private school space (Shields, 2010). The paper seeks is to make private schools' principals aware that they also have a role to play as agents of social change.

Keywords:- Private Schools, Transformative Leadership, Transformational/Transactional Leadership, Dialogical Tenets, Social Justice.

I. INTRODUCTION

➤ Narrative Case Study

To achieve the aims delineated above, emic one-to-one semi- structured interview with a transformative leader to understand how she has managed to balance her business-oriented mandate of private schooling with social justice

awareness and advocacy. During the interview, I strategically directed her to put more emphasis on her role in using the elements of social justice to uplift the marginalized groups as opposed to speaking about the roles she played on academic interventions. Ethnographic observations also informed the development of this study. Ethnography suitably fits the aims of this study because it provides an understanding of the cultural and behavioural practices of particular groups in a particular context and time. For example, I have observed how my transformative leader immersed herself fully into the Chinese culture at a research site (i.e. a secondary school in Yinzhou district South Eastern part of China). Publicly available documents of the school and the pictures that portray the interviewee continuing to serve as a transformative leader at are used accordingly as per permission granted by the school. The interviewee opted to relate her most memorable intervention as from the time when she was at a Fijian International School. The identity of that particular school was concealed because of ethical consideration as permission was not sought. The narrative visual and audio representation of the case captures the gist of information garnered through the interview as well as the ethnographic observations of the site where the transformative leader is now based.

The major finding from the interview and the study refutes a popular view that leaders in private schools have propensities to prioritize profit and turn a blind eye to issues of transformative leadership. The findings are also significant in illuminating Shields' (2010) assertion that although *transformational/transactional* and *transformative* leadership theories have some common underpinnings, *transformative* leadership involves principals attaining both the academic mandates and the social justice. In this case, private international schools.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In affirmation of the stance that suggests that one has to read more about literature that present an alternative/critical view on leadership so as to challenge the popular masculine or mainstream view, evidence-based literature will be meticulously selected from dedicated scholars about educational leadership discourse on the following three related aspects: *School education and social justice*, *Freirean dialogical tenets* and the *dichotomies between transformative and transformational or transactional leadership*. More zest on school education and social justice will hinge on Rawlsian (1958) work on distributive social justice. Academic literature that supports Rawlsian (1958) distributive social justices as brought to light by dedicated scholars such as Nieuwenhuis (2010) and Brighouse (2002) will be elicited.

Other academic writers with insightful contributory erudition on *school education and social justice* including but not exhaustive to Keddie (2012), North (2006), Soto (2014), Jean-Marie, Normore and Brooks (2009), Giroux (1989) will be cited. Blackmore's (2010) insights on intersectionality and the disruption of common notions on leadership is of paramount importance for this study considering that my transformative leader is a foreign woman within a patriarchal Chinese society. Some of those insights are adduced in examples such as how throughout her career as a transformative leader in East Asia and other parts of the world, the interviewee (an Australian) was able to form de-territorialized citizenships and advocated for collective national identities in the international schools in different countries. It was also important for her as a female transformative leader, to first recognize and acknowledge differences, so that she was able to address inequities and inequalities. Intersectionality helps leaders to reflect on a myriad of intersecting identities and power structures. Khalifa, Gooden and Davis (2016) work on Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) will also be drawn upon. This is done primarily to unpack the interviewee's comments about the Fijian culture when she related ONE most memorable intervention that she has implemented as a transformative leader in her illustrious career. From what I have garnered, I was enthralled by how my transformative leader became culturally responsive and supported the teachers in her efforts

to promote a welcoming, inclusive and accepting climate for minority Fijian teachers and students (Khalifa et.al 2016).

Literature on Freire's (1970) dialogical tenets as discussed in Miller, Brown and Hopson (2011) features prominently in this literature review. There are two reasons that informed the choice of this source. First, Freirean (1970) elements of love hope, faith, humility, critical thinking and solidarity are explicitly explained (Miller et.al 2011). The other reason is that the context of urban leadership inferred in this scholarly source, fits perfectly with the idea of sampling a principal that leads a private school in an urban area for an interview.

Literature on Shields' (2010) work wherein an in-depth description of what the *transformative leadership* entails provides a stark distinction between *transformative* and *transformational/transactional* leadership. This is strategically done in order to sway the interview to lean more towards investigating the leader's role on transformative leadership as opposed to neither *transformational* nor *transactional* leadership. This forms the crux of what the interview was intended to explore and one needed to be careful not to side-track from that.

➤ *Social Justice in Education*

Social justice covers a wide range of aspects including, but not exhaustive to elements such as equity, equality, equal opportunities, poverty and respect for diversity (Furman, 2012). Sherpa (2021) identifies three aspects of social justice, namely; distributive, cultural and associational. For this study, the expedience of Rawlsian notion of distributive social justice will be brought to light. Rawls (1958, p 163) avers that the "conception of social justice" is to be regarded as providing "... in the first instance a standard whereby the distributive aspects of the basic structure of society are to be assessed." Rawls (1958, p173) further expounds that this standard should form the basis for "assigning rights and duties and defining the appropriate division of social advantage".

Rawls (1958) also puts forward a convincing case that social justice provides a moral ground for modern democracy to be fully expressed. It governs how people conduct themselves in relation to others, particularly in educational set-ups like schools. However, Nieuwenhuis (2010) raises a

contention that although authors like Rawls (1958) provides a specific lens through which social justice in education can be viewed, they construct an ideal that can neither be legislated nor achieved by enforcing international conventions and declarations. Nieuwenhuis (2010) further posits that social justice is rooted in peoples' minds and hearts; therefore it has to be lived. Soto (2014) is in concurrence with Nieuwenhuis (2010) by asserting that projects that are made with hearty intentions, are likely to forge social justice ahead and obviate oppression. I concur with this view and argue that although the transformative leader I have sought happens to lead a private school, she has been an advocate of social justice even within that space because those values and principles of societal reform are rooted in her mind and heart.

In affirming Rawls's (1958) distributive notion of social justice, Brighouse (2002) suggests two principles that can guide social justice in education, namely; fair equality of opportunity and equality of condition. Fair equality of opportunity centers around equal treatment of people and ensuring equal rights. Equality of condition gives marginalized equitable results by recognizing previous atrocities and structural barriers embedded in the social, economic and political systems that perpetuate those systemic discriminations. In advancing the same reasoning asserted by Rawls (1958), Brighouse (2002) postulates that personal autonomy and educational equality is required in order to achieve social justice in education. Personal autonomy means that each child should have an opportunity to be autonomous and be able to reflect on him/herself. Teachers in schools are duty-bound to facilitate that autonomy.

Brighouse's (2002) stance on autonomy resonates with Freire's (1970) argument that people need to develop critical conscientization and engage educative praxes that encapsulate theory, action and reflection as a means to attaining social change and justice. Breuning (2016), further expounds that Freire's (1970) reference to praxes that involve theory, action and reflection as activism implies that action cannot just be considered to be a mundane activity, but a purposeful social justice-cognate activity that is relevant to a changing society. Teachers and educational leaders can implement change and lead social justice if they are provided with the autonomy to develop as critical educational pedagogists. They can also succeed in doing that if they are given opportunities to

participate in social activities that promote cultural representations of broader communities (Giroux, 1998).

➤ *Freirean Dialogical Tenets*

Miller et.al (2011) explore Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy to provide answers as to how educational leaders can grapple with challenges in urban schools. In doing so, they suggest an urban educational leadership style that is driven by Freirean dialogical tenets of love, faith, humility, hope, critical thinking and solidarity. Miller et.al (2011) further point out to Freire's (1970, p.163) statement where he is quoted verbatim saying "the people must find themselves in the emerging leaders, and the latter must find themselves in the people". In explaining this quotation, Miller et.al (2011) argue that Freire illuminates his belief in the expediency of dialogue and leader's solidarity with the people. Solidarity with the people, according to Miller et.al (2011) makes leaders to refrain from always giving instructions to the followers, but rather working towards cultural synthesis. Miller et.al (2011, p. 1086) describe each of the five Freirean (1970) dialogical tenets as follows:

- *Humility*: Open-mindedness fits the description of a leader who embraces humility. Such leaders, do not have false dictums that they know it all or have solutions for all the challenges. Hence, they regularly seek for advices through dialogue with their followers
- *Faith*: Leaders who have confidence and believe that their followers will succeed or deliver are much more likely to succeed than those who lack confidence in their people
- *Hope*: Leaders who are hopeful that there are opportunities out there to be explored and attained by everyone often reach their goals and objectives.
- *Critical Thinking*: Allow leaders to evaluate the decisions they make with their teams and weigh how those decisions impact on the results.
- *Solidarity*: Leaders who work collaboratively for a common course and towards the same goals with their followers reap more benefits from those interconnections than those who opt to work individually.

➤ *Attributes of Transformative Leadership that Contrast it from Transformational/Transactional Leadership*

Shields (2010) provides the differences between transformative and transformational leaders in order to guide

educational leaders whose approach to leadership is broad in terms of including both the academics in a school and the social changes in communities. According to Shields (2010, p2), transformative leadership, in contrast with transactional or transformational leadership takes into cognizance Freire (1989, p37) posit “that education is not the ultimate lever for social transformation, but without transformation it cannot occur”. Shield (2010) further expounds that transformative leaders criticize inequitable practices and offer promise of achievement for individuals in conjunction with others. Transformative leadership calls for educational leaders to work for equity in diverse contexts. Some other salient attributes that differentiate transformative leaders from transactional and transformational leadership as averred by Shields (2010) are that transactional leadership is more bureaucratic as it operates on key values of honesty, responsibility and honouring of commitments. Transformational leadership puts more emphasis on school effectiveness and reforms and improvements.

➤ *Research Processes and Procedures*

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001, p.74), research processes and procedure involve a blueprint of how the study will be conducted. These processes and procedures often link the aims alluded to in the abstract with the purpose of the study, method of data collection and resources available. Cohen and Manion (1989) affirm that and rightly point out that there are three prerequisites to the design of the research, namely; purpose of the study, methods of collecting data and the availability of the resources.

➤ *Purpose of the Study*

To garner information as to what is ONE challenge that required the transformative leadership’s ideologies and intervention. It was to restore the dignity and respect of teachers and students coming from low-socio economic class of the Fijian community.

➤ *Methods of Collecting Data and Analysis*

Emic face-to-face to semi- structured interview with the transformative leader was conducted to find out how she has managed to effect the social changes in spite of the popular view that private schools are only interested in profit and not on matters of social justice. The list of possible questions for the interview were emailed to the respondent well before the

interview in order for her familiarize herself with the questions. Ethnographic observation of the respondent’s leadership style and the critical analysis of the positive culture within school were made. Gabrielian, Yang and Spice (2008) aver that observations entail the how one selects, watches and records information, behaviours and artefacts in the social setting chosen for the study. In this study the social setting is the school – NBHIS and the information was recorded through the interview whilst also taking some time to observe the behaviours of the people in the school. The narrative style in the video accompanying this narrative case study affirms the veracity of the points raised in the essay. The APA referencing style was used to acknowledge evidence-based literature cited in both the essay and the concomitant video. Permission was sought to use both the name of the respondent and the school where the study was conducted. A consent form and ethical clearance forms were signed prior the interview was conducted.

➤ *Validity and Reliability of the Ethnographic Observation Study*

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), validity and reliability of observation-based research can be determined if answers to the following questions are provided:

- How can the results of one study be applicable to the other scenario that may be closely related to the first one?
- How can genuineness of the results from the study be tested?

Bias is always a challenge when an observation study is done. The observer’s judgment may be clouded by their close proximity or involvement to the study. This is likely to affect the genuineness of the results of such study. To address the questions delineated above, I will perform rigorous internal validity and reliability checks. For example, I will allow someone from outside to peer-review my observation and give me feedback.

➤ *Challenges Encountered*

One major challenge was to stay alert to what I needed to investigate and avoid deviance. In the study like this where one extracts answers from a respondent through the interviews, there is always the danger of deviation from the aims of the investigation, for example I had to make it clear from the onset that the interview was about *transformative leadership* and

not transformational/transactional leadership. I also needed to make it clear that we are looking for just ONE intervention she implemented and not numerous interventions. It was an onerous challenge to direct my transformative leader to focus more on her role for influencing programmes that are geared towards community upliftment and service as opposed to ONLY school improvements during the interview.

Another challenge was the hierarchical leadership conceptions of the Chinese culture. To be granted permission to conduct an interview with their employee and to do ethnographic observation in a private school, I had to knock on many doors and attend many meetings with the board of directors to present my case. I used the heuristic questions in my abstract to explain to the board about what the study would entail, why I was doing the study, how I intend to conduct the study, what is the hypothesis that would inform and what is the significance of those findings. The last challenge was to access archived information of the school because it is in the Chinese culture to be stealth with private information. I resorted to using publicly available online documents, photos and logos to garner useful information about the school's background after the board gave me permission.

➤ *Availability of Resources*

Photographs and live video coverage of the school context/premises and the logos/emblems as well as year books were portrayed in the narrative video. The permission was duly granted for those resources to be used on conditions that the ethical considerations were adhered to. One ethical consideration to adduce was that I had to present my findings to the board prior I submitted this work for peer review.

➤ *Biographical Details of the Transformative Leader*

The female leader with rare qualities of balancing the promotion of academic excellence with community service thus serving as an agent of social justice was identified. She holds a master's degree in curriculum studies from Michigan State University. In international schools Cheryl Keegan's journey began in 1983 in Port Moresby International School, in Papua New Guinea, where she taught literature and became head of one of the four houses of the school population. Her interest has always been service and so in Hong Kong International School from 1986-90 she taught literature and

headed the school's Service Committee. In Switzerland, she taught at the university and also did some community service.

In Japan 1994-96, she was College Counsellor and literature teacher and Language A also at Lincoln, in Argentina, 1998-2001. Moving to Prem in Thailand was a change as she ran the girls boarding school and was CAS coordinator, College Counsellor and language A teacher in the start-up school. From 2005-07 in Suva Fiji, she was the head of English, Creativity Action Service (CAS) coordinator and College Counsellor. At the United World College of South East Asia (UWCSEA) from 2007-2015 she was a CAS advisor and Language A teacher. Her leadership began outside of school in 2004 working with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) as examiner. In 2010 I trained as a workshop leader and in 2013, she became a consultant, and evaluator and an authorizer of new schools. Travelling over Asia in this capacity she learned about styles of leadership in international schools of all kinds. In 2015, she became an IB lead educator training others to evaluate schools and to be consultants. It is this platform which prompted NBHIS to offer her the role of principal. She then moved to Ningbo Huamao International School BHIS in 2015 where is currently the principal. She exudes with passion as she relates how she chose to accept the roles as leader a because she wanted to grow the groups of which she was in charge. She saw chances to do good and to streamline or improve those groups. she developed an inclusive leadership style because she was a teacher in a school system for so long and saw what could be done under many different heads. She says that but it was really her IB training in consultation and collaboration which determined her belief in allowing her co-workers to have agency and in encouraging them to consult with their staff to get the best results for positive growth.

➤ *Background Information of the School*

Ningbo Huamao International School (NBHIS) is the first and only IB school in Ningbo city, Yinzhou district, Zhejiang province South Eastern coastline of China. The school started in 2006 as Huamao Foreign Language School. The majority of students in NBHIS are mainly Chinese and the teaching staff from many countries globally. NBHIS offers three IB programmes namely; Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP). The school is also the member of World

Association of Schools and Colleges and Round square. The school is governed as a joint venture by Huamao Educational Group. The principal acts as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and reports to the chairman of the board of directors. English is the predominant language of instruction and Chinese language and culture are well preserved in NBHIS.

➤ Narrative Sketch

One key intervention that the transformative leader spoke passionately about in the video was at the Fijian international school. The evidence provided was based on the recollection of the interviewee there. I did not have access to videos and images to support what she has done there because she has since moved. Transformative change she implemented there is not wholly different from the great community activities she is currently leading now in Ningbo. The images and videos portrayed in the narrative video illustrate similar interventions that she continues to lead in her endeavours to change the face of private international school from the institutions that are deemed by society as only focused on profiteering to the ones that promote/address social justice.

III. CONCLUSION

This paper has been successful in uncovering the talents and expertise of a female transformative leader by means of an interview and ethnographic observations. Despite the challenges of patriarchy and the demands of promoting academical excellence in a highly competitive and market-oriented private schooling sector, she still finds ways to balance her job to lead and inspire greatness with advocacy for social justice. I consider her to be a paragon of a paradigm shift that is needed for all other educational institutions, including international private schools to start prioritizing social justice over profit.

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APPENDIX A

➤ *Transcript of the Interview*

➤ *The Interviewer's Name is Abbreviated SC and the Interviewee's Name CK.*

- SC: I really appreciate the time you took out of your busy schedule to do this interview on transformative leadership. I am glad that you are giving me this opportunity. Having spent some time being under your leadership here at this institution (Ningbo Huamao International School), I have observed and admired how you have been able to not only inspire, but to foster a multicultural group of teaching and non-teaching staff as well as students to have freedoms to reflect on their communities and become agents of change. This perfectly fits the description of a transformative leaders and I have identified you as one.

- CK: My pleasure

➤ *CK: So, would you like me to Work through your Questions?*

- SC: No, before you do that. Let me first give you some guidelines. Our interview basically centres around Paulo Freire's dialogical tenets that I will explain in more finer details as the interview continues, but throughout the interview, I would also like to know more about how you utilize your transformative leadership skills to juggle between your academic improvement mandate here at a private school with what is happening in the larger Ningbo community. More about social interventions. So, in a nutshell we will also touch base on your insights about social justice.

➤ *SC: Now, who is Cheryl Keegan and can you tell me more about yourself?*

- CK: Yes, I am. I am a person who has worked in education for quite a long time in many different international schools, starting in 1983, in Port Moresby, in Papua New Guinea. I began my work as a literature teacher and in 1986 to 90 was in Hong Kong International School, again as a literature teacher. But also, then I ran a very large service committee for the whole school. I've always been interested in service and how it can fit into school, so I was really pleased with that job. I was I was also looking in service committee in Switzerland at the UN school, the International School of Geneva. But I also taught at a university, the American University in Switzerland up in Lausanne. I wanted to try university as well as high school, so I did both there. Later, 1994 to 96, I was in Japan again teaching literature. College counselling and counselling generally in Argentina 1998 to 2001. I was back to literature. That was just a brief one. And then really, I suppose my term in leadership began in Thailand. In Thailand we started a new school, which is now a very big school in in Chiang Mai. I began because we all started with very small numbers. We were all doing lots of jobs. So, I was CAS co-ordinator, college counsellor, I ran a girl boarding school, I was teaching literature.

➤ *SC: Awesome! You were pretty destined to be a transformative leader, right?*

- CK: It was pretty busy running school activities, all sorts of things. In 2005 to 2007, we went to Fiji. My husband was head of school and I was head of English and class coordinator and college counsellor there. And finally, he moved to work for the IB. We moved to Singapore at 2007 to 2015 and I went to United World College and was cast there as well as literature. But in the meantime, from 2004 I began working for the RBA. I was an examiner for many years and a workshop leader for teachers, teaching teachers. Then eventually I became a consultant for new schools and I was allowed to evaluate schools and authorise schools all over the Asia Pacific. That's really how I moved into this job when the school approached me for this job. I said, Well, my credentials for being a head of school are really the job training and practice. So, after I came here, I became a lead educator

for the RBA, which means training, trainings and just monitoring evaluation reports and authorization reports, helping the IB to make sure that when they introduce a new school or when they evaluate a present school, that it's done well.

➤ *SC: Wow! RBA? I reckon it is the Reserve Bank of Australia, the bank in your native country – Australia, I know that the bank is actively involved in the development of public education, right? Your husband Mr. Stephen Keagan. What role did he play in shaping the kind of transformative leader that you are?*

- CK: I think probably because he's a mathematician and I am involved in literature English. So, when we were teaching in high school together, we were always, you know, in those important departments. And so, we. Compared our practice. I think when things changed, when he became head of school in Fiji and you know, he took on more leadership roles, he did a masters in leadership before then. But I think the biggest change was when he was the Asia Pacific manager for the EIB. So, he had 360 schools at that time that he was looking after. He visited all of them in the first four years. And I watched as he spoke about the difference in the schools and how their interpretation of the IB happened and what he saw as very valuable and so on. I think that did form some of my opinions, but also, I think my master's in curriculum and teaching from Michigan State, which is a very good university for education, we picked that one because that was that was so I think I think after this study also bonded our ideas, we're definitely in the line of me. Both of us completely believe in the autonomy of the school to learn, to grow and to reflect and to respond to requirements. And for teachers to.

➤ *SC: What is Cheryl Keegan's leadership style?*

- CK: I believe that leaders are just facilitators, so leaders are there in order to help the teachers. That's how it should work. You know, leaders, leaders can organize and can direct in some cases, but really what they're there for is to make sure the systems in the school work so that the teachers are supported and the students are supported and the families are supported and the school feels safe. You know, the systems are there so that people do things the same way year on year, so that there's a culture building.

➤ *SC: Hold on, what do you mean by systems, do you imply maintaining the status quo? Elaborate please...*

- CK: I don't mean by that that nothing changes. But you have to have systems, standard operating procedures, we call them, you have to have those in place before there's organization. Otherwise it's just chaos because it's this that everything changes. So, I think what I like to do is put systems in, but I also like to have those systems reviewed by the teachers and the coordinators to see they're relevant. And if we need to change, then we refine them. So, if systems are relevant, people will use them. If they're useful, people will use them. So that's probably the kind of leader I am. I believe in teachers' autonomy. I believe I can make decisions. I can. I believe they're the best ones to make decisions, but within a framework, not just according to their personal preference

➤ *SC: Terrific! You are that kind of a leader, aren't you?*

- CK: So, that is the kind of leader I am. I believe that the core business of the school happens in the classroom, not in this office. You know, this office is there to protect and to support, but really the work of the school is in the classroom.

➤ *SC: How do you build mutual relationships between this school and the Ningbo community?*

- CK: We're a private school. And that means people choose to come. And that means at some level for us, we're a choice. If they opt for us, then the Chinese principal and myself agree that we need to make sure that they're supportive, that they appreciate the school, that they understand what we're doing, and that they support the school at home. Because for students, if they come

to school and teachers saying one thing and they're hearing something else at home, they get confused and they don't feel safe. So that's the most important thing. How do you get community support? You make sure that people are talking to the families. So, the homeroom teachers particularly and the other teachers need to communicate all the time with the with the community as much as they can. Before COVID, we had lots of occasions in the year when we bring in the community, we ran huge carnivals where they came for open days for parent teacher conferences. They came for special weeks. You know, we had information sessions. Since COVID, most of that has been removed. And so, we haven't seen as much of our families as we would like. Similarly, before COVID in the primary school, the parents could drop the children off right to the classroom, say hi to the teacher and go. Now, I don't think we'll ever have that again. I think that's changed. But if we don't have it, we have to find other ways to talk to them. The last way we should link with the community is service. We should be able to look around and see what's needed. It's difficult in Asia because in Asia typically people don't like to say they need anything because it looks like they're failing. But if you get the right connections, you can still go out and do some good work. You know, as we have mainly before COVID, I'm afraid, but it will come again.

➤ *SC: Thank you. Can you describe for me the role of love, humility, faith, hope, critical thinking and solidarity in contributing towards successful transformative leadership?*

- CK: Humility is necessary everywhere. If you don't have humility, you never listen to people, and it's hard to care about them. A leader is at the top of a pyramid, but everyone standing on someone else's shoulders. So even the lowest people on the rung, maybe the staff, you know, the office staff, etc., then the teachers rely on them and then the coordinators rely on the teachers and then the principals rely on everybody. So, without that group, nothing can happen. So, you have to understand that and be humble and realize that your position depends on so many other people. Yes, you depend on yourself, but really that's a small part of it. It's a group mentality.

➤ *CK: And faith?*

- SC: Sure!
- CK: Talking about faith, a faith, non-religious faith. But just faith is something that makes a leader. If people have faith in their leaders, it means they trust them. If the leaders have faith in their staff, it means they trust them. And the second one is most important, because if you don't believe people are good and are doing a good job.
- SC: Elaborate more on hope, please
- CK: Hope is stronger in the sense that hope means real belief in improvement and real belief that things will get better in bad times. And so, it's challenged all the time. When difficult times come, hope is challenged. And so, the leaders are the ones that need to say to people, we can fix this or improve this, or let's look for solutions. You can't just say, Oh, this is terrible, you know, because then without hope, other people will say, oh! my God, leaders think it's terrible. It must be terrible. So, hope is something that's catching you. It's it goes along with faith, but it's a little bit different. It's maybe more tangible. You know, in a in a classroom situation, hope is the belief of the kids when they sit down to do an assignment that they can do it. They know what the teacher is going to be grading on. They know the criteria. They understand it's a safe place and they try their best. You know, that's that is tangible hope. Same with leaders. We have to hope that in all of our K-12 schools at this very moment, that there are teachers in classrooms doing their job. There are communicators. There are coordinators looking, monitoring, helping. We have to hope that that's our normal thing. And you build it, you know, if you don't have it, I think you have you're cynical and I think you think it's just for money and it doesn't work.

- SC: But on that score, there would be other views that say that kind of a laissez faire kind of leadership style where you just let things be.
- CK: It doesn't mean that it means those systems I talked about are in place and that through professional development, you support teacher's growth so that they understand more about their job. But that means they take more responsibility and that builds hope. You know, so it's not laissez faire

➤ *SC: Critical Thinking?*

- CK: critical thinking for a leader. You have to accept different viewpoints. You have to be open. Different interpretations. And then you have to think about them and sort them and be aware of them and how they fit into the whole pattern. And it goes right down through the school. If everything is on surface level and it's black or white, right or wrong, it will remain on surface level. Most of the job of the leader is not black and white. It's somewhere in the grey area. And you're constantly listening, listening and deciding on a form of action. But more and more than that, you're listening, listening. And you're asking your coordinators and your staff what they think because they're close enough to action to do it. But you have to take the ultimate responsibility. So, it's complex.
- SC: Oh yes, you cannot finish this interview by not talking about COVID-19 and its negative impact on education. Especially with regards to teachers. I just finished reading an article written by one of my lecturers which talks about teachers being transformative intellectuals, and I know that you are attracting teachers from all over the world and you are recruiting teachers from all over the world. And I know that last time I was speaking to one teacher and she was saying to me, Oh, you know, the way Ms. Cheryl is so convincing when she conducts those interviews, you really find yourself taking up your bags and coming and come to hire. So how do you take care of your teachers? Emotional and psychological effect in the midst of this COVID pandemic?
- CK: It's really hard to do in our context in China. Particularly, I think in a way. I mean, in other countries there was more death and there was more chaos about it, and that is its own problem. We didn't have so much of that and Ningbo particularly has been not badly hit. But for us, the length of the restrictions, we haven't had long lockdowns, but the brief lockdowns, but the restriction on travel and movement around our city, outside our city, outside the country, that's been really hard on foreigners and Chinese alike, because a lot of our teachers are not from Ningbo. And so, they can't, they haven't been able to visit family in the rest of China or have family come visit them. Same for foreigners. So, that's a distress for people because they want to have that touch with family and loved ones. We try our best to make sure that people are busy, make sure that we offer some different things to distract people. We've offered, you know, some sports and some relaxation and things, a lot of which we haven't been able to make happen because of restrictions of numbers and so on. Partly then what I've done is through the coordinators, we've reminded them about how people are feeling and encouraged them to talk to the staff about it and encourage them to say to let people talk about how they're feeling and to introduce where they can some breaks, a little bit of fun, a little bit of activity that that reminds people, oh, there's a world out there. You know, it's not a huge plan. But absolutely that the other thing I've done is talk to staff about how the kids are feeling. You know, they need to put themselves in their kids' perspective and that helps them understand behaviour and to watch for warning signs because one of the ways you take care of staff is you give them a job and if their job is to help keep their students mentally healthy, it helps them indirectly. So, you know, again, not a perfect plan, but as good as we can do, I think.
- SC: Hmm, I think that is a mouthful.

- SC: *As a principal and a transformative leader, what are the values and beliefs you refer to when leading your staff? And how do you deal with divergent/contrasting views?*
- CK: That's one thing. And to go over what I said before, you need to believe in yourself. You need to give them clear guidelines that they can feel safe in. But then as they begin to grow, you need to let them grow and listen to them and let them try out their ideas and then reflect with them about it. And in that way, they will believe that it's safe to have ideas and to and to put things into practice, because sometimes in all kinds of schools, people go in with the idea. Or if I say too much, maybe I'll get into trouble. Or maybe they'll think that I'm criticizing or whatever. But it's not true, you know. So, I would say I would say all the questions that you've asked are the ones that transformative leaders need to think about and to practice.
 - SC: Great! Thank you so much.

APPENDIX B

➤ *Narrative Video's Script*

- *(Brief Background of the Respondent)*

Interviewer/Narrator: This narrative video on transformative leadership mainly revolves around literature that presents an alternative view from popular masculine or mainstream view on leadership to that of a critical view. Evidence based literature is meticulously selected from dedicated scholars about educational leadership discourse. My identified transformative leader, C.K., is not only a doyen of IB curriculum, she's a woman with rare qualities and talents of having been able to balance her employers' high expectations of the promotion of academic excellence with service to the community, thus deserving a title to be called an Agent of Social Justice. She holds a master's degree in curriculum studies from Michigan State University. In international schools, C.K.'s journey began in 1983 in Port Moresby International School. In Papua New Guinea, where she taught literature and became head of one of the four houses of the school population. Her interest has always been that of service and so in Hong Kong International School, from 1986 to 1990, she taught literature and headed the school's community service committee. In Switzerland, she taught at the university and also did some community service work. From the year 2005 to 2007 in Suva, Fiji, she was the head of English as well as Creativity Action Service (CAS) Coordinator and college counselor. And that's where she began her service to the community. As you shall hear later when she speaks more passionately about the intervention that she did in that part of the world. Traveling over Asia, in this capacity, she learned about styles of leadership in international schools of all kinds. In the year 2015, she became an IB educators' training officer, training others to evaluate schools and to be consulted. It is in this platform where she cut her teeth as a leader that prompted the present employer NBHIS to offer her the role of principal. She then moved to NBHIS in 2015, where she still serving as a principal. She exudes with passion as she relates how she accepted the offer because she wanted to change the face of private international schools from that of focusing only on profit making to that of promoting social justice.

- *(Musical interlude as the slides flash for the viewers to read the literature review)*

Interviewer/Narrator Good afternoon, Ms. Cheryl. I really appreciate the time that you took out of your busy schedule to do this interview. I have identified you as a transformative leader. Let me first give you some guidelines as to how the interview is going to unfold. Our interview is basically centering around Freirean dialogical tenets that I will explain in more finer details as the interview unfolds. And I would also like to know more about how you utilize your transformative leadership skills to juggle between your academic improvement mandate here at the private school with what is happening in the community, more about social interventions. So, in a nutshell, we will touch base on your insights about social justice. So, tell me, what are the attributes of a transformative leader?

Interviewee/Respondent: A leader must like and trust their staff. If they don't, they can't go anywhere. Right. So, you genuinely have to believe that people are good. And then if they prove themselves disappointing, that's another thing. But. But you need to start there.

Interviewer/Narrator: What are your views on the discourse that says schools need to address and promote the interests of those that have been marginalized, for example, by race, socio-economic statuses, sexual orientation and women in particular?

Interviewee/Respondent: In education, women are pretty equal. I mean, all my life I've been paid equally and treated equally. So, to be honest, I never think about male/female. I just think about the best person for the job if it needed a balance, right? If there were a bunch of men in one position and I could employ a woman or a man, and they were the same level, then I would employ the woman because it's balance. But same with the man.

- *Interviewer/Narrator: What is ONE key intervention that you have implemented as a transformative leader?*

Interviewee/Respondent: I think it would be at this school in Fiji. At this school in Fiji, I went in as head of English and. As a college counselor. It was a little international school and a lot of local kids, you know, government employees' and ambassadors', kids and so on. When I went in, the previous head of school had really not valued the Fijian teachers. Students and teachers. So, the Fijian teachers felt that they were second class citizens but in fact they weren't. This is not respectful. You know, and you start with respect and. On this respect that it's shameful for them, you know, so another thing was we because we did a lot of work out in the community where it's a poor community, we had to make sure that the Fijian kids said to the foreign kids, when you go into this community, this is what you can do, this is what you can do, this is who you talk to, this is who we are. and so, when we left there, with the feeling that we respected the people who were there and we lifted them up, you know, and it was a small thing, like little bits here and there. But I think it gave me the best feeling. I felt I was so proud.

Interviewer/Narrator: What is the role of love, humility, faith, hope, critical thinking and solidarity in contributing towards successful, transformative leadership?

Interviewee/Respondent: Humility is necessary everywhere. If you don't have humility, you never listen to people, and it's hard to care about them. A leader is at the top of a pyramid, but everyone's standing on someone else's shoulders. So. So you have to understand that and be humble and realize that your position depends on so many other people. Yes, you depend on yourself, but really that's a small part of it. It's a group mentality.

- Interviewer/Narrator: And what about that critical thinking?
- Interviewer/Narrator: And faith, trust and solidarity?

Interviewee/Respondent: You're talking about faith, non-religious faith, which is faith, is something that makes a leader. If people have faith in their leaders, it means they trust them. If the leaders have faith in their staff, it means they trust them. And the second one is most important, because if you don't believe people are good and are doing a good job and you want to improve it. I think you need to have faith in your people.

- *Interviewer/Narrator: Elaborate on hope please.*

Interviewee/Respondent: Hope is a little bit different. Hope is stronger in the sense that hope means real belief in improvement and real belief that things will get better in bad times. So, it's challenged all the time when difficult times come, hope is challenged. And so, the leaders are the ones that need to say to people, we can fix this or improve this, or let's look for solutions. You can't just say, Oh, this is terrible, you know, because then without hope, other people will say, oh my God, leaders think it's terrible. It must be terrible.



SECTION A: Declaration to the

Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee
NHREC Reference Number REC-110613-036

RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE (APPLICATION)

I, *Mabini Shuping* (the researcher's name and student / staff number) hereby confirm that:

1. The information provided in this ethics clearance application to undertake research with human participants is accurate to the best of my knowledge;
2. I understand the principles of conducting ethical research;
3. I will endeavour to conduct all the research in an ethical manner as prescribed by Faculty and University rules;
4. I will inform the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee (REC) of any substantive changes to the project that might impact on the ethical clearance of the project; and
5. This project has not been submitted to another REC or Review Board for review.

Signature (click or tap above)

2022/06/05

Date

Please select one:

- ☒ This *student research project (up to Master's level)* has been approved and ethically screened by the relevant Department or Centre of the Faculty of Education for submission to the REC.
- ☐ This *student research project (PhD)* has been approved and ethically screened by the relevant Doctoral Committee for submission to the REC.
- ☐ This *staff research project* has been approved and ethically screened by the relevant Department or Centre of the Faculty of Education for submission to the REC.
- ☐ This *student group research project* has been approved and ethically screened by the relevant Department or Centre of the Faculty of Education for submission to the REC. This application covers the broad ethical issues pertaining to the group project.
- ☐ This *research project* is a Funda Ujabule Practice School project for which the involvement of minors has been pre-approved.
- ☐ This *external research project proposal* and associated ethics application have both been submitted to the Faculty of Education REC for approval.

N/A

Signature (Supervisor / Staff Researcher / External Researcher)

2022/06/05

Date



PUBLISHED BY

Informed Consent/Assent Form*Project Title:**Investigator:**Date:*

I hereby:

1. Agree to be involved in the above research project as a participant.
2. Agree to be involved in the above research project as an observer to protect the rights of:
 - a. Children younger than 14 years of age;
 - b. Children younger than 18 years of age that might be vulnerable; and/or
 - c. Children younger than 18 years of age that are part of a child-headed family.
3. Agree that my child, _____ may participate in the above research project.
4. Agree that my staff may be involved in the above research project as participants.

I have read the research information sheet pertaining to this research project and understand the nature of the research and my role in it. In addition, I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

Please allow me to review the report prior to publication.

Name:

CHERYL KEEGAN

Phone or Cell
number:

+86 13819839053

e-mail address:

keegans@ozemail.com.au

Signature:

If applicable:

- ☐ I consent/assent to audio recording of my/the participant's contributions.
- ☐ I consent/assent to video recording of my/the participant's contributions.

Signature:

* Vulnerable children refer to individuals at risk of exposure to harm (physical, mental, emotional and/or spiritual).

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