Community Engagement: Missing Link in Peace and Conflict Studies

A thesis
by
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Abstract

Violent conflicts, resistance movements, and the humanitarian crises that are taking place across the globe reflect a need for peace and conflict studies to teach students about how to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, the purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies’ challenges in providing students critically reflective, experiential, and transformational learning opportunities for community engagement-based service-learning to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. As such the research questions were structured to gain insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning, critical theories, and experiential and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Through phenomenological interviews, this study explored the experiences of five peace and conflict studies educators. The study’s five superordinate and nineteen subordinate themes revealed that the current education is inadequately using community engagement-based service-learning to provide students critically reflective, experiential and transformative education to help them learn about how to help communities in addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This is probably the only study based on the experiences of peace and conflict studies educators and there is a dearth of literature regarding the use of community engagement for providing students experiential and transformative learning that is based on Critical Race theory. The study includes implications and recommendations that are associated with the paradigm shift that the education in peace and conflict studies needs to undertake.
Keywords: community engagement, conflict studies, critical race theory, experiential learning, institutionalized oppression, peace studies, service-learning, social injustice, transformative learning.
Acknowledgements

I have come to realize that my educational journey leading to this dissertation was made possible only through the understanding, and unconditional support of numerous individuals in every part of my life. I have also come to recognize that throughout this educational journey, my evolution was facilitated by the influence that the faculty and co-students have had on me. I also know that I was fortunate to have co-workers who pleasantly took it upon themselves to relieve me of a significant share of my work responsibilities.

If Miriam, my daughter, had not questioned why I was not completing my master’s degree in Dynamics of Organization at the University of Pennsylvania, it is likely that I would not have enrolled into my doctorate programs. I was fortunate to have the positive influence of the faculty in the Dynamics of Organization program, especially Professor Andrew Lamas, who convinced me that education is not about a diploma; it is about becoming aware of who you are and thinking about your role in helping others. That is how I came to know that in order to find who am, I needed to commit to formal and informal learning for the remainder of my life.

As a result, I enrolled into and completed my doctoral program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University. Faculty at Nova had a very positive influence on my thinking about the purpose of education as it relates conflict and peace which in turn enhanced my desire to pursue this doctorate degree in education. I gratefully note that Dr. Judith McKay’s social justice round table discussions greatly increased my passion to study how social orders and societal power structures perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression. As such, my doctorate in conflict analysis and resolution created a perfect setting for me to pursue this doctorate program in education. So, when many of my friends thought that I was crazy and asked me why at the age of 71, I wanted to enroll into another doctoral program,
Shanti, my son wisely told me, "Dad, listen to your life and pursue your dreams." I am grateful to Shanti’s wise counsel and support, without which I may not have joined the EdD program.

Reflecting on my learning journey at Northeastern University, I can say that I was fortunate to have the faculty who mentored me to further my understanding of social injustice and institutionalized oppression that is deeply embedded in our social order and societal structures. I want to thank the supportive faculty, especially Dr. William Ewell, Dr. Claire Jackson, Dr. Elizabeth Mahler, Dr. Karen Reiss Medwed, Dr. Monica Savoy, Dr. Corliss Thompson, Dr. Christopher Unger Dr. Carrol Young. Every one of them helped me refine my research topic, problem of practice, and research questions. Because of their guidance, I was ready to develop my dissertation thesis proposal and the dissertation. I also want to thank Mr. Neil Hourihan who was always there to guide me in making progress in my educational journey. I also want to acknowledge that without Ms. Kate Skophammer, IRB Coordinator’s, guidance I would have encountered challenges in getting the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of my research protocol.

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Importantly, I acknowledge Ruth, my wife, who read and edited all my papers and this dissertation. Ruth's comments and our discussions about how my papers and dissertation relate to the challenges faced by the oppressed gave me a more holistic view of what I was learning. I really think that Ruth was my partner in my educational journey, which has transformed our relationship. I genuinely thank her for the support she has given me over the last 48 years and for living with the challenges associated with my transformational journey.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all practicing peacebuilders and educators, especially to the participating educators, who have wisdom, passion, energy, and have dedicated their lives to cherishing our diversity, focusing on the commonality of what is good within each of us and on making our planet a peaceful home for everyone. Though many are invisible, I view them as real peacemakers. I admire their commitment to motivate students in developing an understanding that the real purpose of education is to promote the common good and their dedication to teach students about immersing in communities for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. I sense that they are expected to promote the common good largely on their own and without any support from their institutions. I also believe that because of their view of education as a source of employment, students may not be interested in learning about how to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. So, these educators are trying to fulfill a task of raising the societal conscience in a system in which students may be seeking a quick way to get diplomas and in which institutions are becoming efficient diploma factories. Therefore, I hope that every one of us will ask what we can do to require that educational institutions demonstrate that they value what educators do and demand that they support educators in their effort to teach students about making this world a peaceful one for everyone. Otherwise, I am afraid that our future generations would live in a world in which social injustice and institutionalized oppression are accepted as an unquestioned reality of life. I hope the readers of this dissertation will reflect on the underappreciated value educators provide to every one of us and do whatever they can to make them feel appreciated by supporting them.
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Community Engagement: The Missing Link in Peace and Conflict Studies

Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

Recent life-changing experiences have reinforced my interest in conducting this research. From January 2012 to May of 2014, I was fortunate to have five grandchildren. With this addition of a new generation in my family, I have become concerned about the world future generations are going to inherit. As such, the arrival of my grandchildren has motivated me to better understand how the educators and students in peace and conflict studies can help communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression and to find ways to preemptively resolve the twenty-first century’s communal conflicts. Ongoing communal conflicts that have been erupting across the globe have resurfaced my childhood memories of the 1947 post-independence conflicts between Hindus and Muslims in India and Pakistan which killed thousands and displaced millions. I still remember my first experience as a young five-year-old boy, the pain and hardship experienced by innocent individuals because of the partition of British India into two countries: Hindu majority India and Muslim majority Pakistan. Since then, I have been curious about the failure of education in helping communities to address issues of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression.

My previous doctoral dissertation (Kulkarni, 2014) explicitly recognized that the conflicts of the 21st century demand a paradigm shift in the current education in peace and conflict studies to education that is founded in the educational philosophies of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Dewey (1916, 1938, 1959), Freire (1970, 1974), Jenlink (2005, 2014), and Senge (2009). Through my education and personal experiences, I have witnessed the inadequacies of education in addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized marginalization of individuals and
large segments of societies. This experience and education-inspired curiosity has given me the passion to undertake this research study.

Consequently, this research reflects my evolution as scholar-practitioner in the specific context of education in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, this research was oriented at the Nexis of theory, research and the praxis based on the Freirean concept. As such, this study was not designed to create new knowledge for its own sake. This research was to leverage innovation and change by using community partnerships to improve the education in peace and conflict studies for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression to preempt communal conflicts. Therefore, this research sought to address the specific context of how educational institutions and educators in peace and conflict studies are using sustained community partnerships for providing students transformative experiential learning. The primary purpose of this research was to discover new ways for facilitating and fostering change in peace and conflict studies to provide the students community engagement-based experiential learning for proactively managing communal conflicts and creating conditions that are conducive for the sustainment of a more equitable and peaceful world in the twenty-first century.

**The Topic: Context of the Research**

Ongoing eruption of violent communal conflicts arising out of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression-based marginalization of large segments of communities is a significant concern for all citizens of the globe. For example, riots arising out of Black communities in Baltimore, MD and Ferguson, MO could be viewed as a result of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression-based marginalization experienced by the African Americans in the U.S. Similarly, the mass killings of innocent individuals in many countries (e.g., England, France, and Netherlands) could be considered as a reaction to marginalization of
Muslims in many countries. Additionally, citizens’ resistance movements (e.g., Arab Spring, Black Lives Matter, and Wall Street Protests) that are taking place in many countries also reflect a communal resistance to institutionalized oppression that is imposed by a dominant minority using the current social order. Similarly, current humanitarian crises (e.g., Syria and Myanmar) also reflect marginalization of a large group of communities by a group in power.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau by 2020, more than half of the nation's children under the age of 18 are expected to be part of the population of minority groups. The minority population is expected to rise to 56 percent of the total population in 2060, as compared with 38 percent in 2014. No one group will have a majority share of the total population and the United States will become a ‘plurality’ nation of racial and ethnic groups (Wazwaz, 2015). This researcher suggests that this demographic change is more likely to increase the social and economic stratification of the American society with a few rich, predominantly White Americans having the dominant power to determine the measures of success the minority groups need to live by. Therefore, the U.S. population will experience challenges of some groups wanting to continue the use of the current social order to perpetuate the dominance of the White countered by the demands of minority groups for a new social order that treats them justly and equitably. Therefore, the changing demographics of the United States are more likely to contribute to an increase in societal fractures, further contributing to social injustice and institutionalized oppression-based communal conflicts.

Lake and Rothchild (1996) argued that when heightened social uncertainty experienced by large segments of societies, a history of conflict, and anxieties over how the future may unfold; societies experience societal fractures, that create a collective “fear of the future, lived through the past”, providing fertile ground for intense communal conflicts (p. 43). The 24/7
media images of the consequences of social injustice and the institutionalized oppression-based communal conflicts vividly demonstrate an urgent need for the global community to find solutions to communal conflicts caused by the divide among the global population. This researcher believes that ongoing communal conflicts are a result of unfulfilled needs of individuals in large segments of societies. These unfulfilled needs as defined by Maslow (1943) include biological and physiological needs (e.g., food, water, and shelter), safety needs (e.g., security, stability, and freedom from fear), belonging needs (e.g., work, family, and community), and esteem needs (e.g., feeling of accomplishments and aspiration). As such, this researcher suggests that ongoing communal conflicts are deeply embedded in the “fear of future” and in the “loss of hope for future” (Lake & Rothchild, 1996, p. 43).

Therefore, the question is what peace and conflict studies educators are going to be committed to be doing to effectively address issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression experienced by large segments of societies across the globe including the U.S. As such, peace and conflict studies educators and peacebuilding practitioners need to pause and question whether they are effectively doing anything to address the issues of institutionalized oppression, social injustice, and inequality experienced by millions of individuals from every segment of the marginalized communities. They need to recognize that these issues, if unaddressed, will provide fertile grounds for further social divide and communal conflicts in communities across the globe.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges in providing students critically reflective, experiential, and transformational learning opportunities for community
engagement-based service-learning to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The knowledge generated by this research is expected to benefit the potential audience identified in this chapter.

**Statement of the Research Problem**

The literature review indicated that peace and conflict studies education has not yet adopted the goal of empowering students to challenge power imbalances and to achieve greater equality, justice, and peace through social transformation (Bettez, 2011; Reilly & Niens, 2014; Savas, 2014). As such, peace and conflict studies programs will need to find ways for providing students a “experiential learning and transformative learning” and “critically reflective” experience for changing their frame of reference to communal intergroup conflicts arising out of social inequity and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, the research problem dealt with the need for developing a better understanding of the challenges of peace and conflict studies educators in providing civic engagement-based education that empowers students with the ability to preemptively address the issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression, the root causes of communal conflicts.

**Rationale and Justification of the Research Problem**

Since the end of the Cold War, more than 80 percent of conflicts are taking place within the borders of many countries (Stiftung, 2010). The rise in communal conflicts across the globe has resulted in loss of thousands of lives and multi-millions of dollars (Brown & Stewart, 2015). Therefore, the need of the future generations to have a more equitable and peaceful world warrants that the education in peace and conflict studies find ways to engage communities for finding their own approaches to address their communal challenges associated with social injustice and social inequality. My previous doctoral dissertation explicitly recognized that the
conflicts of the 21st century demand a paradigm shift in the current education in conflict resolution (Kulkarni, 2014).

The ongoing violent communal conflicts that have been erupting across the globe potentially represent only a hint of the social unrest and institutionalized oppression-based deep societal fractures that are embedded in communities around the world. Therefore, countries across the globe face an urgent and critical challenge of minimizing the institutionalized oppression and marginalization of large segments of communities (e.g., Bell, 1997). This challenge represents a call for higher education in peace and conflict studies to use sustained community engagement and partnership for helping communities to proactively address social injustice and social inequality issues and to preemptively address community issues that are conducive to communal conflicts (Bettez, 2011; Hartley, 2009).

Deficiencies in the Evidence

The literature review indicated that as the current education in peace and conflict studies does not include opportunities for engaged learning through involvement as members of a community, it does not address the influence of social injustice and institutionalized oppression and the lack of opportunities for thousands of poor people (e.g., Woods, Willis, Wright & Knapp, 2013). Additionally, when the current peace and conflict studies education and the practice of peacebuilding focus on the resolution of conflicts, they focus on resolving communal conflicts only within the existing social structures without addressing the issues of social injustice, social inequality, and institutionalized oppression of large segments of societies.

The Audience

By using qualitative approaches and involving peace and conflict studies educators as research participants, this research has provided insights into the challenges associated with
sustained community engagement for preemptively addressing issues raised by the existing social order as it relates to social injustice, and institutionalized oppression. Peace and conflict studies educators, educational institutions, peacebuilding practitioners, NGOs in peacebuilding, community service organizations, governmental and private sector organizations and community, political, and business leaders can use the insights surfaced by this dissertation to define potential approaches to proactively engage the community for addressing the influence of social orders and structures that marginalize large segments of societies.

**Significance of the Research**

As stated before, countries across the globe face an urgent and critical challenge of minimizing the institutionalized oppression and marginalization of large segments of communities. This challenge represents a call for higher education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding to use sustained community engagement and partnership for helping communities to proactively address social injustice and inequality issues and to preemptively address community issues that are conducive to communal conflicts (Hartley, 2009). The objective of this research was to examine how peace and conflict studies educators are using pedagogical practices to engage community members for proactively addressing social justice issues experienced by communities. Therefore, its aim was to find out how education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding can answer Allan Mazur’s question: How can the world become a better place to live for more people (2007, p. 124)? This study was designed to use the answer to this question for discovering insights into the potential strategies for improving higher education in peace and conflict studies to make it more relevant to communal conflicts of the 21st century (Savick & Eckert, 2014).
This research was designed for discovering insights into how educational institutions can use community engagement for providing students abilities that are essential for creating and nurturing a peace culture in their communities (Kester, 2010). The findings of this research may contribute to a better understanding of how, through the required community engagement, educators in peace and conflict studies can help students in understanding and appreciating the broader social and political dimensions of communal conflicts (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993). This research may bring to educational institutions in peace and conflict studies insights into how to help students in developing abilities to help communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and inequality to minimize the potential for communal conflicts and to maximize a community’s resilience for collaboratively working to find sustainable solutions to communal conflicts (Harkavy, 2006).

This study may provide educational institutions in peace and conflict studies new insights into how to offer the students transformational learning opportunities for understanding the influence of social justice and equity issues in the context of the frames of reference that the marginalized members of the community experience (Baumgartner, 2001; Caputo, 2005; Harkavy, 2006). This study may also provide insights into how educational institutions in peace and conflict studies can, through a purposeful utilization of community engagement, expose students to the impact of social injustice and inequality issues on communal conflicts and help them become civically-engaged and socially responsible members of their communities (Barnhardt, 2015).

This research may also shed light on how educational institutions can integrate research, teaching, and community service for becoming community engaged institutions that maximize the benefits of their institution’s intellectual and human capital for the greater good of the
community and that provide the students the opportunity to collaborate and learn from the community for deepening their understanding of complex societal issues (Furco, 2010). This study provides educators new ideas for empowering students to move from classroom learning to the learning gained from the lived experiences of members of the community, and in turn aligning with students’ passion for social justice and heightening their sense of building a more just society in the community of their service learning (Wallace, 2000). This research also offers students opportunities to understand how public policy can potentially be used to perpetuate the institutionalized marginalization of large segments of communities (Caputo, 2005).

**Positionality Statement**

Based on my lived experience and education, I have come to believe that social injustice and institutionalized oppression are likely root causes of the unrest and of societal conflicts that have been continuously erupting and are constantly simmering under the surface. Therefore, I think that I have a moral and ethical responsibility for doing everything I can to advance social justice and equity. As such, I believed that I needed to demonstrate reflective, integrative, holistic, and ecological thinking-based behavior that includes a recognition of the economic conditions and the lack of opportunities which have significant impacts on the lives of the individuals belonging to the marginalized groups (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003). Therefore, my actions were deeply influenced by Bronfenbrenner’s *Ecology of Human Development* (1979).

**Influence of This Researcher’s Positionality**

My qualitative research, a subjective endeavor, demanded that I view my research questions from multiple perspectives and ensure that I was vigilant about managing the influence by my positionality on the conduct of my research (Brisco, 2005; Jupp & Slattery, 2010; Parsons, 2008). As such, I recognized that my positionality has a strong influence on my interest and
desire to help educators in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding to proactively engage communities for preemptively addressing the issues of social injustice and inequality. Therefore, as an ethical scholar-practitioner who is committed to reforming the current systems, I reflexively questioned my positionality-based biases, presuppositions and assumptions. I also managed my interactions with the research participants to minimize the influence of my power and privilege as the researcher. In other words, the conduct of this research was founded in the conscious recognition that my life experience, a critical aspect of how I became who I am and how I see the world, will affect my ability to create new knowledge discovered from the world views of my research participants.

I acknowledged that my research topic, problem of practice, the purpose of the study, and research questions are a direct manifestation of my views regarding my personal responsibility for advancing social justice. Based on my commitment to identifying ways for addressing the problem of practice, the objective of this research was to discover new ways for providing education in peace and conflict studies that uses community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This objective was founded in my multifaceted positionality including growing up in India; being a son of a dominant father who was a successful business man; my undergraduate education in India and graduate education in the U.S.; being a member of the majority in India and being a member of a minority in the U.S.; being an owner of a professional services firm; and being a supporter of organizations committed to advancing peace (Kezar & Lester, 2010; Sinclair, 2010). My life has given me firsthand experience of how power and privilege can be used to perpetuate institutionalized marginalization of segments of societies and how the social order can be used to continue a
system of social injustice and inequality. Therefore, the following paragraphs highlight the critical aspects of my positionality that I proactively considered in conducting my research.

**Influence of Becoming a Grandfather**

Within a short period from 2012 to 2014, I became a grandfather of two granddaughters and three grandsons. Holding my grandchildren after they were born, I became very concerned about the kind of world that they and future generations will inherit. Their arrival motivated me to better understand the global community’s difficulties in finding sustainable solutions to twenty-first-century’s communal conflicts. This continued juxtaposition of new life and all the potential for future generations set against ongoing eruption of violent conflicts has convinced me that current education in peace and conflict studies and peacebuilding practices are ineffective in engaging communities for addressing social injustice and the institutionalized marginalization of large segments of societies.

**Influence of Growing-up in India and My Life in the United States**

In 1947, at the age of five, I was first exposed to some of the human consequences of the conflict caused by the partition of British India into two countries: India with a Hindu majority and Pakistan with a Muslim majority. Ever since, I have been curious about the failure of our global society to successfully achieve sustainable communal peace.

Since 1966, I have been in this country, first as an immigrant and then as a naturalized citizen. Because of my long cross-cultural journey, I have gone through significant personal changes, rethinking and self-questioning of my evolving cultural frame of being from a non-English speaking Hindu family, an Indian and now, as a non-religious American (Brisco, 2005; Jupp & Slattery, 2010). The dimensions of my positionality include changes in my demographic position from being a Hindu in an Indian society to be an immigrant in the United States, a
country controlled predominantly by older white American males (Brisco, 2005; Takacs, 2002). I believe that this change in demographic positionality has most likely also resulted in my ideological positioning caused by the change of my being a member of the majority to a minority social class (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008; Brisco, 2005; Sinclair, 2010). Therefore, my positionality provided a very personal and challenging framework (with embedded bias founded in my evolving cultural lens) for approaching understanding of the views of largely white American peace and conflict studies educators and peacebuilding practitioners.

As a brown immigrant from India, I have experienced marginalization based on the color of my skin and language. For example, using institutional power, New York State refused to issue me a Professional Engineering license and only issued it when the New York State Supreme Court ordered that the license be issued to me. Similarly, my brown skin has exposed me to police interactions that are very different from how I see the police interface with the White Americans. However, when I am dressed in my business attire; police officers have given me respect and addressed me as Sir. Therefore, I was aware that I need to examine my biases and presuppositions about the social orders that are controlled by white men.

**Influence of Being Groomed for Position of Power**

At the age of 24, I was selected by my father to be his partner to take over his successful companies. Because of my father’s dominant personality, I was convinced that as his partner, I would never be able to find my true self. Therefore, I chose not to be his partner and returned to the U.S. I have now recognized that my “self” identity and my views regarding the use of power have been deeply influenced by him. In every American company I worked for, within six months, I reported to the president or CEO and was unofficially leading project staff including the designated managers (Doyle & Smith, 2001; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Cha, 2007). After
working for eight years for American companies, I realized that, probably because of my accent and nationality, I was being marginalized. Therefore, even though I had a mortgage, and two young children, I started my own company to place the welfare of individuals at the center of company values (Doyle & Smith, 2001; Schaubroeck at al., 2007).

**Influence of Being in the Positions of Power**

Watching my father, a successful businessman and a person who was admired by others, I developed a sense of understanding of ownership and the associated relationships of legitimate as well as expert, referent and information power (Bauer & Erdgan, 2009; Giang, 2013). My education and professional licenses gave me the expert, referent and information power. For the last 40 years, as the owner and the president and CEO of a professional services company, I have used my legitimate power to lead my company where every decision has been based on what is in the best interest of my coworkers but not on what the company can do improve the bottom line (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Doyle & Smith, 2001). As the CEO and the owner, I enjoyed legitimate, reward and coercive power as well as expert, referent and information power (Bauer & Erdgan, 2009; Giang, 2013). In my company, I could never completely dismantle the barriers created by my ownership and my executive roles. Looking back, I can see that although my decision not to be my father’s partner gave me an opportunity to find myself, I have now recognized that my leadership identity and my views regarding the use of power have been influenced by him.

Throughout my life, I was never was able to possess “Connection Power” (Bennington, 2012; Giang, 2013). To overcome the lack of connection power, I used the excellence of my solutions to persuade people in power. My experience in leading my company has made me apprehensive about the relevancy of my experience to be a scholar-practitioner in the field of communal peace. Therefore, my self-identity has potentially created a confusing power dynamic
that may influence my relationships with the educators and practitioners (Banks, 2007; Takacs, 2002). In this role, although I did not possess legitimate, expert, or connection power, because of my education and philanthropy; I most likely possessed reward, coercive, and information power (Bennington, 2102; Giang, 2013). I have come to believe that because of my status as a successful and educated businessperson and as a philanthropist, educators and practitioners in this field view me as a positive change agent for reforming the systems. Therefore, the intersection of multiple aspects of my identity has made my positionality appropriate for conducting my research and for becoming a scholar practitioner in this field (Elliott, 2015).

**Influence of Previous Education and Knowledge**

My previous master’s degree in Organizational Dynamics made me aware of the impact of social injustice and inequality on the lives of poor people and aware of how the current education seems to perpetuate a social order that continues a system of marginalization of the poor. Similarly, in my doctorate in conflict analysis and resolution, I had the first-hand experience of the inadequacy of that program in addressing issues of social justice and institutionalized marginalization. In all my education, there was almost no emphasis on critical reflection about what it means to be a responsible and responsive civic citizen concerned about the common good. However, my education did give me the firsthand experience-based perception that the educational institutions are possibly very good in giving students the knowledge about the theories associated with the resolution of conflicts, but they do very little to prepare students for addressing challenges associated with the perpetuation of institutionalized social injustice and social inequality.

All my undergraduate and graduate education was based on a traditional education curriculum that provided me the “exchange value of education” (Bergenhenegouwen, 1987, p.
My education was designed to transmit to me the necessary employability skills and prepare me for success in life by having a career employment (Hyslop-Margison & Naseem, 2007). My education completely ignored my social connection to a larger society (Giroux, 1994, 2010). I have always felt that my education did not allow me the benefit of learning through my experience or did not facilitate an understanding of a human world of meanings and interpretations (Dewey, 1938). Community engagement for addressing institutionalized social injustice and inequality was a critically missing element in all my education.

Therefore, through my graduate education, I developed a sense of responsibility. I have been trying to convince educators to make education relevant to challenges of social and economic inequality that are experienced by large segments of societies across the globe. Similarly, through my interactions with the leaders of peacebuilding organizations, I have been attempting to convince them that they need to address the root causes of ongoing conflicts: social injustice, marginalization of large segments of societies, and the lack of opportunities for education and employment that are experienced by the poor, especially African Americans (Senge, 2009). I have come to think that in the 21st century, education must facilitate students’ understanding about how to address massive social and ecological challenges for leading societies toward a more humane future in the interconnected and interdependent world (Kenan, 2009).

**Influence of Previous Personal Experiences**

Based on conversations with academia and practitioners, I have come to believe that they are not either interested in or supported by their organizations for proactively engaging with the communities to address the issues of social injustice, inequality or institutionalized marginalization of large segments of societies. Similarly, peace and conflict studies educators
seem to be expecting students to be able to transfer their knowledge of interpersonal conflict resolutions to the resolution of communal intergroup conflicts. Additionally, they seem to be content in teaching theories that are no longer adequate for the communal conflicts of the 21st century. It is very rare that they talk about causes of communal conflicts and what they could be doing about them. My dedicated funding of a few NGOs has provided me evidence that they are neither interested in nor capable of addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression, one of the most significant root causes of the communal conflicts of the 21st century. Finally, because they know that conflicts are inevitable, educators in the field of peace and conflict studies seems to be content to wait for conflicts to erupt and do everything they can to resolve the conflict while not addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized marginalization that caused the conflict in the first place.

Influence of My Beliefs, Biases and Presuppositions

I do believe that all educators in peace and conflict studies and practitioners in peacebuilding are truly interested in helping communities find sustainable peace. However, I have gotten a sense that they believe that helping communities to become societies that are committed to becoming just and equitable societies is like chasing an impossible dream. I also have come to believe that demands of the 21st century’s world require most of the citizens to go through life without feeling the interconnectedness of all citizens of the world. As such, the 21st century has made all of us turn inward and ignore the need to be interconnected for the common good. The political leaders of many countries, especially the U.S., seem to be using the societal fractures to perpetuate the current social order that marginalizes a significant segment of societies and sees poverty as happening because of individuals’ inadequacies. The competition among the political leaders to give multi-national corporations tax incentives seems to have only
exaggerated the societal fractures. Finally, I have come to sense that educators, practitioners, business and political leaders seem to be succumbing to what Senge (2009) refers to as “short-termism” (p.25) and not heeding his suggestion that going forward, all of us must take into consideration the needs of future generations and that real change needs to be “grounded in new ways of thinking and perceiving” (p.25).

**How My Positionality Has a Potential to Influence This Research**

Through introspection, I have developed views, that are founded in my experience with power and privilege in the context of personal and professional experience, for addressing inequities caused by the social, economic, and political arrangements (Banks, 2007; Andrews, 2014). This analysis has given me an understanding of the influence of my positionality and identity on this research study (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). This discussion reflects the sense of my identity and responsibility about the critical aspects of power in my personal and professional social structures (Sandy & Franco, 2014). Based on my self-identity as global citizen, I see myself both as the “insider-outsider” and the “external-outsider” in any society (Banks, 2007, p. 61).

**Approach for Identifying, Isolating and Mitigating the Influence of My Positionality**

The conduct of this research was founded in my belief that it is not possible to conduct a bias-free qualitative research (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). Therefore, using Machi and McEvoy’s (2012) suggestion, I conducted careful introspection to bring forward and confront the issues related to my personal experience-based views, and to openly and honestly address my biases and opinions. In conducting my research with managed objectivity, I used a self-reflection assessment (bracketing) as a tool to purposefully raise an awareness of my presuppositions regarding my research topic to avoid misleading interpretation of the data in my
research (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997). I also used the bracketing to avoid my motivated bias and keep unmotivated bias to an absolute minimum (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). To achieve this objective, I engaged in self-reflective introspection to openly acknowledge my reasons for conducting the research, my life history, personal experiences, concerns, and perspectives on my research topic (Pollio et al., 1997). For identifying my biases, preconceptions, and presuppositions as well as the influence of my power and privilege as the researcher, I engaged in “Reflexive self-questioning of identity, voice, and biases” and I will ask: What do I know? How do I know what I know? What shapes and has shaped my perspective? With what voice do I share my perspective? And, what do I do with what I have found? (Marshall and Rossman, 2011, p. 98).

**Research Problem and the Research Question**

The research problem dealt with the need for developing a better understanding of the challenges of peace and conflict studies educators in providing community engagement-based education that empowers students with the ability to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression, the root causes of communal conflicts. The purpose of this research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges in providing students experiential and transformational learning opportunities for community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**The Research Questions**

This research was based on the premise that to effectively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, education in peace and conflict studies would need to include service-learning that integrates critical theories, especially Critical Race Theories (CRT) and experiential and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the
social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, the research question was the influenced by CRT and transformational learning theory. The overarching research question and sub-questions were purposefully structured to gain insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning, integrating critical theories, especially CRT and experiential and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The following overarching research questions and research sub-questions were structured to provide insights into the answers to the research problem.

**Overarching research question.**

How do peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage their experience in educating students to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts?

**Research sub-questions.**

1. How do the peace and conflict studies educators think about the appropriateness of the current curricula in preparing students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

2. How do the educators in peace and conflict studies make sense of their personal experience in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning to help the communities preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

3. How do the peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage the effectiveness of their institution’s support for using community engagement to prepare students
capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

4. How are the educators in peace and conflict working with practitioners to improve education for effectively engaging a community to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

**Definition of Key Concepts and Terms**

The following definitions of key concepts and terms as used in this research provide the framework of the context of this research study. These definitions were provided to the research participants.

**Community**

Community is defined as “any formal or informal organization that has developed its own identity and power through the creation of shared values, norms, and goals (Odame & Oram, 2012, p. 177). Community has traditionally been viewed in two distinct ways: one referring to geographic location and the other referring to relational focus, social cohesion and emotional cohesion (Howard, O’Connell, & Latrop, 2016).

**Peace**

Peace, as used in this research, is based on the following definition (Kulkarni, 2017).

Peace is a fragile social environment-based ecosystem in which individuals, groups, and organizations continually use their abilities and processes to work together to develop and implement sustainable solutions to either real or perceived social inequity-based disputes by themselves and for themselves to prevent the escalation of disputes into conflicts, especially violent and deadly conflicts. The absence of violent conflicts does not represent Peace (p. 146).

**Scholar-Practitioner**

The scholar-practitioner seeks to make sense of the way the practice works and the way it doesn't (Labaree, 2003). Because the scholar-practitioners are individuals who value research
findings to inform practice decisions, they intentionally engage in research within and for their practice to improve the effectiveness of practice (Bailey, 2014; Kupo, 2014). This view is supported by Ho’s (2014) endorsement of Kram, Wasserman and Yip’s (2012) definition of a scholar-practitioner as a person who: 1) Engages in both scholarly activities and practice outside the educational environment and 2) Is dedicated to generating new knowledge that is useful to practitioners. Therefore, a scholar-practitioner needs to possess: 1) Ability to collaborate and learn from others; 2) Repertoire of research and analytical techniques to assess effectiveness of the practice; and 3) Knowledge for translating theory and research into practice and practice into theory (Schroeder & Pike, 2001). Wasserman and Kram, (2009) asserted that because scholar-practitioners have one foot each in of the worlds of academia and practice and are pointedly interested in advancing the causes of both theory and practice; they associate themselves with the tasks of generating new knowledge and improving practice.

Short and Shindell (2009) suggested that scholar-practitioners act as bridges to persuade the practitioner community to appreciate research and theory and to embrace evidence-based practices. Jenlink (2001) stated, “Scholarly practitioners use a critical lens to guide inquiry and practice to ensure that ethics of social justice, equity, and care are woven into the generative processes associated with knowledge” (p. 11). Both Bailey and Gautam (2015) and Herbert (2010) cited Horn’s (2002, p.83) following definition: “scholar-practitioners are those who engage in the interplay between theory and practice, allowing them to recognize the ubiquity of their interaction with others.” Jenlink (2005) suggested that as developing the interdisciplinary bricolage is complex and dynamic, historically situated and culturally responsive; the work of a scholar-practitioner is complex and requires a good understanding of theories, philosophies, methods, and multidisciplinary process.
As the problem of practice centers on communities’ challenges in addressing social injustice and social inequality, it is necessary to define “service-learning”, “social justice”, and “social justice projects” as used in this study, and to identify potential challenges.

**Service-learning**

As service-learning is a pedagogical process in which students participate in course-relevant community service to enrich their learning experience, it integrates course material with voluntary community service and reflection on learning outcomes and therefore, experiential learning could be used to facilitate service-learning (Petkus, 2000).

Service-learning (sometimes referred as Community Service Learning) provides students, as engaged learners, opportunities to question and develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes within real world situations (Odame & Oram, 2012, p. 177). Service-learning experience can be seen through four different lenses: technical, cultural, political, and postmodern/poststructural (Butin, 2007; Carrington & Selva, 2010). Service-learning represents a pedagogical method for intentionally integrating learning with service, in a framework in which service and learning goals are of equal value (Simons & Cleary, 2005).

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (Ryan, 2012) defines service-learning in the following manner: “…a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich learning experience teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities” (p. 3). Using the definition established by the National and Community Service Trust act of 1993, Cashel, Goodman, and Swanson (2003) listed four service-learning characteristics: learning and development through active participation; integration into the academic curriculum and provision of structured time for reflection;
opportunity to apply newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations; and extensions of student learning beyond the classroom.

**Social Justice**

Recognizing the existence of social inequality and institutionalized oppression, higher education universally agrees that there is a need to create a change in the educational and social systems in order to combat social order-based inequality and institutionalized oppression. Although the objectives of social justice are universally endorsed, the literature search indicates that there is not a universally accepted definition of social justice or agreement about what it means and how to achieve it. As the concept of social justice is complex, there is a tendency to view it in a specific context while being subject to a wide range of interpretations. Social justice has been defined with a range of terms like diversity, equity, inclusion. Therefore, it is no wonder that social justice within the educational literature is still under-theorized. Hytten and Bettez (2011) suggest that even with the extensive literature, in practical terms “what is social justice is often unclear” (p.8). Therefore, some of the widely recognized definitions of social justice are provided below.

The Center for Economic and Social Justice (n.d.) states, “Social justice is a set of universal principles which guide people in judging what is right and what is wrong, no matter what culture and society they live in.” According to Lee Bell (1997), “Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable… [and] involves social actors… who have a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole” (p.3). Similarly, Theoharis (2007) suggested that social justice is centered on the idea of disrupting and subverting arrangements that promote marginalization and exclusionary processes.
By combining definitions advocated by Bell (1997) and Theoharis (2007), this research study was based on the following definition of social justice: Social justice aims to minimize social inequality and to promote maximized equity for all members of the society. It addresses social inequality based on any group identity (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, economic status and national origin). Issues related to social justice and equity include the disparity of income and wealth and are also about opportunities for education, living wage, affordable housing and healthcare, unequal law enforcement, and gender and sexual orientation discrimination (Blow, 2015; Kahn & Kirk, 2015; North, 2016; The Editorial Board, 2016). Using this definition, this study suggested that to help communities in addressing issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression; education in peace and conflict studies needs to advance social justice principles of deconstruction of power, minimizing the influence of privilege, fighting oppression, and promoting liberation.

**Experiential Learning**

Although all learning is experiential learning, for learning to be considered experiential, learning processes and outcomes need to be part of processes of continuity and interactions that are to some extent, learner controlled. There also needs to be some relationship between the learning environment and the real-life environment (Illeris, 2007). Experiential learning, an approach founded in real life, involves students interacting directly with the content of what they are studying to develop deep understanding of the topic they are learning about from their education (Kolb, 1984; Sanders, 2013).

McClellan and Hyle (2012) suggested, “Although literature has suggested that adult learning best occurs through experiential approaches, in the classroom most professors still rely upon a traditional lecture format with limited hands-on activities” (p. 239). Experiential learning
assumes two different kinds of process: An external interaction process between students and their social, cultural, and material environment and an internal psychological process of expansion and acquisition in which new instincts relate to results of previous learning (Illeris, 2007).

Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as, “the process whereby knowledge is created through transmission of experience” (p.41). Therefore, experiential learning involves students’ metacognitive process for assessing outcomes of their actions (Kolb, 1984). Kolb’s (1984) model of experiential learning requires four different learning abilities: actual experience, reflective observations, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Petkus (2000) suggested that the service-learning experience should involve all stages of the (experiential learning) cycle. Experiential learning is a cyclic learning process in which students directly interface with the topic being studied; learn through experimentation, receive feedback, and reflect on their learning process.” (Kolb, 1984).

Bing (1989) asserted, “University peace education must have an experiential dimension in which students engage in or observe problems of peace and conflict” (p. 49). Bing’s (1989, p.51) following citation of Jerry Folk (1978) is relevant to the education in peace and conflict studies:

The both peace research and peace education are incomplete without what might also be evident in the structure of the program by including a field education component…It should not be put together haphazardly but be thoroughly integrated into the total educational approach to the program. Field experiences ought to be authorized only if they actually provide opportunity to apply and test theoretical knowledge gained in traditional educational experiences. Students ought also to be required to reflect extensively on their field educational experiences in both written and oral form and to integrate them into general educational experiences by the program
Theoretical Framework

As stated before, the existing literature suggested that peace and conflict studies education has not yet adopted the goal of empowering students to challenge power imbalances and to achieve greater equality, justice, and peace through social transformation (Bettez, 2011; Reilly & Niens, 2014; Savas, 2014). Therefore, peace and conflict studies programs will need to find ways for providing students a “transformative learning” and “critically reflective” experience for changing students’ frame of reference to intergroup conflicts arising out of social injustice, inequity, and institutionalized oppression. As such, this research was founded in the belief that critical theories, especially Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Mezirow’s (1991, 1997) Transformational Learning Theory along with Daloz’s (2000) theory of Transformative Learning for the Common Good would provide meaningful insights into addressing the research questions. Consequently, the theoretical framework of this research study was based on the integrated use of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Mezirow’s Transformational Learning Theory and Daloz’s (2000) theory of Transformative Learning for the Common Good (See Figure. 1-1).

Figure 1-1. Theoretical Framework

The following discussion is intended to demonstrate the influence of critical theories, CRT and transformational learning theory on the planned research study.
Critical Theories and Critical Race Theory (CRT)

As the aim of this research was to discover how educators in peace and conflict studies can help the communities in proactively addressing the issues of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression, it was deemed prudent to understand the root causes of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. The literature review indicated that the existing literature (Bell, 1997; Brantmeier, 2013; Cabera, 2014; Closson & Rhodes, 2011; Hirraldo, 2010; Horkheimer, 1972; Ladson-Billings, 1998) has demonstrated that critical theory and critical pedagogy have been used to develop an understanding of the root causes of social injustice. As the central goal of critical pedagogy is to critically examine the system of education and work toward change in dominant social and cultural values, it offered a diverse set of theoretical approaches to understanding and researching the ways educational systems have reinforced the status quo and neglected opportunities for refining the processes of learning and the goals of educational institutions (Cooks, Scharrer, Paredes, 2004).

As critical theory is founded on the principle that because a just and democratic society will come about through the liberation of its citizenry, this research was based on the premise that education must take into consideration the socially situated nature of experience within the historical, social, and political context of the experience (Brantmeier, 2013; Carson & Fisher, 2006). Consequently, this research study explored whether peace and conflict studies education is taking into consideration the socially situated nature of experience within its historical, social, and political context (Carson & Fisher, 2006).

Critical race theories offer the students and educators in peace and conflict studies tools to understand how the dominant ideology and the social order established framework of power structures are being used for perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression that is
experienced by large segments of communities (Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Habermas, 1984). Only when essential self-reflection is integrated with critical action focused on social transformation, is full criticality realized (Carson & Fisher, 2006). Therefore, as critical theory and critical pedagogy are essential to understanding social injustice and institutionalized oppression, they provide the theoretical framework for this research study. As such, the following discussion is included to illustrate the rationale of using critical theory, especially Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the framework for this research.

Overview of Critical Theory. Critical Legal Studies (CLS), that expose contradiction in the law and demonstrate the ways laws create and perpetuate the hierarchical society, provide the foundational thinking behind critical theories (Brayboy, 2006). As they question the roles of power, knowledge, and ideology, the educators need to integrate into peace and conflict studies critical pedagogy that was developed in 1970-1980s. Critical pedagogy is an outcome of philosophers’ and scholars’ efforts to understand and to explain social inequality. Freire’s (1970) questions of the universal concept of knowledge examined the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor and had a major influence on the initiation of critical pedagogy. His comprehensive analysis of the interconnecting responsibilities of educators and students has significantly impacted the vision of the purpose of education. Based on Freire’s (1970) thinking regarding the influence of power relationships within the educational system, Giroux (1985) encouraged educators to:

Develop a discourse that can be used to interrogate schools as ideological and material embodiments of a complex web of relations of culture and power, on the one hand, and as socially constructed sites of contestation actively involved in the production of lived experiences on the other (p.23).

Critical theory encourages educators to be activists whose role is to articulate concerns and advocate on the behalf of the oppressed with power holders, and to develop action strategies
with a long-term goal of shifting power (Brown, 2005). Therefore, educators need to carefully consider the complicated ways education transects with economic, political, and cultural power dynamics that are essential for developing a clearer understanding of societal power and inequality (Apple, 2004). In other words, the concept of knowledge as socially constructed rather than objectively attained is the central factor in any education, especially as it relates to social justice. Horkheimer’s (1972) suggestion that critical theory explicitly critiques the oppressive relationship between social classes in a capitalistic society could be viewed as an explanation of the perpetual social injustice, one of the root causes of the communal conflicts.

**Overview of Critical Race Theory (CRT).** Critical Race Theory originated from the Critical Legal Studies movement that failed to address the effects of race and racism (Brayboy, 2005; Hiraldo, 2010). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) asserted that social inequality is based on three foundational propositions: 1) Race continues to be a significant cause in the creation of inequality; 2) U.S. society is based on property rights; and 3) The intersection of race and property generate an analytical tool to understand social inequality. As the rejection of colorblind society and social justice are at the heart of CRT, it questions the dominant ideology of a liberal order including equality theory, legal reasoning, enlightenment rationalism and neutral principles of constitutional law (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Savas, 2014). Therefore, CRT challenges the use of the experience of whites as the standard framework for understanding the distinctive experiences of people of color (Barlow, 2016; Taylor, 1998).

Additionally, as a form of oppositional scholarship, CRT advocates “aggressive, color-conscious efforts to change the way things are (Barlow, 2016). Similarly, it challenges the use of the experience of whites as the standard and conceptual framework for understanding the distinctive experiences of people of color (Taylor, 1998). CRT describes whiteness as a social
construction that is invisible to white individuals but gives them taken-for-granted privileges based on the pronounced societal color-blindness (Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012). As such supporting critical theories that have been developed need to be considered, e.g., Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) and Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit). Additionally, theories such as feminist theory and queer theory need to be also considered.

**Five tenets of CRT.** Although the tenets of CRT focus on race, they are valuable for understanding the ways in which dominant ideologies manage to perpetuate themselves (Hiraldo, 2010). These tenets could be used to understand the influence of socially constructed identity of the oppressed and to comprehend the challenges of inequality and institutionalized oppression that the oppressed experience. The following five tenets of CRT provide effective tools for understanding of social injustice and institutionalized oppression as they relate to communal conflicts (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Hiraldo, 2010): 1) Racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society; 2) CRT employs counter-storytelling to analyze presuppositions about Blacks and other minorities; 3) Whiteness (normal and invisible) is viewed as property; 4) Whites have been primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation; and 5) CRT insists on a critique of liberalism.

The first tenet suggests that institutionalized oppression, based on socially constructed norms, has become a socially accepted reality. By rejecting the belief and advocacy of a color blind society, the second tenet questions the pure objectivity of the dominant groups in understanding how they benefit from their socially constructed identities and how minority groups suffer under the socially constructed oppressive system. The third tenet suggests that property (that non-whites can never possess) is used to perpetuate a system in which non-whites are marginalized (Cross, 2005). The fourth tenet illustrates how the dominant groups receive more benefits than the oppressed groups from the actions that are specifically designed to benefit
the oppressed groups. The fifth tenet advocates for utilization of different methods to understand the experiences of the oppressed groups. These five tenets could be used to comprehend the challenges of inequality and institutionalized oppression.

**Counterargument or critique of CRT.** Although CRT serves as a framework for understanding institutionalized oppression, it does not address the marginalization of specific groups (Brayboy, 2006). Additionally, several social scientists have raised concerns over CRT’s hyper emphasis on race (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). Ledesma & Calderón (2015) cite Darder and Torres’ (2004) objections to CRT’s use of race as the central category of analysis in educational debates around racism (even though the concept of race continues to be under-theorized) to the exclusion of a critique of capitalism. Additionally, Crenshaw (1991) recognized that oppression and racism are experienced within and across divergent spectrums such as sexism, ableism, and classism. This researcher believes that the current capitalistic social order has been effectively used by the rich and the powerful for perpetuating social injustice, social inequality, and institutionalized oppression against individuals belonging to lower economic status, regardless of their other kinds of social status, e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, language, religion.

**Relevance of the theory to the research problem.** This research was based on the premise that the education in peace and conflict studies needs to heed Ladson-Billings (1998, p.9) following assertion, “Thinking of race strictly as an ideological concept denies the reality of racialized society and its impact on people in their everyday lives…in a racialized society where whiteness is positioned as normative.” In other words, education in peace and conflict studies needs to accommodate the CRT’s stipulation that the current social order majoritarian frame
privileges Whiteness and works towards maintaining Whites in control (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015).

This researcher believes that the education in peace and conflict studies also needs to recognize that in the U.S., whiteness is legally, politically, and socially located in hegemonic power that produces institutionalized racism (Anders, Bryan, & Noblit, 2005) and that ‘race” is socially constructed and “racial difference” is invented, perpetuated and reinforced by society (Gillborn, 2015, p. 278). The education in peace and conflict studies would benefit from using the tenets of the CRT to question the current social order and power structures’ claims of equal opportunity in color-blind objectivity and culture neutral systems (Brayboy, 2006; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

As the aim of this research was to gain insights into how educators in peace and conflict studies can help the communities in proactively addressing the issues of social injustice, the research needed to consider the root causes of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression caused by the current capitalistic social order. Critical race theories offered some tools to understand how the dominant ideology and the social order establish a capitalistic-framework of power structures that perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression experienced by large segments of economically disadvantaged communities (Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Carson & Fisher, 2006; Habermas, 1984).

**Summation.** The literature search suggested that peace and conflict studies education needs to recognize that in the U.S., whiteness is legally, politically, and socially located in hegemonic power that produces institutionalized racism and that ‘race” is socially constructed and “racial difference” is perpetuated by society to give Whites taken-for-granted privileges (Anders et al., 2005; Gillborn, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2012). Therefore, this research study was
based on the premise that the education in peace and conflict studies needs to accommodate the CRT’s stipulation that the current social order majoritarian frame privileges Whiteness (especially to the wealthy) and works towards maintaining the rich Whites in control (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). As such, education in peace studies would benefit from using the tenets of the CRT to question the current social order (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2005).

The aim of this discussion is to illustrate that educators would need to use critical pedagogy and critical theory to question the current system of education in peace and conflict studies. This research was based on thinking that critical theories offer a diverse set of theoretical approaches to understanding and researching the ways educational systems have reinforced the status quo and neglected opportunities for refining the processes of learning and the goals of educational institutions. Therefore, using critical theories, the educators could find ways to work with communities to institute changes in dominant social and cultural values. However, the educator would need to consider critical theory to address social inequality and institutionalized marginalization of a divergent spectrum of marginalized society, especially the poor, regardless of their race or ethnicity. An educational program would need to consider using critical pedagogy and CRT-based approaches to effectively address the problem of practice associated with the challenges of educators in peace and conflict studies in helping communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized marginalization. In other words, the educators would need to integrate the critical pedagogy and critical race theories into their service-learning program.
Transformative Learning Theory

It seems that the education in peace and conflict studies has been ineffective in giving students learning experiences that empower them for perceiving, comprehending, and questioning the social order established methods that perpetuate social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. As education needs to include learning that is focused on transformation and on helping individuals to discover themselves to reach their full potential for becoming civically minded members of their societies, transformative learning theory provides one of the most critical and effective lenses to address the integration of social injustice, social inequality and institutionalized oppression into the education in peace and conflict studies. As such, this researcher believed that transformative learning theory provides one of the most critical lenses to address the integration of social injustice, social inequality and institutionalized oppression into the education in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, the following discussion is included to illustrate the relevance of the transformative learning theory to education in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, this study was purposefully positioned within Mezirow’s Transformative Learning theory (Mezirow, 1989, 1991, 1996, 2000) and Daloz’s (2000) theory of Transformative Learning for the Common Good.

Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory

Overview of transformative learning theory. Transformative learning theory is a comprehensive model of adult learning (Mezirow, 1994). Transformative learning theory defines learning as the social process of creating and adopting a new or refined interpretation of individuals’ experience to guide their actions (Mezirow, 1994). Therefore, transformative learning can be viewed as a process of effecting change in an individual’s frame of reference (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991, 1997).
The beginning of the transformative theory could be traced back to Dewey’s (1938) and Freire’s (1970) theses that experiential learning consolidates an individual’s relevant life experiences to facilitate learning and created knowledge. Similarly, Mezirow (1991) suggests that the transformative theory builds upon the cultural context of learning that is founded in Bowers’ (1984) “sociology of knowledge” (pp. 1-3). The critical influence of Habermas’ (1984) thesis of transformation arises out of the premise that the technical, the practical, and the emancipatory are three areas of human interest that generate knowledge (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991, 2000).

Mezirow’s Transformational Learning theory (1991) shares theoretical underpinnings with Freire (1973). Both perspectives hold that adult education should lead to empowerment and that knowledge is not discovered, but rather is created from interpretations and reinterpretations of new experiences. Unlike Mezirow (1991) who focused on the importance of rational thought and reflection in the transformative learning process, Freire (1970, 1974), who believed that education’s purpose was liberation, was driven by social justice. Freire wanted students to, by reflecting on real life issues, recognize the larger societal structures that oppressed them and how they could overcome these barriers.

Mezirow (2000, 2003) drew upon critical theory and used Habermass’ (1984) conceptualization of communicative learning. Stressing that transformative learning theory requires questioning of absolute truths, Mezirow (2000) suggested that to achieve the benefits from transformative learning, the learner must develop the ability “to negotiate his or her own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than to simply act on those of others” (p. 10). Mezirow’s (2000, 2003) theory of transformative learning also asserted that for incorporating new ideas and beliefs, the transformative learning requires an individual to engage in the practice
of understating and questioning of an individual’s own deeply held personal beliefs and ideologies. To achieve this objective, Daloz (2000) suggested that educators and individuals need to “seek out and encourage engagement with those different from ourselves, to foster critical reflection on the meaning of our differences, and to create mentoring communities where socially responsible commitments can be formed and sustained” (p. 121).

Brown (2004) suggested that critical reflection is an essential element of transformative learning. Using the tenets of the transformative learning as they relate to social change, Daloz (2000) described the following conditions that are essential for transformation: the presence of the other; reflective discourse; a mentoring community; and potential for committed action. These transformational conditions and critical reflections require a transformative learning-based process for effecting change in an individual’s frame of reference that is supported by Mezirow’s following thesis (1997, p. 5).

Frames of reference are the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences. They selectively shape and delimit expectations, perceptions, cognition, and feelings. They set our “line of action.” Once set, we automatically move from one specific activity (mental or behavioral) to another. We have a strong tendency to reject ideas that fail to fit our preconceptions, labeling those ideas as unworthy of consideration—aberrations, nonsense, irrelevant, weird, or mistaken.

Mezirow (1994) suggested that the process of learning to make meaning is influenced and governed by an individual’s frames of reference and meaning structures, and disorienting dilemma acts as a trigger for reflection which in turn involves questioning of assumptions (Mezirow, 1994). An individual’s frame of reference, which includes conative and emotional aspects, has two dimensions: “habits of mind” and a “point of view” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). Habits of mind provide the individual’s orientation towards habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are influenced by a set of cultural, social, educational, economic or psychological assumptions and a “point of view” presents a constellation of belief, value judgment, attitude and
feeling that affects an individual’s interpretation (Mezirow, 1997). In contrast to habits of mind that are more lasting, a point of view could be subject to continuing change caused by individuals’ reflection on the content or process by which they solve problems and recognize the necessity to amend their assumptions (Mezirow, 1997). Therefore, for helping students to change their meaning schemas (i.e. specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotions), educators need to help them to “become critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 167).

According to Mezirow’s (1991, 1994) theory of transformative learning, adult learners experience deep shifts in their mental models or frames of reference and become authors of their own knowledge. Particularly, Mezirow (1991, 1994) described transformative learning as a process of change that occurs in a person’s frame of reference. Additionally, Mezirow (1991) noted that “Approved ways of seeing and understanding, shaped by our language, culture, and personal experience collaborate to set limits to our future learning” (p.1). Therefore, an essential element of transformation theory is the notion that past beliefs are negated and transformed by new knowledge, and transformation of perspective happens through critical self-reflection and discourse. Using the participating educators’ experience, this research sought to better understand how institutions are using the critical self-reflection and discourse to provide students transformative education that is necessary for students to learn about how to address the influence of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Ten tenets of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory. Mezirow (2000, p. 22) described the following ten tenets of transformative learning theory that are useful for understanding and promoting social justice and need to be included in the education in peace and conflict studies: 1) a disorienting dilemma; 2) self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt,
or shame; 3) a critical assessment of assumptions; 4) recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared; 5) exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions; 6) planning a course of action; 7) acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans; 8) provisionally trying new roles; 9) building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and 10) a reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective.

**Counterargument or critiques of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory.** In his critical review of the transformative learning theory, Edward Taylor (2007) suggested that previous research might have generously assumed the existence of critical reflection among the participants during the process of transformative learning. He stated that researchers need to develop a greater understanding of the students’ role in fostering transformative learning and the relationship between trusting support and transformative learning. Although Mezirow (1994) has provided rebuttals, Mezirow’s theory (1991) has been criticized by other scholars. For example, Cranton (2016) suggested that Mezirow’s transformative learning theory was criticized for its omission of issues of social action, power, and cultural context and for not paying enough attention to social change. Carson and Fisher (2006) asserted that transformative learning theory focuses on personal transformation rather than social transformation. Newton (1994) strongly suggested that because Mezirow’s view of transformation does not require the learner to actively engage into the flow of social history and into social action, it is different than Freire’s concept of conscientization. Clark and Wilson (1991) contended that as human meaning is context-dependent, the transformative learning theory does not take into consideration the multiple contexts of the experience and therefore, a generic process of transformative learning is not feasible. They cited several scholars to suggest that the principal criticism is that Mezirow has
seemingly adopted Habermas’s epistemology without integrating its radical social critiques and the need for social action.

Olen Gunnlaugson (2007) asserted that by putting rationality at the center of his theory, Mezirow emphasizes individual change over social change and risks marginalizing other ways of knowing and not recognizing the limitation of conventional reason. Edward Taylor and Patricia Cranton (2013, p. 43) recommended that transformative learning practitioners and theorists need to critically examine their assumptions and asked questions such as: “How does experience unfold in the context of transformative learning? How can we foster new experiences that have potential to lead to transformational learning? If transformative learning can be negative, how can we deal with the ethical issues of fostering it?” Collard and Law (1989) asserted that as Mezirow presents some aspects of a theory of adult learning and education, Mezirow’s claims to have a transformative learning theory are premature and concluded that Mezirow’s theory suppresses the concepts advanced by Freire. In response to this criticism, Mezirow (1989) suggested that although social collective action is critical (that is probably desired by peacebuilders) it is not the only goal of adult education.

**Transformative Learning for the Common Good**

Daloz (2000) defined social responsibility as a commitment to the common good. Daloz defined social responsibility as a commitment to the common good and one that is “grounded in the metaphor of the commons, a place where an entire community comes together to do business, celebrate, and recognize their shared interdependence” (p. 105). Daloz’s “Transformative Learning for the Common Good” (2000) uses Mezirow’s transformative learning theory to advance social justice and to promote the common good. Daloz’s theory civilizes the transformational learning process in which students use reflection of their
experiences to transform themselves. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that an educational institution is an ideal environment in which students would be mentored to gain civic knowledge, habits of mind and skills development.

Daloz (2000) noted that this commitment to the common good is an everlasting process that requires one to take a “stance of openness to necessary and ongoing dialogue with those who differ or those who may not be full participants on commons” (p. 105) and “It is the growth toward this capacity to identify one’s own self with the well-being of all life that undergirds our use of the term social responsibility” (Daloz, 2000, p. 105).

In Transformative Learning for the Common Good, Daloz (2000) used Mezirow’s theory for defining “Social responsibility” and asserted that the “commitment to the common good is a stance of openness to necessary and ongoing dialogue with those who differ or who may not yet be full participants on the commons” (p. 105). Suggesting that the engagement with otherness, an essential aspect of transformation (an incremental process of differentiation and integration that involves a series of identifiable steps), Daloz (2000) articulated the following four key conditions that may facilitate transformative learning for greater social responsibility for contributing to the common good: the presence of the other, reflective discourse, a mentoring community, and opportunities for committed action that contribute to the common good.

Daloz’s (2000) theory presented four key conditions that must be present for transformative learning for responsibility. The first is the presence of the other which provides that constructive engagement with someone previously viewed as the other and leads one across the boundary of “us” and “them” to the construction of a new “we” (p. 113). The second condition of reflective discourse involves having the ability to reflect consciously and critically on earlier assumptions and to incorporate cognitive, emotional, and social components into
active dialogue with others. Elements of successful discourse include empowerment and self-determination, a participant-based agenda, and validation of emotions (Daloz, 2000). The third condition is that of a mentoring community through which relationships with significant others are developed. He suggested that mentors often exhibit the ideal practices of addressing problems and issues and share key insights and analysis. Daloz’s fourth condition, opportunities for committed action, provides that the ability to act on, test, and ground one’s convictions are critical to the process of transformation.

**Relevance of the transformative theory to the research problem.** Edward Taylor’s (1997) critical literature review of empirical studies surfaced the following three critical points that educators in peace and conflict studies need to consider:

First, the ideal practice for fostering transformative learning is theoretically based, with little support from empirical research. Adult educators are being encouraged to practice a particular approach to teaching toward an outcome (perspective transformation) and with a process that is inadequately defined and understood. Second, in identifying these ideal learning conditions, the authors of these studies, as well as Mezirow himself, overlook the practical implications associated with facilitating and encouraging learners to revise their meaning perspectives. Third, few of these, studies explored the practice of fostering transformative learning in relationship to the participants’ cultural background.” (pp. 54-55).

The following statement “at the basic level, communicative learning is defined as understanding what someone means when they communicate with you” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 59) has direct implications for education in peace and conflict studies as it relates to social injustice, social inequality and institutionalized oppression. Mezirow (2000) suggested that transformative learning that involves the process of challenging an individual’s long held beliefs and ideologies is essential to moving forward for incorporating new ideas and beliefs.

Making meaning out of experiences, questioning prior experience-based assumptions and changed perceptions are at the heart of the transformative learning theory (Cranton, 2016). The
use of a multidimensional collaborative inquiry as framework, used for widening frames of reference and transforming world views of students, may facilitate the integration of transformative learning in the education in peace and conflict studies (Baumgartner, 2001; Hanlin, Rowney et al., 2006). The implementation of transformative learning would require educators to create a learning environment that facilitates students’ experience of a sense of safety, trust between the educator and them, a sense of possibility, help for overcoming fear, empowerment for discovering their “self” and acknowledging them as the whole person (Cranton & Wright, 2008).

As individualism is so deeply embedded in the socially constructed cultural meaning of existence, utilization of the individual as the unit of social analysis is profoundly ingrained in the practice of adult education (Cunningham, 1998). In supporting the view that transformative learning centers on the association of an individual with the wider cultural environment, Chin (2006) provided the following quotation of O’Sullivan, Morelli, and O’Connor (2002) that is directly applicable to education in peace and conflict studies:

Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and the natural world; our understanding of relationships of power in interlocking structures of class, race, and gender; our body-awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy. (p.11)

Therefore, the socially constructed concept of an individual is at the center of transformative learning. As such, educators in peace and conflict studies need to use transformative learning to answer Phyllis Cunningham’s (1998, p. 16) question: “Do we educate participants to perform in the workplace or do we educate participants for engagement in constructing a more democratic and egalitarian society?” In other words, transformative learning
needs to be 1) about making meaning within the context of our cultural boundaries and 2) about restructuring our social reality in a more judicious and classless manner (Cunningham, 1998).

Therefore, educators in peace and conflict studies need to heed Mezirow’s (2000) following assertion that emphasizes the direct linkage between transformative learning and social justice: “full development of human potential for transformative learning depends on values such as freedom, equality, tolerance, social justice, civic responsibility, and education” (p.16).

As such, the following thesis of Mezirow (2000, p. 7-8) succinctly demonstrates the importance of integrating transformative learning into the education of peace and conflict studies:

Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. Transformative learning involves participation in constructive discourse to use the experience of others to assess reasons justifying these assumptions and making an action decision based on the resulting insight.

As the primary objective of the education in peace and conflict studies is to teach students about how to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression for creating more just societies, the education in these fields essentially focuses on promoting the common good. Therefore, the four conditions of Daloz’s (2000) transformative learning theory for the common good have a direct relevance to the research problem.

**Summation.** The literature has documented the responsibility and critical role of higher education in preparing students to be responsible citizens who strive for the common good (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Dewey, 1916, 1938, 1959; Freire, 1970, 1974; Giroux, 1985, 2010; Jenlink, 2005; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010; Senge, 2009). This study was based on the premise that this critical role of higher education includes helping the students to change their mental models
of frame of reference, empowering them to negate their past beliefs and to become authors of their own knowledge in the process of becoming a responsive participant in their community’s efforts to become a just community. The discussion above was intended to demonstrate that the research question, data collection method and the interview questions hope to address whether the peace and conflict studies education is providing students transformative learning opportunities for examining their assumptions and for refining their perspectives by integrating insights gained from their community engagement.

In providing the students transformative learning, educators in peace and conflict studies may need to heed Lisa Baumgartner’s (2001, p. 16) suggestion to follow “Dirkx’s (1998) four lens approach”: the first lens drawing on Freire’s (1970) concepts of philosophy of emancipatory education and consciousness-raising; the second lens based on Mezirow’s (1991) process of perspective transformation; the third lens Daloz’s (1986; 1999) holistic, and contextually- based developmental approach; and the fourth lens for linking spirituality and learning. These educators would also need to create a learning environment that facilitates students’ experience of a sense of safety, trust between the educator and themselves, a sense of possibility, help for overcoming fear, and empowerment for discovering their “self.”

Based on the criticism discussed above, the educators in peace and conflict studies would need to understand that because there has not been sufficient empirical research-based validation of transformative learning, they would be using the concept of the theory and they will have to find a way to integrate issues of social action, power, and cultural context into the use of transformative learning theory. Educators in peace and conflict studies need to take into consideration that transformative learning theory was criticized for its omission of issues of social action, power, and cultural context and for not paying enough attention to social change.
Summary of the Theoretical Framework

Transformative learning through community engagement-based service-learning will allow students opportunity to question their biases and to change their mental frame of reference. Through service-learning students may be able to use critical theories, especially CRT to critically question the current social order that perpetuates social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This research is based on the proposition that critical theories and transformative learning provide peace and conflict studies educators a viable option for developing critical thinking, the knowledge, and abilities that are essential for becoming responsively engaged members of their communities. Peace and conflict studies education needs to integrate service-learning for exposing students to the realities experienced by the marginalized and to use transformative learning and critical theories for facilitating students’ understanding of privilege and institutionalized oppression for developing the capacity to address the issues of social injustice (Adams, 2012, 2014; Bell, 1997).

Conclusion

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, this research study was a result of this researcher’s life experience-based and education-inspired curiosity. Based on the literature search, this researcher has come to believe that the education in peace and conflict studies is not effectively integrating community engagement-based service-learning for addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized marginalization that are the root causes of communal conflicts. Based on his education and the literature search, this researcher has to come think that in many ways, the education in the United States may be reinforcing the social injustice experienced by students who are marginalized because of their family’s socio-economic status (Banks, 2010; Boland, 2014; Freire, 1970). Therefore, his passion for having just and equitable
communities that are dedicated to the common good led him to investigate the research topic which in turn has produced the research problem, the purpose of this research. To achieve the benefits from the significance of his research, this research identified the audience that could use the findings of this study to improve the education in peace and conflict studies to prepare students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The comprehensive positionality statement articulated this researcher’s recognition of the potential of his positionality to influence this research.

The research problem and the research questions provided the framework for effectively addressing the critical inadequacy of the current education in peace and conflict studies. Similarly, the definition of key concepts and terms provided the foundational basis for this research. The discussion of the theoretical framework was intended to illustrate how the integrated use of critical theories; especially CRT and transformative learning theory would facilitate insightful answers to the research questions and hopefully helps the educators in effectively integrating community engagement-based service-learning for educating students to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Structure of the Dissertation**

This chapter used this researcher’s lived experience and education-based interest in conducting this research study to lay out the topic; context of the problem of practice, purpose of the research, research questions, justifications, significance of the research, and audience for the research. This chapter included definition of key concepts and terms and also addressed the influence of this researcher’s positionality on this research and the theoretical framework of critical theories and transformative learning. This chapter is followed by Chapter Two: Literature Review that documents the inadequacies of the current education in peace and conflict
studies and serves as a documented justification for conducting this literature search. The rationale for using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the research methodology and details of conducting the research are included in Chapter Three: Research Design. Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis focuses on the words of the participants to present the review of findings of the study. In Chapter Five: Discussion of Research Findings, the literature review and theoretical framework are used for presenting key findings of the study. Chapter Five also includes a discussion of the limitations of this study, the implications for future research and recommendations for educators in peace and conflict studies.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

The purpose of this research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges associated with educating students in using sustained community engagement for preemptively mitigating communal conflicts by proactively addressing the issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. This research defined a communal conflict as a conflict that is driven by the fear of being marginalized and oppressed by the dominant groups in a state or a country, or fear of the influence of groups outside the country that are aligned with and supportive of the dominant groups in the country. In the 21st century, a communal conflict that originates in one community has a potential for impacting some other regions or countries and for being impacted by some group from the outside; and may have ramifications of an international nature, whether perceived or real. Since the end of the Cold War, communal conflicts have had an impact outside the borders of the state, in the same manner as the volcano in Iceland whose ashes stopped air traffic in Europe or a tsunami that starts in one location that has a destructive effect on a lot of countries hundreds of miles away from the epicenter of the tsunami (Kulkarni, 2014).

Founded in a reflective, integrative, holistic, and ecological thinking-based view toward social justice and equity (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003) for addressing challenges of peace and conflict studies in helping communities to proactively tackle social injustice and institutionalized oppression, this literature review was purposefully based on this researcher’s underlying educational philosophies. Based on these educational philosophies, the literature search was focused on finding out what the literature has to say about the challenges of peace and conflict studies education in helping communities to preemptively address the root causes of communal conflicts. Therefore, the literature review purposefully used the following structure: 1)
Description of the underlying educational philosophies; 2) Discussion of communal conflicts and the current state of global destabilization; 3) Prevalence of institutionalized oppression and a discussion of the perpetuation of multidimensional inequality; and 4) Overview of the current practice in higher education, the current status of programs in peace and conflict studies, the inadequacies of peace and conflict studies programs, the need for scholar-practitioners, and the relevance of professional doctorate programs. This discussion is followed by a discussion social justice, social justice projects, service-learning, and the following critical elements that are missing in the current education in peace and conflict studies: Critical theories and critical race theories, transformative learning theory, service-learning and ending with the summation of the literature review and the implications.

Underlying Educational Philosophies

As the problem of practice and research questions were embedded in the overriding purpose of education, this research study was based on the specific educational philosophies of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Dewey (1916, 1938, 1959), Freire (1970, 1974), Jenlink (2005, 2014), and Senge (2009) as the foundational purpose of education, particularly in peace and conflict studies. Additionally, the following statements of wisdom provided guiding principles that underscore the purpose of education, especially higher education in peace and conflict studies.

Nelson Mandela’s (1990) assertion, that education is the most powerful weapon which one can use to change the world, is even more relevant to the world of the twenty-first century. Similarly, Giroux’s (2010) following suggestion is equally applicable to today’s education.

As Freire argued, education, as a practice for freedom, must attempt to expand the capacities necessary for human agency and, hence, the possibilities for democracy itself. Surely, this suggests that at all levels of education from the primary school to the privileged precincts of higher education, educators should nourish those pedagogical practices that promote a concern with keeping the forever unexhausted and unfulfilled human potential open, fighting back all attempts to foreclose and pre-empt the further
unraveling of human possibilities, prodding human society to go on questioning itself and preventing that questioning from ever stalling or being declared finished.(p. 718)

This research also used the following citation of Harry Lewis, the former dean of Harvard College, to describe the challenges educational institutions are facing today.

Beyond academic and research excellence, universities have forgotten their main purpose, which is to help students learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings…The students are not soulless, but their university is…Reforms, where they do take place, do not go nearly deep enough to re-ensoul the university and reestablish the purpose of higher education, which is the fostering of our full humanity (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 3).

These educational philosophies were used to conduct the literature review to determine the needed reforms of higher education in peace and conflict studies and to address the question of whether today’s education is providing students the skills and competencies that are appropriate to the challenges of the twenty-first century’s state of global destabilization consisting of communal conflicts that have been erupting across the globe. Similarly, the definitions of key concepts and terms (included in Chapter 1: Introduction to the study) were used to conduct this literature review. The following overview of the evolving nature of communal conflicts that appear to have caused the current state of global destabilization was used to frame the context of the research questions.

**Communal Conflicts and the Current State of Global Destabilization**

The ongoing violent communal conflicts that have been erupting across the globe potentially represent only a tip of a large iceberg of social unrest and institutionalized oppression-based deep societal fractures that are embedded in communities around the world. Therefore, countries across the globe face an urgent and critical challenge of minimizing the institutionalized oppression of large segments of communities. This challenge represents a call for higher education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding to use
sustained community engagement and partnership to help communities to proactively address social injustice and inequality issues and to preemptively address community issues that are conducive to communal conflicts (Hartley, 2009).

Since the end of the Cold War, scholars have been trying to comprehend the impact of the new world order and the international systems, consisting of players with extremely polarized world views (Bercovitch & Foulkes, 2012). The literature suggested that until a new world order is universally adopted, conflicts over values; including liberty, identity, and self-determination will continue to erupt (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009; Helsing, 2004; Zartman, 2007). Because an institutionalized oppression is most likely the root cause of communal conflicts, the current practices of short-term peacebuilding support to communities only after conflicts erupt have not been effective in achieving sustainable community peace. Therefore, the education in peace and conflict studies would need to find ways to integrate service-learning to facilitate community engagement for helping communities to proactively address systemic social injustice, inequality, and social order-based institutionalized oppression. As such, this research recognized that the education in peace and conflict studies will encounter difficult challenges and dilemmas that have no easy solutions.

**Current State of Global Destabilization**

Even a cursory review of the recent global events reflect very deep divisions in many countries. For example, British citizens very narrowly decided to exit the European Union (EU). Similarly, the Freedom Party’s candidate Norbert Hofer was elected as the president of Austria, narrowly defeating the anti-EU candidate. Marie Le Penn, who expressed the view that nationalism means not taking in any more refugees or not taking in the poor, may have a potential to be the president of France in the next election cycle. Societal stratification structures
dominating majority or dominating minority; and one group retaining economic power, and political power – seem to be the root cause of the communal conflicts that are taking place across the globe (Rupesinghe, 1996). Like the U.S., many countries seem to have become ‘divided’ nations, with almost equally sized groups with totally opposing views. As such, countries across the globe seem to be finding that it is very difficult to focus on the common good.

During the 2016 primaries and the presidential election; the U.S. citizens were subjected to the heated national dialogue and the rhetoric about divisive issues such as 11 million undocumented individuals, radical Islamists, LBGT rights, shootings of unarmed Blacks, prolife vs. prochoice issues and the rights to own and use guns. Pro and anti-Trump debates and continuous protests across the nation can be seen as a reflection of the major divisions that are deeply embedded in the voters’ racial, religious, educational, social and economic status-based identities. Additionally, since January 2017, the actions of the president and his administration have been further dividing the country and diminishing the values cherished, or at least proclaimed, by the U.S. In other words, the positionality and identity (Kezar & Lester, 2010; Sinclair, 2010) of the voters have become the driving force behind these divisions that are turning the social and governmental structures upside down.

**Conclusion**

The current state of global destabilization and the political, social, and economic divide between a small minority consisting of rich, elite and those in power, and most of the socio-economically depressed population will continue to create fertile grounds for communal conflicts. Based on the education of this researcher and his interactions with educators in peace and conflict studies as well as peacebuilding practitioners, he thinks that very little, if anything, is being done to address the gap between those in power and the oppressed.
Prevalence of Institutionalized Oppression

Institutionalized oppression is organized exploitation of individuals within certain identity group(s) that is imposed by the society. Institutionalized oppression takes place when the laws, regulations, and practices intentionally generate inequities based on individuals’ membership in targeted social identity groups (Chaney, LeFrance, & Qinteros, 2006).

Documented Institutionalized Oppression of Large Segments of Societies

This section first describes global institutionalized oppression and then documents institutionalized oppression in the U.S.

Global institutionalized oppression of large segments of societies. The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2016 Report (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2016) provided the following critical statistics: Since 2008, the world has become 2.44% less peaceful; Violence costs were $13.6 trillion - 13.3% of the World GDP: Globally $5/day/per person; and from 2011 to 2015, deaths from terrorism increased by 286%. In 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recorded over 65 million forcibly displaced refugees, an increase of over fifty percent over five years (UNHCR, 2016).

Documented institutionalized oppression. Katherine Newman and Victor Chen (2011) asserted that “thirty-seven million Americans live below the poverty line” (p. 148). Institutionalized oppression is disproportionately experienced by minority groups, especially African Americans. In the United States, less than 10% of the wealthiest American own about 70% of the assets while almost 45% of the U.S. population has no assets but is likely to be in debt (Sernau, 2014). Alexander (2010) suggested that as a result of the war on drugs, one in three young African American men are subjected to time in prison and in some cities more than half of adult black men are either in jail or on probation or parole. Bryan Stevens (2012)
asserted that Blacks are 11 times more likely to get the death penalty than Whites. Weis and Fine (2012) also stated that, “Since 1989 there have been more blacks entering the prison system for drug offenses each year than there were graduating from SUNY with undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degrees combined” (p. 191). Alexander (2010) suggested, that as a result of convictions, these men are subjected to legalized discrimination in employment, housing, education, government benefits and denied their right to vote. The mass incarceration is perpetually continuing the racial caste system envisioned by the era of Jim Crow laws.

According to federal data (Kahn & Kirk, 2015), blacks were more likely than whites to be in jail while waiting for trial; police arrest black Americans for drug crimes at twice the rate of whites. Black men’s sentences were on average, 10 percent longer than those of their white peers; prosecutors are about twice as likely to file charges against blacks that carry mandatory minimum sentences than against whites; and African-Americans get sometimes twice the prison terms that whites get with identical criminal histories, when they commit the same crimes under identical circumstances. Achievement and opportunity in America: Critical next steps for schools Report (The Education Trust, 2017) included the following substantiation of inequality experienced in the U.S, by Blacks, minorities and poor: 1) Child poverty rate among Blacks is 3 times that of the child poverty rate among Whites; 2) Latino and black students are three times as likely to get low- effectiveness teachers than White students; and 3) National inequities in State and Local funding per student include a gap of $1200 between high poverty vs. low poverty districts and $2000 between high minority vs. low minority districts.

**Multidimensional aspects of inequality.** Now, scholars consider inequality to be multidimensional and that the traditional view of inequality that was limited it to economic, socio-economic, and cultural inequality is not considered to be sufficient to the world of the 21st
century (Grusky, 2011). They believe that a new multidimensional approach needs to be undertaken to address “eight forms of inequality” (Grusky, 2011, p. 8): 1) economic (wealth, income, and ownership); 2) power (political power, workplace power, and household authority); 3) cultural (knowledge, digital culture, and good manner); 4) social (social clubs, workplace associations, and informal networks); 5) honorific (occupational, religious, and merit-based); 6) civil (right to work, due process, and franchise); 7) human (on-the-job, general schooling, and vocational training); and 8) physical (mortality, physical disease, and mental health). Therefore, it is apparent that all these factors are contributors to social injustice and institutionalized oppression experienced by the poor and minorities. Additionally, scholars have suggested that through deliberate policies those in power perpetuate these inequalities (Fisher et al., 2011).

Within many countries including the United States, the power to control these policies mostly resides in economic, political, and military domains (Mills, 2011). Additionally, in a capitalist society in the United States, the use of ownership and control of profit producing investments as well as property rights in the means of production are the one of the critical means used to perpetuate inequality and institutionalized oppression (Domhoff, 2011; Wright, 2011).

**Inequality as a significant contributor to communal conflicts.** In their paper, “Addressing Horizontal Inequalities as Driver of Conflicts in the Post-2015 Development,” Henk-Jan Brinkman, Larry Attree, and Saša Hezir (2013) demonstrated that various inequalities – socio-economic, social injustice, political exclusion, joblessness, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and gender-based disparities related to opportunities, justice, social services, and security – lead to conflicts in diverse contexts around the world. They asserted that the evidence that various inequalities are one of the drivers of conflicts is strong enough for policymakers to act on inequality, to address inequality through inclusion, responsiveness, and accountability to
all social groups and to implement measures to strengthen inter-group relations. Therefore, they suggested that addressing inequalities should be recognized as one of the guiding principles underpinning the whole framework of policy options for establishing goals that specifically focus on addressing social, political, and economic inequalities – a suggestion that should be integrated into the education of peace and conflict studies.

France Stewart, Graham Brown and Armin Langer (2008) provided the following findings on horizontal inequalities: 1) Conflicts are more likely to occur where socioeconomic and political inequalities are high; 2) Unequal recognition among groups creates grounds for conflict; 3) Perceived horizontal inequalities increase the likelihood of conflict; 4) Some horizontal inequalities create conflicts that are long lasting; 5) The nature of the state is critically important in determining whether a serious conflict will erupt and if it will persist; and 6) Government’s policies are blind to the influence that horizontal inequalities have on long-lasting conflicts.

Michael Schwalbe (2008) contended that the society establishes the “rules of the game” to provide those in power with the ability to “rig the game” and to perpetuate inequality by getting people to believe that “There Is No Alternative” (TINA). By rigging the game, the group in power has institutionalized the inequality to make the inequality trap a critical aspect of the income and status inequality among the different groups in any society. The income inequality can be viewed as vertical inequality, and the status inequality as horizontal inequality; both being the root causes of communal conflicts. Therefore, it seems that practitioners will need to 1) find ways to change the relationships between the segments of the society as they relate to the influence of the cultural (knowledge, values, and skills acquired by growing up in a social environment and social capital (social network connections) on an individual’s social mobility
and 2) to create equal opportunity for every member of the society in acquiring the human capital consisting of credentials, skills and experience.

**Unaddressed influence of inequality.** Global inequality is a grim situation in which people living in a country have unequal access to income, wealth, property rights, resources, social services, and advanced positions in their society. Indicating that over the last few decades of income inequality has increased in many countries, the International Monetary Fund (2014) Policy Paper, *Fiscal Policy and Income Inequality* and the UN report, *Inequality Matters* (2013) discussed many implications of the rising inequality. The UN report pointed out that the denial of political voice and influence at the lower end of the inequality spectrum can cause political unrest and violent conflicts. The prevalence of inequality was also noted by the International Monetary Fund Survey Magazine (2014), which included the following facts: 1) Oxfam reports that the top 85 richest people own half of the world’s wealth; 2) the richest individuals may be hijacking the political process for their own gain; and, 3) inequality is often passed and exacerbated through generations.

Because the current peace and conflict studies education and the practice of peacebuilding focus on the resolution of conflicts, they focus on resolving communal conflicts only within the existing social structures without addressing the issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression of large segments of societies. This discussion suggested that the current education in peace and conflict studies has been ineffective in addressing social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression as the root causes of conflicts of the twenty first century. Therefore, this research study raised questions about the effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies and the current practices of peacebuilding in addressing the social divides and communal conflicts.
Conclusions

Even with ongoing communal conflicts that have been erupting across the globe, there has been almost no discussion of whether the sustained institutionalized oppression of significant segments of societies across the world and the growing inequality of income and opportunities between and within societies are the root causes of these conflicts. It was noticed that there is very little discussion about how to reform the current education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding for tackling conflicts caused by the race, ethnicity, language and religion-based oppression of large segments of societies. The literature review indicated that as the current peace and conflict studies do not include opportunities for engaged learning through involvement as members of a community, they do not address the influence of social and economic inequality and the lack of opportunities for thousands of poor people (e.g., Woods, Willis, Wright, & Knapp, 2013). The literature review indicated that there is a need for further research to better understand the challenges associated with developing a sustained community partnership for assisting a community in its efforts to find sustainable peace by proactively addressing the issues of social injustice and inequality (Bettez, 2011).

Current Practices in Higher Education

The origination of peace studies can be traced back to the Cold War initiation of the American foreign policy dominated practice of conflict resolution and development of the Western culture and philosophy-based peace education. In the evolving post-Cold War world order, conflicts have tended to be internal to states, which have required peacebuilding practitioners to work with outdated approaches to keep experimenting with the notion of stability (Zartman, 2007). Therefore, it seems that peace and conflict studies educators will continue to experience challenges until a new system is adopted for addressing pre-conflict social order that
perpetuates social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Bercovitch & Simpson, 2010; Malek, 2013; Zartman, 2007). As such, the 21st century conflicts make it even more critical that the education in peace and conflict studies include the exploration of collective needs and interests of the parties to the conflict and integrate the psychological, cultural, and social dimensions of interactions between the parties who want to change the course of conflict that is destructive and detrimental to their self-interest (Kelman, 2007).

Although the role of higher education as public good is fundamentally important, Philip Altbach (2016) asserted that as higher education is facing unprecedented challenges, the fundamental goal of education is negated in preference for income and prestige. Therefore, the future of higher education will require educational institutions to undertake a mutual caretaking ethic for higher education in the twenty-first century (Cassuto, 2015). However, because of the challenges faced by higher education institutions that include increased reliance on part-time faculty, deterioration of qualifications of the faculty, inadequate compensation and bureaucratization of the profession; educational institutions are in for a struggle for the soul of higher education (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2010). Thelin (2011) suggested that for managing institutional survival, universities are either reducing or moving away from tenure-track positions and increasing their reliance on adjunct faculty positions. Altbach et al. (2010, p.107) asserted that the massification of higher education has changed higher education to “functional knowledge.” Collins (1971) considered higher education as “Education as Status Culture” (p. 1010) and “Education as a Mechanism of Occupational Placement (p.1011). Therefore, this research questioned how the changes that are taking place in education have constrained the abilities of the educators and the institutions’ governing bodies as they relate to the fundamental purpose of education as expressed by Dewey (1916) and Freire (1970).
Explosive Growth in Peace and Conflict Studies Programs

Johnson & Johnson (2005) documented that since 1970, peace programs have been initiated at every level of education and now over 300 educational institutions have programs in peace and conflict studies. At present in the United States there are an estimated 100 graduate programs in conflict resolution and peace studies and another 85 in other English-speaking countries (Smith, 2013a). According Windmueller, Wayne, and Botes (2009), peace and conflict studies increased from four graduate programs established in 1985 to 80 graduate programs in the United States and 130 graduate programs globally in 2000. However, it seems that even with this tremendous growth, the educators in peacebuilding have not been effective in developing practitioners capable of helping communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression in societies. Consequently, it can be concluded that there is a gap between the knowledge and skills students learn in peace and conflict studies education and the skills and knowledge that are required for resolving conflicts in the 21st century.

Status of Programs in Peace and Conflict Studies

The current peace and conflict studies education primarily focuses on processes such as negotiations, conflict management and resolution, reconciliation, and the use of treaties and laws to reduce violence (Harris, 2004). Because the current education in peace and conflict studies primarily centers on negative peace, reduction of violence, it has proven to be ineffective in educating citizens to live together peacefully (Gervais, 2004). Therefore, it is questionable whether the education in peace and conflict studies is addressing John Synott’s (2005, p. 22) following assessment:

Peace education is regarded as fulfilling a central role in establishing and sustaining nonviolent societies where conflicts are resolved through peaceful means. It is concerned
with supporting humans in developing their individual potentials for achievement through peaceful means and the transformation to peaceful societies and institutions.


Our central thesis is that education and the generation and transmission of knowledge which challenges dominant thinking and puts forward alternatives, can contribute to the realization of a peaceful, just and equitable future.

In his chapter, “The Nature of Peace Education: Not All Program Are Created Equal”, Gavriel Salomon (2002) astutely observed that peace education is not a single entity and the field’s scholarship in the form of theorizing, research, and program evaluation unfortunately lags behind the practice, an observation that was validated through this literature review. Based on his review of the Rotary program’s contribution to the training of peace fellows as effective peace builders, Hove (2015) suggested that as peacebuilding is not a fully developed profession and is a broad, interdisciplinary field, education in this field is focused on the needs of individual institutions.

Lack of universally accepted definitions. Although education in peace and conflict studies has enjoyed massive growth, there is no single definition of peace and conflict studies education and most of the peace and conflict studies programs overlook contributions of non-western societies to education peace and conflict studies (Gervais, 2004; Köylü, 2014). Additionally, many peacebuilding practitioners and peace and conflict studies educators have suggested that there are no universally accepted definitions of international conflict, peace, or peacebuilding (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Windmueller et al., 2009). For example, in his article, A definition of peace, Anderson (2004), asserting that there is no consensus on a theoretically comprehensible definition of “peace”, described the real challenges faced by the educators and practitioners who are engaged in peacebuilding. He advocated a useful distinction between the
two dimensions of peace (positive peace and negative peace): the notion of peace and the notion of a culture of peace. Providing several examples of words used for peace in different cultures, he suggested that the concept of peace takes on additional nuances when drawn from non-Western languages and cultures. Anderson (2004) stated:

Whereas most Western definitions of peace tend to emphasize the absence of violence, Eastern definitions tend to be positive in the sense that peace means the presence of certain characteristics rather than the absence of negative characteristics. A truly global understanding of peace should include both the absence of factors such as violence and the presence of factors such as balance, harmony, and unbrokenness” (p. 102)

Therefore, it seems that the current peace and conflict studies and the mediation of international conflicts are predominantly structured to address the negative dimension of peace - absence of violence.

**Lack of agreement on the core competencies.** Peace and conflict studies education programs vary widely in terms of ideology, objectives, and emphasis and are based on very different curricula, contents, and practices (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Most of peace and conflict education programs neither have any real theoretical or research rationale nor have they been evaluated. The education in peacebuilding still lacks an underpinning of convincing theories across the academic disciplines. Even with the mounting awareness of the role of education in promoting a culture of peace, the field still is faced with significant ambiguities in terms of the collective understanding of the critical concepts (Gill & Niens, 2014). Therefore, the fundamental challenge in peace and conflict studies education initiatives is finding a universal agreement on the theoretical framework that bridges the disconnect between practice, theory and research (Danesh, 2006; Gill & Niens, 2014; Johnson & Johnson, 2005).

Windmueller et al. (2009) raised the following critical but unanswered questions: “What core competencies should be included in graduate-level peace and conflict resolution education?
What curriculum best serves these competencies (p. 286-287)?” These authors asserted that the lack of a clear definition of the field of peace and conflict further complicates the task of defining the core competencies required for peace and conflict studies. Therefore, it seems that the educational programs in peace and conflict studies need to answer the following critical questions raised by Brigit Brock-Utne in her article: Introduction: Education for Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution (2009, p. 153): “What core competencies should graduate-level peace education convey? What curriculum elements promote these competencies most effectively? To what degree are these competencies and pedagogical approaches culturally bound? And, how is the education assessed and how does it relate to professional practice? “

Therefore, there is no agreement about what constitutes peace and conflict studies, especially as they apply to the conflicts of the twenty-first century. For example, based on the political-societal conditions that serve as the background for peace education; Bar-Tal & Rosen (2009) have described two models of peace education: 1) Indirect peace education (for unfavorable political-societal conditions) that does not aim to bring immediate deep change but by focusing on reflective thinking, tolerance, ethno-empathy, human rights, and conflict resolution; seeks to develop peace infrastructure and 2) Direct peace education (for favorable political-societal conditions) that directly tries to change societal beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors that serve as barriers to peaceful resolution of conflict. However, educational institutions do not appear to make this distinction in their curricula.

Salomon & Nevo (2001) have suggested that the development of peace education scholarship faces two major obstacles: 1) Conceptual ambiguity – difficulty in finding a common core for educational programs and 2) Scarcity of research and evaluation of peace education as an educational challenge. They also argued that there is a critical distinction regarding whether
the program is providing education about peace or education for peace with the other. Peace and conflict studies need to educate students about understanding the critical distinction between peace education (focuses on intergroup aspects of conflicts, aiming at changed perceptions and attitudes, leading to a different way of relating to the “other collective side” of the conflict) and conflict resolution (focuses on self-perceptions, self-monitoring, social skills and interpersonal aspects of conflicts) as conceived and practiced primarily in education institutions (Salomon, 2004). Based on this conception they viewed “peace education as affecting one’s way of treating the 'other’s' collective narrative as legitimate (p.66)” and asserted that peace education programs must deal with long histories of ethnic hostilities and inequalities— a critically missing element of the peace and conflict studies.

In their article, “Conflict Resolution and Transformative Pedagogy”, Fetherston and Kelly (2007) suggested that based on their experience, they believed that what transformative education might mean in practice complicates the education in peace and conflict studies. They asserted that transformative education in peace and conflict studies needs to be less about the application of techniques for managing conflicts and needs to emphasize “a search for processes that can make possible myriad transformations of self, self-in-relationships, self-in-society, as well as transformation in the structural realm” (p. 264). As such they supported the premise of this research that the education in peace and conflict studies needs to embrace critical theory and transformative learning.

The literature review indicated that Paulo Freire's philosophy of critical pedagogy has a continuous and profound influence on the theory and practice of peace education (Snauwaert, 2011; Tapper, 2013). Snauwaert (2011) argued that the fundamental premises of Freire’s philosophy, which point to a realization-focused theory of justice, can facilitate a strong
foundation for theory and practice of critical peace education. Articulating the importance of a conception of justice, he suggested that the consideration of the nature of justice in peace and conflict studies is important to addressing the definition of the problem of "What is peace?" Therefore, this research is based on the premise that the conception of justice is fundamentally important to the theory and practice of critical peace and conflict studies education.

Brian Polkinghorn, Haleigh La Chance, and Robert La Chance (2008) discussed how graduate education in peace and conflict studies is composed of an eclectic mix of programs, schools, and departments and that these programs are spread out across more than 20 different departments and types of schools (including College of Arts/Humanities and Science, School of Law, School of Theology/Religion, School of Education, College of Public Affairs, School of Business; College of Social Sciences, and School of International Studies). These authors asserted that, because of the number and mix of programs, the curriculum planning is based on what the faculty want or can teach rather than what is needed to provide the students with the knowledge and skills necessary for being effective practitioners. For example, conflict resolution programs offered by many well-recognized institutions do not even include the requirement for courses in facilitation or mediation.

Jay MacLeod (2009) suggested that schools educate the wealthy to occupy places at the top of the economy and train the poor to accept their deprived status in the societal class structure. This is drastically different than the proclaimed assertion that “peace education is aligned with a radical/counter-hegemonic paradigm for social change through education” and that peace education acts as ‘resistance’ to dominant models of education that reproduce oppressive, violent social structures” (Synott, 2005, p. 6-7).
Addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression: Challenges of peace and conflict studies. Patrick Coy (2009) suggested that in the twenty-first century, conflict must be viewed as an opportunity to effect a social change and a way to achieve “proportional empowerment” for readdressing social disparities. However, courses regarding social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression are either completely ignored or insufficiently addressed by the existing curricula, including the 70 classroom-tested courses included in Peace, Justice, and Security Studies: A Curriculum Guide (McElwee et al., 2008). This review supported the contention that education in peace and conflict studies primarily centers on addressing negative peace and finding temporary solutions to communal conflicts caused by deeply embedded social injustice, vertical and horizontal inequality (Stewart, Brown & Langer, 2008).

As many of these globalized and electronic-media facilitated conflicts are based on class, race, religion, and culture-based institutionalized oppression, nation states will be ill-equipped to resolve these conflicts (Oetzel, Dhar, & Kirschbaum, 2007). However, the current education in peace and conflict studies seems to continue to be primarily founded in the concept of negative peace. It seems to be focused on using detached (without any real association with the conflicted communities) peacebuilding experts and working with community elites (referred to by Freire, 1974) to find temporary peace without addressing the root causes of conflicts. As such, it is understandable that education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding are primarily focused on conflict management activities that are conducted only after conflicts erupt and only within the existing socio-political environment and the framework of social order that cause the conflicts in the first place. Consequently, education in peace and conflict studies and the practice of peacebuilding seem to perpetuate a view of negative peace.
The following discussion is intended to demonstrate a need for peace and conflict studies to integrate new ways of thinking for achieving sustainable peace by questioning the current dominant ideology-based social order that perpetuates social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression.

Using “Inequality: A Metaphor for Peacelessness?”, in their chapter titled, Peace Education and the Comparative Study of Education, Robin Burns and Robert Aspelagh (1996) suggested that a peace education paradigm, at least indirectly, provides a critique of dominant discourse in two ways: “through the critique of structures and processes which underlie the negation of peace, of which inequality is a central outcome, and through analysis of education’s role in sustaining this culture, which is a ‘war culture’” (p. 6). They added,

“Concern about inequality and justice, as metaphors for radical peace education, are integral to the change program which is bound up in peace education…And further, the world for which peace educators act, is one which addresses the issues of inequality, so that they must at some level be concerned with access to knowledge and the kind of knowledge which they, too, are transmitting…Our central thesis is that education, and the generation and transmission of knowledge which challenges dominant thinking and puts forward alternatives, can contribute to the realization of a peaceful, just and sustainable future” (p. 7).

In Toward a Definition of Peace Studies, Máire Dugan and Dennis Carey (1996) provided the following definition of peace studies:

Peace studies is an academic field which identifies and analyzes violent and nonviolent behaviors as well as structural mechanisms attending social conflict with a view towards understanding how these processes might lead to a more desirable human condition (p. 79).

The processes referenced in Dugan and Carey’s (1996) definition and the peace education advocated by Burns and Aspelagh (1996) raised questions about whether (over the last twenty years) the education in peace studies has evolved enough to be effective in addressing the issues of dominant ideology-based perpetuation of social injustice, inequality, and
institutionalized oppression. Therefore, educators in peace and conflict studies need to think about the relevance of Robin Burns’ (1996, p. 121) citation of the following comment of Nickolas and Ostermann (1974), to their work:

One cannot be educated for peace: peace is a condition attainable only through social action. A capacity for peace action may perhaps be gained through educational process. Social action can certainly not mean, in a given social situation: education for “organized peacelessness.”…The close connection of peace education with the development of a potential for critical consciousness reveals the convergence of peace education with an emancipatory political education.

This citation supported Freire’s (1974) insistence that methodological failings can always be traced to ideological errors and his thesis that “if one is to adopt a method which fosters dialogue and reciprocity, one must first be ideologically committed to equality, to the abolition of privilege, non-elitist forms of leadership wherein special qualifications may be exercised, but not perpetuated” (p. xi).

Inadequacy of the current educational programs. Experts have suggested that better conceptual frameworks for organizing the knowledge about peace education are needed to guide future development of peace education and research (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Bar-Tal and Rosen (2009) have raised critical questions: Can peace education facilitate change in the socio-psychological infrastructure that feeds continued intractable conflict, and, if so, how should the change be carried out” (p. 557)? Similarly, in their article, Lessons to be learned from research on peace education in the context of intractable conflict, Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) suggested that the education in interpersonal conflict resolution is not very useful for resolving conflicts that are deeply entrenched in the collective narratives and beliefs of the conflicting groups. They also concluded: 1) Peace education may not be able to deliver the desired sustainable peace in the face of unfavorable political-societal conditions; 2) Strong
negative emotions may limit the effectiveness of peace education; and 3) Participants in peace education may have incompatible agendas and perceptions.

The transformative power of peace and conflict studies education needs to be embedded in its potential to redress dehumanization processes which are root causes of violent conflicts. By being a passive force, peace and conflict studies education may be playing a destructive role in perpetuating the root causes of conflicts, including inequality and disapproving intergroup attitudes. Even with the mounting awareness of the role of education in promoting a culture of peace, the field still is faced with significant ambiguities in terms of the collective understanding of the critical concepts (Gill & Niens, 2014). Questioning whether education for peace can become a legitimately transformative process, Gill & Niles (2014) have provided some pedagogical approaches (citizenship education, values education, critical education, and history education) to peace and conflict studies education – approaches that don't seem to be adopted by educational programs in peace and conflict studies.

_Graduate Education and Professional Practice in International Peace and Conflict_ (Carstarphen, Zelizer, Harris, & Smith, 2010), Special Report 246, published by the United States Institution of Peace, included the following conclusions: Graduate-level academic institutions are not adequately preparing students in peace and conflict management; students are not acquiring a holistic understanding of international conflict work; students are not given sufficient opportunities to learn from field experience; most courses emphasize theoretical knowledge more than practical skills and applications; and educational practices are inadequate for making conflict resolution practice culturally and contextually appropriate to the specific local culture of the parties. This discussion highlighted a need for having scholar practitioners
who use service-learning to improve education in peace and conflict studies by effectively engaging communities for providing students transformational learning.

**Influence of institutional business models and governance.** Corporatized higher education views students as consumers and relies on educators to be the means to transmit knowledge to fulfill the demands of corporations for having workers with functional skills (Giroux, 2012). Educators are not taking the time to get to know students and that is creating a gap between what professors have been doing and what students need from them (Cassuto, 2015). The corporate business management model (that is autocratic and hierarchical and top-down) that is increasingly adopted by educational institutions has significantly relied on viewing faculty as a tool to transmit knowledge, reduced the collaboration with faculty and faculty governance, turned the need for citizenship skills into a requirement for work skills, and therefore, has drastically reduced the abilities of educators for providing students community-engagement-based service-learning and associated experiential and transformative education that is focused on the common good (Giroux, 2003; Taylor, 2017). Because the educational system has practiced teacher-centered curriculum and ignored student-centered curriculum, the problem of the relevance of graduate education will be challenging (Cassuto, 2015).

Corporate practices in higher education have emphasized higher rankings, growing enrollment and more revenue to substitute learning as the main criterion for decision making (Nica, 2014). Leonard Cassuto (2015) asserted, “The current practice of graduate teaching essentially retails expired passports” (p.9). The institutional governance that emphasizes rankings and enrollment numbers has evolved into an institutional view of students as consumers of education as a product and in turn diminished the achievement of the idea of higher education as a calling for the common good (Cassuto, 2015).
Therefore, for educators, higher education represents a challenge for managing tensions between the market-oriented approach to education and education for promoting values of a just society (Giroux, 2003). Taylor (2017) suggests that “the use of corporate management practices in higher education minimizes both non-economic values and the traditional role of the university as a locus of knowledge creation and dissemination within society” (p. 108). Giroux (2003) stated, “The corporatizing of US education reflects a crisis of vision regarding the meaning and purpose of democracy at a time when market cultures, market moralities, market mentalities [are] shattering community, eroding civic society, [and] undermining the nurturing system for children” (p. 195).

**Lack of participation of individuals from underserved communities.** Educational institutions have recognized that the faculty from underserved communities could act as role models students from underserved communities (Borkowski, 1988; Brown & Miller, 1998; Taylor, 2011). Educational institutions have also acknowledged that to meet the needs of increasing participating of students from underserved communities, they would need to tackle the challenge of recruiting and retaining faculty from underserved communities (Benjamin, 2004; Brown & Miller, 1998; Prystowsky, 2018; Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004). To address this challenge the educational system would need to undergo a systemic change that it has not been able to do for a long time (Benjamin, 2004; Prystowsky, 2018). However, actions designed to achieve the objectives of increasing the faculty from underrepresented communities may have to be structured to withstand potential legal challenges (Clague, 1989; Taylor, 2011). These actions would have to address what Ronald Taylor (2011) refers to as “Equal Protection Paradox of Minority Faculty Preferences” (p. 46).
The institutional pursuit for prestige encourages a culture that subordinates teaching, mentoring, collaborative responsibility and shared acceptance to the institutional status in terms of ranking and student enrollment (Benjamin, 2004; Brown & Mille, 1998). Literature has documented that earnings of full-time educators have declined disproportionally relative to earnings in other professions and concurrently the use of non-tenure track positions and adjunct faculty has steadily increased (Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004). Similarly, educational institutions do not recognize the value which the faculty from underserved communities provide by devoting their time for serving on committees and for being voices for students from underserved communities (Thomas, 2006). Unfortunately, presidents of educational institutions have ignored Francis Borkowski’s (1988) following suggestions, that he included in his article, “The University President’s Role in Establishing an Institutional Climate to Encourage Minority Participation in Higher Education”: giving less merit to the recommendations made by the faculty at small institutions, such as historically black colleges and universities (HBCU); not recognizing throughout the institution that recruitment of minorities is a continual process and is not a process just used during a formalized search; not hiring outstanding graduates from the institution's own doctoral programs; not developing faculty exchange programs with HBCUs, and utilizing postdoctoral fellowship programs to recruit minority faculty members for permanent positions.

As students from low-income families are less likely to overcome financial barriers or assume large debt, creative solutions would be required to increase participation of underserved communities in faculty or leadership in higher education (Altbach et al. 2010). Cassuto (2015) suggested that as the selection of graduate students is controlled by economics and therefore, the admission process has marginalized graduate education to the point that it has lost a clear
purpose and identity. He asserted that the prestige-driven research culture of graduate education has resulted in intramural class struggles. The cost of graduate education has turned into a system that perpetuates inequality rather than a way to promote the common good (Cassuto, 2015). As historically educational administrators have leaned on requiring superior qualifications from minorities, graduate schools have remained mostly as white enterprise and therefore, in doctoral programs, there is an unacceptable level of underrepresentation of individuals from underserved communities (Björk & Thompson, 1989; Cassuto, 2015). Additionally, as the current educational system does not fulfill the needs of individuals from underserved communities and does not have a system that seems to value faculty from underserved communities, it would continue to have challenges of recruiting and retaining faculty from underserved communities (Benjamin, 2004; Thomas, 2006).

This underrepresentation has resulted in what is referred to by scholars as a pipeline problem (Björk & Thompson, 1989; Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004). This pipeline problem associated with having individuals from underserved communities as faculty is caused by the unacceptable numbers of individuals from these communities who earn PhDs: African-Americans less than 5%; Hispanics less than 4%; and American Indians less than 1% (Björk & Thompson, 1989; Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004; Taylor, 2011; Thomas, 2006). Additionally, history has demonstrated that representation of faculty from underrepresented communities declines at tenure time (Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004). The literature has documented that the underrepresentation of individuals from underserved communities is a problem that has persisted in higher education for a long time and for resolving this problem, educational institutions would have to embrace a paradigm shift that encompasses
implementation of comprehensive but uncomfortable changes in (Benjamin, 2004; Prystowsky, 2018; Slaughter, Ehrenberg, & Hanushek, 2004).

The need for scholar-practitioners. To address the challenges of dealing with social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression, institutions in peace and conflict studies would need to explore whether they could to find ways to develop scholar-practitioners. This research used Kupo’s (2014, p. 89) question “Theory to Practice, Practice informed by evidence, what does the literature say?” to define what it takes to be a scholar-practitioner.

What does it mean to be a scholar-practitioner? The literature has recognized the challenges associated with defining what it means to be a scholar-practitioner (e.g., Herbert, 2010). This is because the concept of scholar-practitioner is based on the idea that education is a scholarly endeavor and needs scholars to become practitioners who are engaged in the educational enterprise (Jenlink, 2014). Scholar-practitioners could be viewed as individuals who purposefully use theories, research and collaborative conversations with others to intentionally examine their practice for bringing innovations and transforming practice. Adams (2008) supported this view by his suggestion that by combining the contributions of the scholar and practitioner, scholar-practitioners see the practice not only as the application of knowledge but also as source of its generation and benefit from the knowledge that is embedded in the practice. However, to achieve this objective, the scholar-practitioners would need to be both the “insider-outsider” and the “external-outsider” in any society (Banks, 2007, p. 61). This need for scholar-practitioners could be met by peace and conflict studies programs by developing and implementing professional doctorate programs that include a way for addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression.
Assessment of Appropriateness of Professional Doctorates

Currently, a PhD is the primary vehicle for anyone interested in getting a doctoral-level education in peace and conflict studies. However, the research orientation of these PhDs may not provide any direct and explicit benefits to students in developing skills that are required by the practice of finding sustainable peace in the twenty-first century.

**Professional doctorate (Prof.Doc) vs. PhD.** Prof.Doc was established as a response to criticism of employers that PhD graduates lacked the wider subject knowledge, practical experience, and the necessary general skills to work in the area of practice – very relevant to practice areas of peacebuilding (Taylor, 2008; Willis, Inman, & Valenti, 2010). Professional doctorates have been established in numerous fields. Although there are more than 50 ProfDoc programs are offered in the United States, because of a dearth of research on the subject, very little is known about Prof.Docs in the United States (Kot & Hendel, 2012).

A PhD can be viewed as the training for a career in academia or research while the professional doctorate (ProfDoc) can be seen as being concerned with the development of professional practice, professional identity, trans-professional working, and authentic leadership in practice (Beutel et al, 2010; Fulton, Kuit, Sanders, & Smith, 2012; Willis, Inman, & Valenti, 2010). Fenge (2009, p. 170) succinctly stated, professional doctorates reinforce the practice of “professional researcher” (PhD) versus “researching professional” (Prof.Doc). The PhD is academic process driven whereas the ProfDoc is outcome driven (Baldwin, 2013; Fink, 2006; Smith, 2013b; Willis et al., 2010). The discourse of Prof.Doc stresses the importance of the connection with practice and the notion that students exist within communities of practice and the academic. The discourse of the PhD emphasizes primarily a research orientation and students exist predominantly in the academic community (Baldwin, 2013; Willis et al. 2010).
Suggesting that the prof.Doc should be based on Dewey’s progressive ideals, Wergin (2011) asserted that the Prof. Doc should prepare professionals for pedagogical practice that will advance constructive social change. He outlined three types of pedagogies: 1) The pedagogy of uncertainty; 2) The pedagogy of engagement; and 3) The pedagogy of formation. The insights gained from this article would be useful in examining the appropriateness of Prof.Docs to education in peace and conflict studies.

The PhD fits into Mode 1 knowledge – “knowing-in-theory” while professional doctorate fits into Mode 2 knowledge – “knowing-in action” for producing knowledge for the improvement of practice (Fenge, 2009; Fink, 2006; Fulton et al., 2012). The Prof.Doc addresses the gap between the skills and knowledge associated with traditional PhDs and what is required by the fields of practice (Servage, 2009).

**The Gap between Divided Disciplines: Peace and Conflict Studies**

The following discussion demonstrates that for helping communities in addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression, education in peace and conflict studies needs to bridge the divide between these fields that need to complement each other. Just the name, conflict and peace studies, has created an undeniable impasse that has existed from the inception of these programs (Boulding, 1978; Ryan, 2003). Scholars have long been concerned about the division between peace and conflict studies that partly may be fueled by a sustained suspicion that peace and conflict studies do not constitute a coherent and interconnected body of research that is evidenced by very limited cross-citation between studies of conflict and studies of peace (Bright & Gledhill, 2018). Scholars have suggested that the divide between peace studies and conflict resolution is based on the emphasis and approach of these programs (Boulding, 1978; Cooper, 2014; Galtung, 2010; Hansen, 2013; Ryan, 2003).
Conflict studies are transactional and primarily interest based. As conflict studies educate students to resolve conflicts within the current social orders and societal structures, students learn to resolve conflicts in manner that usually perpetuates the interests of parties with either explicit or implicit power and minimally reduces the marginalization of less powerful parties. Most of conflict studies programs try to educate students about how to resolve conflicts outside the traditional legal system (Cooper, 2014). Therefore, conflict studies tend to emphasize processes and intervention and do not necessarily focus on addressing the underlying issues of social injustice. As such, it would be reasonable to suggest that conflict studies focus on negative peace for resolving explicit or implicit violence.

On the other hand, peace studies try to teach students to use conflicts as a vehicle for achieving a societal transformation by addressing the root causes of the conflicts. Johan Galtung (2010) astutely stated, “Peace studies seeks to understand the negation of violence through conflict transformation, cooperation, and harmony” (p. 20). In keeping with Galtung’s message, Robin Cooper (2014) stated, Peace educators strive to address structural and cultural violence and empower the rising generation to contribute constructively to a powerful and just society” (p. 514). Therefore, it would be reasonable to suggest that peace studies focus on addressing social injustice and creating positive peace through non-violent ways to develop societal harmony for promoting just and peaceful societies. Therefore, peace studies tend to emphasize philosophy, values and transformation achieved by addressing social injustice (Hansen, 2013). As such, for accruing societal benefits by bridging the divide between peace and conflict studies, educators in peace and conflict studies may be well served by the consideration of Neil Katz’s (1989) suggestion, “the curriculum and methodology need to combine themes, perspectives, and orientations from peace as well as conflict studies, along with a social-change emphasis” (p.21).
Hansen (2013) suggested that conflict studies tend to focus on communication processes such as mediation, facilitation, and negotiation for intervention while peace studies education tends to use emphasis on oppression and injustice for focusing on preventative practices to accomplish conflict transformation. So, the difference is that peace studies tend to focus on the macro issues of oppression and injustice for preventing conflicts, while conflict studies tend to focus on the micro processes of mediation, negotiation, and facilitation for resolving conflicts (Hansen, 2013). As this difference in the emphasis between peace and conflict has yet not been resolved, it has created a philosophical gap between the two. This researcher suggests that one could view conflict studies as teaching students to be specialists in emergency management while peace studies educate students to be experts in emergency prevention. For example, conflict studies could be viewed as teaching students about managing climate disaster while peace studies could be viewed as teaching students about how to address climate change for reducing future climate disasters. Therefore, bridging the gap would require both peace and conflict studies educators to acknowledge that they need to work together for developing new ways for integrating conflict resolution processes of conflict studies with conflict transformation processes of peace studies for proactively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Conclusions**

Effective peacebuilding through peace and conflict studies education that is appropriate to the challenges of the twenty-first century conflicts has been recognized as one of the major challenges in building long-term, sustainable peace in post-conflict and divided societies. To be effective, education in these fields must be a trans-generational and an integral part of a larger
holistic educational effort that reaches all members of the global community (Schimmel, 2009). Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that peace and conflict education has not yet adopted the requirement that the goal of this education is to empower students to challenge power imbalances and to achieve greater equality, justice, and peace through individual and social transformation (Reilly & Niens, 2014). Similarly, it seems either that education in peace and conflict studies has not been successful in raising consciousness about the conditions that negatively impact large segments of the global society or that the practitioners are not able to act in accordance with their consciences.

It should be apparent that the educators in peace and conflict studies need to move toward a curriculum that will help graduates from their programs to be better prepared for assisting communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice and inequality (Asamoah, Healy, Mayadas, 1997). To accomplish this objective, education in peace and conflict studies would need to integrate theories of learning for adopting a sociocultural approach to provide the appropriate framework for addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Hakvoort, 2002). In summary, the education in peace and conflict studies will require what Toni Kirkwood-Tucker (2004) calls a “paradigm shift” (p. 56). To achieve this paradigm shift, peace and conflict studies programs will need to commit to providing students a transformative learning experience by changing students' frame of reference from interpersonal to intergroup conflicts arising out of social inequity and oppression of large segments of the global society (Brewer & Cunningham, 2009). Therefore, the massive expansion in education of peace and conflict studies may be increasing the negative consequences of teaching students what has proven to be ineffective in preparing practitioners with the knowledge and skills necessary for finding sustainable solutions to the complex conflicts of the twenty-first century.
Social Justice and Social Justice Projects

As social justice deals with social order that institutionalizes oppression, social justice projects cover a wide spectrum. For example, social justice projects include analysis of how power brokers from a dominant majority can use the continuation of European culture-based creation of knowledge to legitimize and to perpetuate group identity-based oppression of segments of societies (Alexander, 2010; Stanfield, 1985; Stevenson, 2012; Weis & Fine, 2012). Because institutionalized oppression has become almost invisible, it is being accepted as an unchangeable reality of a social order that promotes the continuation of privileges of whiteness (Anders et al., 2005; Leonardo, 2002). Therefore, social justice projects use the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) to question the current social order and power structures in regard to the claims of equal opportunity in color-blind objectivity and culture neutral systems (Brayboy, 2006; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Hobson, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Because of the socially constructed knowledge and the relationship between knowledge and power, social justice projects need to examine how Eurocentric epistemology-based educational curricula and practices are used to continue the social order that marginalizes segments of societies (Caruthers & Friend, 2014). Social justice projects also include efforts for helping scholar-practitioners in overcoming their discomfort and assisting them in developing networks of educators and scholar-practitioners for building critical communities (Bettez, 2011; Brantmeier, 2013).

Influence of Positionality

Educators in peace and conflict studies will need to recognize and take into consideration the influence of their positionality on their efforts to use critical theory and transformational
learning theory for advancing social justice (Alverson et al., 2008; Baumgartner, 2001; Brantmeier, 2013; Brisco, 2005; Hargraves & Fink, 2003; Jupp & Slatery, 2010).

**Social Justice Projects’ Challenges for Peace and Conflict Studies Education**

Because social justice projects question the authority of powerbrokers, social justice projects demand an enduring commitment, sustained patience and ability to be comfortable with the discomfort; they pose significant challenges for educators in peace and conflict studies and peacebuilding practitioners. Similarly, as the legislative processes are still controlled predominantly by white men, legislative proposals that reform the social order and realign decision-making powers will be extremely challenging. Additionally, because of the way education is funded, any critical theory driven changes in the education of peace and conflict studies would also be very challenging, and therefore, creating a nurturing space for building critical communities is extremely challenging (Bettez, 2011; Brantmeier, 2013).

**Conclusions**

Educational institutions in peace and conflict studies will need to agree on the definition of social justice. Using this definition, they will need to address the challenges of integrating social justice, as the fundamental purpose of the education, in peace and conflict studies. To achieve this objective, they will have to find ways for integrating critical theory and transformative learning theory into the education in peace and conflict studies.

**Service-Learning**

The aim of the research problem of this study was to better understand the challenges associated with developing a sustained community partnership for assisting a community in its efforts to find sustainable peace by proactively addressing the issues of social justice and inequality. Therefore, it should be evident that assisting a community in its efforts to proactively
address issues of social injustice and inequality would warrant generation of the experiential and transformational knowledge that can be gained through sustained service-learning partnership between the educational institutions and communities.

Review of the curricula of several peace and conflict studies and peacebuilding education programs suggested that the education in peace and conflict studies indicates a critical lack of a well-structured service-learning program that gives students opportunities to work with communities for receiving experiential knowledge of the persistent challenges of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, educational institutions in peace and conflict studies need to grapple with Ira Harkavy’s (2006) following suggestions regarding their role in advancing social justice in the 21st century. (1) the goal for universities should be to contribute significantly to developing and sustaining democratic communities and societies; and (2) by working to realize that goal, democratic-minded academics return to their core mission of effectively educating students to be democratic, creative, caring, constructive citizens of a democratic society. As students need to receive experiential education that is focused on transformation and helping them to reach their full potential for becoming civically minded members of their societies, service-learning, especially critical service-learning and social justice service learning (Chupp & Joseph, 2010; Furco, 2010; Mitchell, 2007) may provide one of the most critical and effective ways for educating the students in using community engagement for addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression. However, to help students to develop a sense of social responsibility, the curricula of peace and conflict studies will need to promote democratic and civic participation and reinforce a belief of interconnectedness with the community (Barnhardt, 2015).
According to Chupp and Joseph (2010), social justice service learning specifically focuses on shaping the student’s sense of civic responsibility while critical service-learning stresses longer-term social change through service activity. Social justice service learning and critical service learning requires students to: (1) engage in continuous critical self-reflection, (2) understand how power, privilege and oppression operate, (3) use critical thinking skills for linking social justice theory (or peace theories) and practice, (4) acquire a sense of agency and inspiration for working toward social change, and (5) participate in ongoing dialogue with others (Bettez & Hytten, 2013). Therefore, the following discussion illustrates the relevance of the service-learning, especially social justice and critical service learning to the education in peace and conflict studies.

**Philosophical Framework of Service-Learning**

Based on his belief that educative and personal experiences are not separable, John Dewey’s (1959) educational philosophy emphasized the critical connection between education and experience. Dewey’s (1959) work provided the philosophical foundation for service-learning (Jacoby, 2015; Kezar & Rhoads, 2001). Similarly, service-learning aims at overcoming Freire’s (1970) argument of ‘banking education’. According to Bourdieu, higher education is a social institution that creates knowledge as a form of cultural capital and power that is entrenched in a social structure of class-based power and privilege (Steiner, Warkentin, & Smith, 2011). Dewey’s (1959) premise that learning is a lifelong process and not a preparation for future living provided the foundational linkage to transformational service-learning.

**Service-learning and Social Justice**

This researcher agrees with Karen Warren’s (1998) assertion that “it is difficult to use service learning without an awareness of social justice (p.134). The aim of service-learning is to
use civic engagement to advance knowledge generation that is responsive to the social justice needs of a community (Altman, 1996; Furco, 2010). As such, this researcher believed that the students pursuing an education in peace and conflict studies are most likely interested in addressing social justice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, he thinks that peace and conflict studies can use service-learning to help students to distinguish between social service that centers on providing immediate help to people in need and social change work that focuses on dismantling societal barriers and political barriers that create and perpetuate the need for social services (Cipolle, 2010; Jacoby, 2015; Warren, 1998). For peace and conflict studies educators, service-learning offers an effective tool for situating students in communities to foster their knowledge of the how the current economic and arrangements create inequality and social injustice and in turn helping them develop strategies for assisting communities to develop new social structure that advances social justice and equality (Bajaj, 2005; Cipolle, 2010; Warren, 1998). However, this researcher has come to believe that for implementing these social structures, students would need to be educated in the development and implementation of public policy that are controlled by the current social order (Hess, 2011). Therefore, peace and conflict studies educators can use service-learning anchored in the larger contexts of communities, and transformational learning process to expose students the realities of social injustice, inequality and systemic oppression (Bajaj, 2015).

Through service-learning, peace and conflict studies may be able to develop an understanding of asymmetrical power (social, political, historical, and economic) relationships and how they create unequal forms of citizens and why these relationships need to change for having a just society (Bajaj, 2015). Through this understanding, peace and conflict studies can use service-learning to promote students’ commitment to social justice (Warren, 1998). This
researcher hopes that to address the urgent need for socially just communalities, the education in peace and conflict studies would find a way to use service-learning to infuse in students' social and educational entrepreneurship (Hess, 2011; Praszker & Nowak, 2012).

Community Engagement-based Service-Learning

Carrington and Selva (2010) stated: “Service-learning can be conceptualized within a social-cultural framework and can be described as people learning as part of developing a practice” (p. 47). Service-learning is entrenched in community and in classroom (Levesque-Bristol, Knapp, & Fisher, 2010; Levkoe, Brail, & Daniere, 2014; Savick, & Eckert, 2014). Therefore, it offers students an opportunity for transformative change, acquired engaged learning and critical inquiry through reflection and praxis; in communities and in the political and ideological spheres of university-community relationships (Levkoe et al., 2014). Service-learning provides students opportunities to be involved in powerful and meaningful change that is rooted in experience, critical inquiry and reflective discourse (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010). However, education in peace and conflict studies and peacebuilding would require service-learning that is focused on “civic engagement as collective action” and “civic engagement as social change” (Adler & Goggin, 2005, pp. 236-239).

Butin (2010a) provided four different perspectives of service learning: 1) technical perspective (focusing on innovation), 2) cultural perspective (focusing on meaning making), 3) political perspective, (concerned with competing stakeholders and how issues are manifested through power) and 4) an antifoundational perspective (centered on disrupting unacknowledged binaries of daily life). These perspectives are relevant to service-learning in peace and conflict studies and peacebuilding.
Research has demonstrated that service-learning contributes to the enhancement of positivity of the learning experience, motivation, civic skills, problem solving, and appreciation of diversity (Levesque-Bristol et al., 2010; Levkoe et al., 2014). As one of the most practical ways to test theories is through experiential learning, service-learning provides students a way to test what they learn in peace and conflict studies education (Kronick, 2007). Ideally, service-learning combines two multifaceted concepts of knowledge: construction and community action (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010). However, to be effective, service-learning should occur across the curriculum (Kronick, 2007).

Deeley (2010) stated, “service-learning is a form of experiential learning that combines academic coursework with voluntary service in the community. Essential requirements of service-learning are that the service needs to relate to coursework and that, through critical reflection, students make connections between their service experiences and the abstract concepts of the coursework” (p. 43). From a pedagogical point of view, in contrast to the “information-assimilation model of traditional education, service-learning is a model based on the practice of experiential learning (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993). Because of its three primary pedagogical objectives of (a) skill-set practice and reflexivity, (b) civic values and critical citizenship and (c) social justice activism; service-learning presents a radical and transformative pedagogy that requires linkage of the objectives of academic coursework with the goals of community-based service (Deeley, 2010; Levkoe et al., 2014). Service-learning can be viewed as the linkage between the academic work with community-based civic engagement executed within a framework of respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection (Butin, 2007; Furco, 2010).
Status of Service-Learning

Campus Contract, the organization of educational institutions that have committed to public service and community engagement, currently has more than 1,100 institutional members and thirty-four state and regional affiliates (Jacoby, 2015). Kezar and Rhoads (2001) asserted that the lack of growth and interest in service-learning could be viewed “as a response to three general critiques leveled at academe: lack of curricular relevance, lack of faculty commitment to teaching, and lack of institutional (and faculty) responsiveness to the larger public good” (p. 150). Although these critiques apply to education in general, they do not apply to peace and conflict studies because it appears that there are no service-learning programs in these fields. Although service-learning practitioners think that service-learning provides students opportunities for learning beyond the classroom education, research findings point to mixed outcomes, some findings even suggesting that community contacts that do not contradict their cognitive biases may lead to reinforcing stereotypical attitudes and beliefs (Simmons & Cleary, 2005). The current practice of service-learning that is based on short stays in the community faces what John Wallace (2000) referred to as “the problem of time” (p.133). Peace and conflict studies educators need to consider his recommendations for overcoming the problem of time.

Critical Service-Learning

Unlike traditional service-learning, because critical service learning focuses on social change and questions the societal distribution of power, critical service learning emphasizes the establishment of genuine and trustworthy relationships between higher education institutions and the communities they serve (Cipolle, 2010; Furco, 2010; Mitchell, 2007; Warren, 1998). By making connection between service-learning and social justice intentional and unambiguous as
well as encouraging students to view themselves as agents of social change, critical service-learning positions service-learning to emphasize social justice outcomes (Mitchell, 2007).

**Tensions of Service-Learning in Higher Education**

Kezar and Rhoads (2001) provided several illustrations of real-life organizational tensions in educational institutions that employ service-learning. They provided a detailed account of how these tensions, that revolve around the meaning and relevance of service, could be summarized with the following four questions: 1) A “learning question” regarding the debates over learning outcome; 2) A “locational question” regarding the connection between service-learning and the formal curriculum; 3) An “organization-of-work question” about how service-learning fits within the expectations of the work of the faculty; and 4) An “implementation question” regarding the desired key features of service-learning experience (p. 149). Kezar and Rhoads (2001) provided recommendations for applying Dewey’s (1959) philosophy for addressing these four questions. Students, consumers of knowledge constructed by educational institutions, may experience tension between the knowledge that is rooted in class-based social order and everyday knowledge constructed by community organizations (Steiner et al., 2011).

**Criticism of Service-Learning**

Levkoe et al. (2014) suggested that service-learning for students, educators, and community partners raises difficult issues regarding ethical, political, social, and economic challenges. Service-learning has been “criticized for not listening to the voices of community organizations” (Steiner et al., 2011). They cited Bacon (2002) to assert that there is a cultural divide between the community practitioners and educators. Community practitioners value practical knowledge and view learning as a collective activity, while educators may view themselves as experts providing students the knowledge. They also contended that community
organizations and educational institutions view the value of service learning from different perspectives (Steiner et al., 2011). Kezar and Rhoads (2001) suggested that over time service-learning has lost its foundation in Dewey’s philosophy.

Conclusions

Based on the above discussion, service-learning, with its linkage to experiential learning, can provide an effective approach for providing students in peace and conflict studies transformative learning for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The educators would have to earn the trust of community members and their institutions would have to enter into a long-term mutually beneficial partnership. The service-learning would have to be well integrated in and across the curricula. However, because of the nature and scope of the education in peace and conflict studies educators would have to rely on critical service-learning that emphasizes “civic engagement as collective action” and “civic engagement as social change” to help communities achieve social justice outcomes. Finally, the educators in peace and conflict studies would have to construct a curriculum that effectively integrates the service-learning program and its objectives of civic engagement for providing the students with a transformative learning experience.

Summation and the Implications of the Literature Review

Summation of the Literature Review

The literature search was focused on all aspects of education in peace and conflict studies to effectively address the problem of practice and the research questions as well as to fulfill the purpose of the research and to find ways of helping peace and conflict studies educators in using community engagement-based service-learning, experiential learning and transformative learning for educating students to proactively address the challenges of social injustice and
institutionalized oppression—the root causes of communal conflicts. As such, the underlying educational philosophies were presented in the beginning of this chapter. This discussion was supplemented with an analysis of the overall context of communal conflicts and the current state of global destabilization and prevalence of institutionalized oppression. This discussion provided the thinking behind the literature search for defining answers to the research questions and addressing the problem of practice.

The research questions emphasized the personal meaning and sense-making of peace and conflict studies educators in the specific context of educating students to use community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Habermas, 1984). The literature search suggested that for providing the students the ability to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression that is experienced by large segments of societies, the current education in peace and conflict studies needs to make a concentrated effort to use experiential learning through community engagement-based service learning.

For providing this experiential learning the curricula of peace and conflict studies need to integrate CRT, experiential learning and transformative learning, and emphasize the use of critical self-reflection that is integrated with critical action focused on social transformation (Carson & Fisher, 2006). This would warrant educators and their institutions and communities to work together for answering Edward Taylor and Patricia Cranton’s (2013, p. 43) questions: How does experience unfold in the context of transformative learning? How can we foster new experiences that have potential to lead to transformational learning? If transformative learning can be negative, how can we deal with the ethical issues of fostering it? To effectively respond to these questions, educators would need to create a learning environment that facilitates students’ experience of a sense of safety, trust between the educator and themselves, a sense of
possibility, help for overcoming fear, and empowerment for discovering their “self”. Education in peace and conflict studies would also need to refine their curricula for integrating a well-structured service-learning program that gives students opportunities to work with communities for receiving experiential knowledge of the persistent challenges of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression.

**Implications**

This literature search provided insights into the interrelationships between different aspects of education. For example, the literature search demonstrated that the education in peace and conflict studies is based on neither the definition of peace nor essential core competencies. Additionally, Carstarphen et al. (2010) suggested that as graduate-level educational institutions are inadequately preparing students to be practitioners in peacebuilding, there is a gap between what the educational programs are providing to the students and the need of the practice for graduates with a holistic understanding of peace and specialized knowledge and skills. Similarly, based on the literature review it has become apparent that current educational programs are neither integrating service-learning nor including critical theories nor transformational learning into the education of peace and conflict studies. In other words, the current education in peace and conflict studies has not placed appropriate emphasis on civic and community engagement for helping communities to proactively address issues of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, because of the lack of a coherent and well-defined field, the curricula of peace and conflict studies education need to be reformed to include pre-conflict community engagement and experiential-transformative learning. Similarly, based on the literature review’s differentiation between “professional researchers” as emphasized by professional doctorates and “research professionals” as emphasized by traditional PhDs; this
research study questions whether professional doctorates are better suited for education in peace and conflict studies.

The aim of this research was to discover insights into how educational institutions can use community engagement for providing students abilities that are essential for creating and nurturing a peace culture in their community (Kester, 2010). The findings of this research provide educators a better understanding of how, through the required community engagement, they can help students in understanding and appreciating the broader social and political dimensions of communal conflicts (Markus et al. 1993). This research offers educational institutions in peace and conflict studies insights into how to help students develop abilities to help communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and inequality to minimize the potential for communal conflicts and also to maximize a community’s resilience for collaboratively working to find sustainable solutions to communal conflicts (Harkavy, 2006).

This study provides educational institutions in peace and conflict studies new insights into how to provide the students transformational learning opportunities for understanding the influence of social justice and equity issues in the context of the frames of reference that the marginalized members of the community experience (Baumgartner, 2001; Caputo, 2005; Harkavy, 2006). This study also delivers insights into how educational institutions in peace and conflict studies can, through a purposeful utilization of community engagement, expose students to the impact of social injustice and inequality issues on communal conflicts and help them become civically-engaged and socially responsible members of their communities (Barnhardt, 2015).

This research sheds light on how educational institutions can integrate research, teaching, and community service for becoming community engaged institutions that maximize the benefits
of their institution’s intellectual and human capital for the greater good of the community and that provide the students the opportunity to collaborate and learn from the community for deepening their understanding of complex societal issues (Furco, 2010). This study helps educators to help students to move from the classroom learning to the learning gained from the lived experiences of members of the community, and in turn aligning with students’ passion for social justice and heightening their sense of building a more just society in the community of their service learning (Wallace, 2000). This research also provides students opportunities to understand how public policy potentially perpetuates the institutionalized oppression of large segments of communities (Caputo, 2005).

**Closing Statement**

In closing, this literature review justified the need for conducting this research. Using the insights gained from the literature review, Chapter Three: Research Design provides details of why Interpretative Phenomenological (IPA) was selected to conduct this research and how IPA will be used for conducting this research.
Chapter Three: Research Design

To provide the framework for the analysis of the selected research methodology, the problem of practice and the statement of purpose of this research study is described first. This is followed by a discussion of paradigms of research inquiry, process and rationale for selecting a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm and its alignment with the problem of practice and the purpose of the research study. Next is the discussion of the research methodology that provides the rationale for using a qualitative research and especially, the definition of phenomenology, the rationale and the basis for selecting phenomenological research methodology. This discussion is followed by details (overview, philosophical underpinnings, key scholars and scholarly debate) to substantiate the appropriateness and the reasons for selecting Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) for conducting this research study and the expected outcomes arising from the use of the IPA for conducting this research study. Next is a discussion of participants (criteria for purposive sample, appropriateness of the sample size, participant recruitment); description of the methods for data collection, and procedures for data analysis and presentation of findings. Following this discussion, the quality criteria considerations addressing credibility, transferability, internal audit, self-reflexivity and transparency are addressed. The discussion of quality criteria is followed by the descriptions of the implications and the limitations of this research study. Finally, the conclusions provide a synthesis of the rationale for the selection and appropriateness of IPA for this research study.

Problem of Practice and Statement of Purpose

Ongoing eruption of violent communal conflicts arising out of social injustice, social inequality and institutionalized oppression-based oppression of large segments of communities is a significant concern for all citizens of the globe (e.g., riots in Baltimore, MD; Ferguson, MO;
and San Bernardino, CA); mass killings (e.g., England, France, and Netherlands); citizen movements (e.g., Wall Street Protest, Black Lives Matter, and Arab Spring); and humanitarian crises (e.g., Syria and Myanmar). Since the end of the Cold War, more than 80 percent of conflicts are taking place within the borders of a single country (Stiftung, 2010). The rise in communal conflicts across the globe has resulted in loss of thousands of lives and multi-millions of dollars (Brown & Stewart, 2015). Therefore, the need of the future generations to have a more equitable and peaceful world demands that the education in peace and conflict studies find ways to engage communities for finding their own approaches to address their communal challenges associated with social injustice and social inequality.

Researchers have suggested that the on-going communal conflicts are founded in the issues related to social injustice, social inequality and institutionalized identity-based oppression (e.g., Bell, 1997; Bercovitch & Foulkes, 2012; Brantmeier, 2013; Brinkman et al., 2013; Oetzel et al., 2007; Stewart et al., 2008; Stiftung, 2010; The UN Report, 2013). The continuous eruption of communal conflicts indicates that there is a need for further research to better understand the challenges associated with developing a sustained community partnership for assisting a community in its efforts to proactively address the issues of social justice and social inequality (Bettez, 2011).

As demonstrated in Chapter Two: Literature Review, the existing literature indicated that researchers seem not to have used a phenomenological research to discover the meaning of the experiences associated with peace and conflict studies educators’ experience in preparing students to proactively use community engagement for preemptively addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression that are the root causes of communal conflicts. Therefore, this study provided a rare and unique opportunity for peace and conflict studies
educators to reflect on the meaning of their work and to bring to the practice of peacebuilding their insights into what it means to tackle the challenges of community engagement for preemptively mitigating community conflicts by proactively addressing issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. Similarly, this researcher hoped that the findings of this study would become a catalyst for communication, which doesn’t seem to be taking place now, within and among the educators in the multi-disciplined field of peace and conflict studies, practitioners in peacebuilding, community organizers, and the political, business, and community leaders. As stated before, the aim of the research questions was to gain insights into the challenges of peace and conflict studies educators in enabling students to use sustained community engagement for preemptively mitigating communal conflicts by proactively addressing the issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression.

Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges associated with educating students to use sustained community engagement for preemptively mitigating communal conflicts by proactively addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Research Questions and Sub-questions**

The aim of this research study was to focus upon peace and conflict studies educators’ experience for understanding the phenomenon of educating students to address social injustice and inequality through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Therefore, the research question and subquestion as well as the open-ended introductory and in-depth interview research question and sub-questions were purposefully focused on peace and conflict studies educators’ experience and challenges in educating to address social injustice and inequality through community engagement for
mitigating communal conflicts. It should be noted that the research question and sub-questions are driven by the theoretical framework of the research consisting of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Transformative Learning within the context of service-learning and are supported by interview questions (See Appendix: E).

Throughout the process of developing the research questions, this researcher was aware that the research question and sub-questions as well as the associated interview questions had the potential to be influenced by this researcher’s positionality (Agee, 2009; Andrews, 2003;). Therefore, this researcher used many of his courses in this doctoral program to refine the research and interview questions. Additionally, this researcher was fortunate to have the ability to refine research and interview questions by incorporating review comments provided by other educators and practitioners. As exhibited in Appendix E: Alignment of the Research Questions, this researcher recognized that because the interview questions generate the data for addressing the researcher questions, interview questions needed to be purposefully aligned to discover the data required for addressing the research questions within the context of the theoretical framework of the research (Agee, 2009; Butin, 2010b; Punch, 2016).

**Overarching Research Question**

How do peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage their experience in educating students to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts?

**Research Sub-questions**

1. How do the peace and conflict studies educators think about the appropriateness of the current curricula in preparing students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?
2. How do the educators in peace and conflict studies make sense of their personal experience in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning to help the communities preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

3. How do the peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage the effectiveness of their institution’s support for using community engagement to prepare students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

4. How are the educators in peace and conflict studies working with practitioners to improve education for effectively engaging a community to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

**Paradigms of Research Inquiry**

Because this research study needed to incorporate the conceptual roots undergirding this researcher’s quest for knowledge, this researcher consciously made efforts to clearly understand the planned research study in terms of: 1) Beliefs or assumptions regarding ontology (the nature of reality and being); 2) Epistemology (the study of knowledge, the acquisition of knowledge, and the relationship between research participants and the researcher); 3) Axiology (the role and place of values in the research process); 4) Rhetorical structure (the language and the presentation of the research); and 5) The research methodology (Ponterotto, 2005).

Alexander (2006) suggested that because each paradigm is founded in its own assumption, the only criteria that can be used to evaluate any specific application of a research paradigm are internal to the research study regarding the logical consistency of the research. The selected paradigm guided the research consideration of this researcher’s philosophical
assumptions about the planned study and in the selection of research tools, instruments, participants, and methods used in the conduct of the research study (Merriam, 1991). Therefore, this research was based on the following definition of paradigm, a critical underpinning of the knowledge created by research using the philosophy of science.

A paradigm can be defined as a 'set of interrelated assumptions about the social world which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organized study of that world (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 127).

**Process for Selecting the Research Paradigm of Inquiry**

The paradigm schema outlined by Ponterotto (2005) and Butin (2010b) identified differences among the four research paradigms (Positivism; Post-positivism; Constructivism-interpretivism; and Critical Theory) in terms of Ontology (The nature of reality), Epistemology (The study and acquisition of knowledge; and the relationship between the knower and would be knower), Axiology (The role and place of values in the research process), Rhetorical Structure (The language and presentation of the research), Assumptions about "Truth", key goals, key outcomes, unit of analysis, and key criteria.

In selecting the research paradigm, this researcher thought about whether the focus of the research inquiry will center on understanding the individual as a uniquely complex entity ("idiographic", e.g., biography or case study) or will concentrate on uncovering general patterns of behavior that have a normative base with an aim of finding an explanation of phenomena ("normative", e.g., a randomized experiment). Additionally, he was aware that he needed to think about whether the research study will refer to universal laws, behaviors, and cultures that apply to all human beings (Etic) or will be associated with constructs or behaviors that are unique to an individual's sociocultural context that are not generalizable (Emic). Therefore, the
selection of the paradigm reflected this researcher’s decisions regarding how he wanted to look at the issue, what he wanted the research study to address and what were his goals for this research study (Butin, 2010b).

**Rationale for the Selected Paradigm of Inquiry: Constructivist-Interpretivist Paradigm**

The following overview of the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm and its alignment with the research problem of practice and the purpose of the research study provided the appropriateness of this paradigm for conducting this study.

**Overview of constructivist-interpretivist paradigm.** Believing that there are multiple equally valid realities and that reality is a construct of the human mind, this paradigm stresses that because the world is a highly subjective phenomenon, reality needs to be interpreted and cannot be viewed as an object that can be measured (Merriam, 1991; Ponterotto, 2005).

According to Ponterotto (2005), as one cannot separate out an objective reality from the person, who is experiencing the reality; reality is constructed by the research participant. The nature of interpretive paradigm research tends to be more of theory-generation than theory-testing (Merriam, 1991).

The constructivist-interpretive paradigm presents a dynamic, rather than a static, picture of the world in which the continually changing world creates new perspectives and generates new knowledge that is based on the shared insights of the research participants (Merriam, 1991; Ponterotto, 2005). Therefore, constructivist-interpretivist paradigm research espouses a hermeneutical approach to questions aiming to discover the meaning and as such, focuses on process rather than outcomes or products (Butin, 2010b; Merriam, 1991). Consequently, unlike positivist or post-positivist research, the researcher cannot be a detached observer but is a deeply immersed research participant committed to co-constructing the findings of the research (Butin,
Constructivist-Interpretivist paradigm is based on the presumption of multiple realities with different individuals experiencing reality differently. Based on these multiple realities, constructivist-interpretivist paradigm-based research focuses on discovering the way people interpret and make sense of their lived experiences and on how the context of their situation within wider social environments impacts their constructed understanding.

Alignment of the selected paradigm with the problem of practice and the purpose of the research study. The fundamental purpose of this research study was to examine whether, based-on their experience-based perceptions, educators in peace and conflict studies view their work as acts of “resistance to dominant models of education that reproduce oppressive, violent social structures” (Synott, 2005). Therefore, the research questions were designed to discover how peace and conflict studies educators understand the processes of community relations and structures and what they think needs to be and could be done to address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression in a rapidly evolving world (Synott, 2005). “12 key propositions of transformative learning theory” (Mezirow, 1996, p. 162) are based on the process of using previous interpretation and frames of references for constructing new interpretations of the meaning of an individual’s experience and frames of reference to guide future actions. Therefore, a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm was considered to be the most appropriate paradigm for this research study’s theoretical framework of transformative learning and critical theories.

This research was focused on discovering the way educators in peace and conflict studies interpret and make sense of their lived experiences; and on how the context of their situation, within wider social environments and the multiple realities that exist within the current system of
graduate education in peace and conflict studies, has impacted their socially constructed understanding of multiple realities. Therefore, this research study was more centered on generating a new theory that is founded in the lived experiences of participating educators and on testing some other theories. Based on his deep immersion in this research, this researcher was committed to working with the research participants to discover the meaning of their lived experience and co-constructing the findings of the research study. Based on this understanding of the context of the research study and the following overview of a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, it was apparent that constructivist-interpretivism will be the paradigm that is most aligned with the transformational learning theory and critical theories, especially, CRT; the theoretical framework of this research.

**Research Methodology**

A research method focuses on the researcher’s precise knowledge and procedures. However, the researcher’s ability to be reflective, insightful and sensitive to language and to be continually open to experience is at the heart of research methodology. Therefore, a research methodology is not a process of following the right method but is a creative approach to understanding and using practices that are receptive to research questions and research phenomena (Laverty, 2003). Consequently, the research methodology followed from and mirrored the chosen philosophy that was embedded throughout the research study (Osborne, 1994). As such, methodology included the research design, settings, subjects, data collection, data analysis, and reporting of findings (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Creswell, 2013; Druckman, 2005; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Gibson & Riley, 2010; Giorgi, 1985, 1997, 2006, 2008; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003; Holliday, 2007; Huff, 2009; Neuman, 2007; Sullivan, 2010; Walliman, 2005). Therefore, the following discussion elaborates on the rationale-based selection of the
methodology used in this research and provides a description of the use of the approach that is responsive to the research questions.

**Rationale for Qualitative Research**

Because natural science research is founded in the belief that knowledge is separate from being and because it emphasizes the discovery of generalizable and repeatable knowledge, natural science research is inappropriate for research studies associated with human experience which centers on meaning-giving experiences, interests and intentions; non-measurable quantitative aspects of a research (LeVasseur, 2003). Because qualitative research focuses on the discovery of the perspective and meaning of the research participants, it is distinct from quantitative research that focuses on objectively measuring discrete and observable units that can be objectively and operationally defined/quantified and facilitates statistical comparative analysis (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Berg, 2009; Brink, 1991; Chenail, 2011; Finlay, 2011; Labuschagne, 2003). Additionally, the aliveness of a living person derives from the individual’s uniquely particular experiences and interactions with others that cannot be reduced to quantifiable, measurable, and predictable units (Polkinghorne, 1983). Therefore, the traditions of qualitative research were considered to be most appropriate for addressing the fundamental purpose of the study (Creswell, 2013; Giorgi, 1997, 2006, 2008; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003; Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002; Smith, 2004; Willis, 2007a).

**Rationale for Selecting Phenomenological Research Methodology**

This research study could have been conducted by using any of the various qualitative research methods such as narrative research, case study, grounded theory, ethnographic research, critical research, and phenomenological research. The following definition of phenomenology
provides the rationale for using the phenomenological research approach for conducting this research study.

**Defining phenomenology.** The literature suggested that phenomenology is concerned with pre-reflectively and pre-verbally discovering the meaning of the lived experiences of human beings with the research phenomenon under consideration (Giorgi, 1997; Groenewald, 2004; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002; Sadala & Adorno, 2002; Sokolowski, 2000). According to the literature, the central objective and goal of a phenomenological inquiry is the depiction of lived experiences, the portrayal of the meaning, and the universal essence of the phenomenological occurrence as it is presented in the experience itself (Creswell, 2013; Osborne, 1994; Patton, 2002). Melby, Dodgson, and Tarrant (2008) suggested that phenomenology is based on the belief that a person is “is thrown into a particular life world complete with background meanings and practices that are shaped by one’s concerns, relationships, culture, language and practices. Meanings are inherently existential and created through individuals within the contexts through of lived-experience” (p. 178).

According to Thorne (2008), the central premise of phenomenology is that most fundamental human truths are accessible through the understanding of the subjective experiences of human beings. Phenomenology focuses on “disclosure of the world” (*révélation du monde*) and attempts “to reveal the mystery of the world and of reason” (Moran, 2000, p. 402). Moran (2000) further suggested that Merleau-Ponty’s “phenomenology of origins” focuses on orientation towards a view of human experiences in a different way, by not relying on the fully developed categories of our reflective experience, but rather by formulating a method and a language sufficient to express our pre-reflective experience, especially the world of perception (p. 402). Max van Mannen (1990) asserted that phenomenology is: 1) the study of lived
experience; 2) the explication of phenomena as they offer themselves to consciousness; 3) the study of essences; 4) the description of the experimental meanings we live as we live them; 5) the human scientific study of phenomena; 6) the search for finding out what it means to be human; and 7) a poetizing activity.

**The basis for selecting phenomenological research methodology.** Phenomenological research aims to explore the conscious experience directly through a unique form of introspection (Osborne, 1994). Instead of focusing on “natural science criteria-based prediction, control, and measurement;” phenomenological research emphasizes “discovery, description and meaning” (Osborne, 1994, p. 168). Instead of attempting to distill a phenomenon to an acceptable number of independent variables and to manage the context of the study of the phenomena, phenomenology seeks to remain as true as possible to the phenomenon and to the environment as it appears in the world (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003).

Additionally, through the exploration of the “inner world of experience;” phenomenology had the potential to empower this researcher to repossess the part of the human being that has been overlooked by the emphasis of human sciences on research based on the natural sciences (Osborne, 1994, p. 168). The objective of phenomenology is to reveal the indispensable structures of phenomena and to discover the common meaning of lived experience within the everyday world (Creswell, 2013; Mannen, 1990). Similarly, phenomenological research methodology was appropriate for facilitating the development of a deeper understanding of peace and conflict studies educators’ perceptions of their experience in educating students for helping communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice, social inequality, and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, since the focus of this study was to discover the meaning of the lived experience of peace and conflict studies educators; phenomenological research
methodology was the best approach for conducting this research study (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Moustakas, 1994).

A phenomenological research methodology was deemed to be essential for discovering the experiences of peace and conflict studies educators by developing a deeper understanding of their perception in order to understand the effectiveness of education in peace and conflict studies in proactively using community engagement for preemptively addressing the reality of social injustice, social inequality, and institutionalized oppression. Since the main purpose of phenomenology was to reduce individual experiences with a particular phenomenon to a description of the *universal essence*, and the aim of the study and the research questions was to find the meaning of the *lived experience* of peace and conflict studies educators, phenomenological methodology was viewed as the right approach toward answering the study’s research questions (Creswell, 2013; McCaslin & Scott, 2003; Moustakas, 1994).

As phenomenological methodology encourages the development of a research question that grows out of the researcher’s intense interest in the topic, this researcher’s curiosity inspired the research topic which was rooted in his interests and values. It has social meanings and is of personal significance to this researcher (Moustakas, 1994). The goal of this research was to understand the human phenomena that are associated with social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression-based communal conflicts; and the lived experiences of peace and conflict studies educators in training students to use community engagement for addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

As illustrated in Chapter 2: Literature Review, the experience and perspectives of peace and conflict studies educators in using community engagement for educating students to help communities to proactively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression
have received very little attention. The existing literature has made very little effort to use a phenomenological method to discover the meaning of the experiences associated with the education in peace and conflict studies as it relates to community engagement-based service-learning for educating students to proactively address a community’s challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.  

**Rationale for Selecting Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)**

The discussion below first provides the rationale for using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The following overview of IPA, summary of the philosophical underpinnings of IPA, key scholars and the scholarly debates surrounding IPA provide the context for selecting the IPA.  

Because the research questions emphasized the personal meaning and sense-making of peace and conflict studies educators in the specific context of educating students to use community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression, IPA was considered to be an appropriate methodological approach for addressing these research questions (Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, Smith and Osborne (2008) asserted that IPA is especially useful when one is concerned with the complexity of the process and how individuals are trying to make sense of their personal and social world and the particular situations they are facing (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006). Larkin et al. (2006) added that IPA analysis provides a researcher an opportunity to think about “what it means for the participants to have made these claims and to have expressed these feelings and concerns in this particular situation” (Larkin, et al., 2006, p. 104). This assertion validated that IPA is appropriate for exploring the lived experiences of peace educators as they relate to the problem of practice and the research question. However, the research goals, topic, problem of practice, theoretical framework and the
research questions as well as the orientation of the researcher have influenced the selection of the IPA as the phenomenological research method for conducting this research study.

**Overview of IPA**

The literature has suggested that IPA, a structured version of hermeneutic phenomenology, focuses on idiographic accounts of individual participants regarding their perceptions and sense-making; how they make sense of their personal and social experiences (Finlay, 2011; Miner-Romanoff, 2012; Pringle, Drummond, McLaftety, & Hendry, 2011; Shaw, 2010; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA uses the “double hermeneutic” for understanding how individuals experience or understand a specific situation (Finlay, 2011; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Shaw, 2010; Smith, 2004; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA research is primarily concerned with experience, with a particular moment which is significant to the participants (Smith et al., 2009). The idiographic (relating to study of the individual) sensibility of an IPA is demonstrated through the researcher’s commitment to understanding experiential phenomena from the perspective of specific individuals in a specific context (Finlay, 2011). Based on the influence of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, IPA emphasizes the interpretation and the role of both the participants and the researcher in a dynamic research process (Clarke, 2009). Even though IPA noticeably uses Husserlian phenomenology to gain understanding of the individual's experience; instead of seeking to bracket the researcher's values and beliefs, it considers these as basic in understanding and making sense of the person's experience (Clarke, 2009).

IPA originated with “the publication of Jonathan Smith’s (1996) paper in Psychology and Health which argued for an approach to psychology which was able to capture the experiential and qualitative, and which could still dialogue with mainstream psychology” (Smith, et al., 2009,
IPA really began in the mid-1990s and it has been influenced by important theoretical ideas. It is an attempt to operationalize the ideas of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith, et al., 2009). IPA is founded in three theoretical underpinnings: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith, 2011a, 2017). IPA, is an idiographic (as opposed to nomothetic) qualitative research approach focused on the examination of how individuals make sense of their significant life experiences and on understanding participants’ experiences, how researchers interpret the accounts of participants’ experiences (Shaw, 2010; Smith, et al., 2009). IPA explores the meaning of personal experience as an interpretative undertaking on the part of the participant and also the researcher (Smith, 2007a).

The following statement succinctly states the foundational premise of IPA (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 3):

It can be said that the IPA researcher is engaged in a double hermeneutic because the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them. This captures the dual role of the researcher. He/she is employing the same mental and personal skills and capacities as the participants, with whom he/she shares a fundamental property – that of being a human being. At the same time, the researcher employs those skills more self-consciously and systematically. As such, the researcher’s sense-making is second order; he/she only has access to the participant’s experience through the participant’s own account of it.

Larkin, Eatough, and Osborn (2011) suggested, “IPA offers an established, systematic, and phenomenologically focused approach which is committed to understanding the first-person perspective from the third-person perspective” (p. 321). The IPA views the personal and social aspects of an individual’s understanding of their experience as “mutually constitutive” (Larkin et al., 2011, p. 321). Therefore, the IPA study findings should be situated in the cultural and historical context of the study. As illustrated in Figure 3-1 (a conceptual flow chart of steps of an IPA research study), by focusing on an individual’s experiences and understandings of a
phenomenon, an IPA research study integrates phenomenological and interpretative aspects of an IPA project (Miner-Romanoff, 2012; Smith et al., 2009).

In other words, IPA aims to capture the “sense of an intentional, embodied, and situated person and “lived experience” that is intended to include the interpreted and meaningfully lived aspect of the participants’ being-in-the world” (Larkin et al., 2011, p. 330).

Figure 3-1. Interpretative Phenomenological Analytical Representation (Adopted from Miner-Romanoff, K (2012). Interpretative and critical phenomenological crime studies: A model design)
Philosophical Underpinnings of IPA

The works of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, four major phenomenological philosophers provide the philosophical underpinnings for IPA (Larkin, et al., 2006; McCoy, 2017; Shinebourne, 2011; Smith, et al., 2009; Wagstaff, et al., 2014). IPA is founded in three philosophical underpinnings (Figure 3-2) of phenomenology - reflecting upon personal experience; hermeneutics - involving double hermeneutic; and idiography – focusing on the particular context (Brocki & Waerdon, 2006; Charlick, Pincombe, McKellar, & Fielder, 2016; Eatough & Smith, 2008; Larkin et al., 2011; Shinebourne, 2011; Smith, 2011a; Smith, et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

**Phenomenology**

“to fully describe a lived experience”

**Descriptive Phenomenology**

**Aim**
To describe a lived experience without attempting to give meaning to it.

**Philosophical Influence:**
Husserl (1927): To “bracket or leave aside our previous knowledge and investments in order to see phenomenon as experienced.

**Interpretative Phenomenology**

**Aim**
To reveal and interpret implicit meaning in a lived experience.

**Major Philosophical Influences:**
Heidegger (1962): Researchers cannot extract themselves from the research.
Merleau-Ponty (1962): Interpretations are made from our perspectives.
Sartre (1956): We are always becoming ourselves.

**Hermeneutics**

“the theory of interpretation”

**Aim**
To provide surer foundations and processes for interpreting text.

**Major Hermeneutic Theorists:**
Heidegger (1962): Researchers bring their own preconception to the analysis.

**Idiography**

“focus is on the individual”

**Aim**
To concern oneself with the particular in 2 ways:
1) With ‘detail’: through and systematic depth of analysis.
2) From the perspective of particular people, in a particular context.

*Figure 3-2.* The three Influences of IPA. (Retrieved from Charlick, Pincombe, McKellar, and Fielder, 2016)
Rachell Shaw (2010) asserted that “IPA is a critical realist method, which means that it assumes that reality exists, but that our access to it is never direct” (p. 178). Therefore, in IPA, a researcher is not simply trying to understand individuals’ experiences but is also hoping to understand individuals’ experiences at a particular time in their life and within the social, cultural, political, and economic context (Hood, 2016; Larkin et al., 2011; Shaw, 2010). Linda Finlay (2011) defined IPA as a “specific hermeneutic version of phenomenology” (p. 139). She further suggested (2011, p. 140):

What separates IPA from some other hermeneutic approaches is its focus on the individual and the way studies often prioritize exploration of participants’ sense-making. IPA seeks idiographic accounts of people’s views, and perceptions: how participants themselves as individuals make sense of their experiences.

**Phenomenology.** As phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of experience, its goal is to explore a lived experience (Charlick et al., 2016). IPA has its foundations in descriptive phenomenology or interpretive phenomenology, two approaches for conducting a phenomenological inquiry (Charlick et al., 2016). In using descriptive phenomenology, as the researcher aims to describe the lived experience of a participant without trying to give meaning to it, during data collection and analysis, the researcher should ‘bracket’ their previous knowledge, investments and the taken-for-granted world (Charlick et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2009). IPA uses the phenomenological process of reflecting on the phenomenon without trying to fix experience in predefined categories and uses bracketing to look at each new case (Charlick et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Descriptive phenomenology is influenced by the philosophy of Husserl while IPA is influenced by Heidegger, Perleau-Ponty and Sarte; three major phenomenological philosophers. Unlike descriptive phenomenology, IPA aims to ‘give voice’ to a phenomenon and then seeks to make sense of that original description in relation to the larger social, cultural, and theoretical context (Wagstaff, et al., 2014).
Husserl’s work of phenomenology and phenomenological inquiry established for IPA researchers the importance and relevance of a focus on experience and its perceptions (Smith, et al., 2009). Smith, et al. (2009) suggested that Husserl’s work has helped IPA researchers to pay attention to the process of reflection and follow Husserl’s agenda for the systematic examination of the content of consciousness and our lived experience. Smith, et al. (2009) added that the key ideas for IPA researchers taken from Heidegger’s major works, *Being and Time* (1962/1927) are that “human beings can be conceived of as ‘thrown into the world’ of objects, relationships, and language; secondly, that our being-in-the world is always perspectival, temporal, and always “in-relation to something”-and consequently, that the interpretation of people’s meaning-making activities is central to phenomenological inquiry” (p.18). Therefore, in IPA, the interpretation of a research participant’s meaning-making activities is continually grounded in the researcher’s perspective at a specific time, from their being in the world (Charlick et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, IPA uses an empathic but critical hermeneutic process to construct an interrogative account based on the experience (Wagstaff, et al., 2014).

For IPA researchers, Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) that focuses on the embodied nature of an individual’s relationships in the world, provides a critical understanding that our lived experiences shape our knowledge about the world (Smith, et al., 2009). Charlick’s et al. (2016) statement “Merleau-Ponty speaks of a ‘meeting point’ between the self and the world, and that the perception of ‘other’ develops from one’s own embodied perspective” (p. 207) illustrated the influence of the embodied nature of an individual’s relationships in the world. In other words, although IPA researchers can observe and experience empathy for their participants, ultimately, they see the research phenomenon for their perspective as they can never share completely the experience of the other (Smith et al., 2009).
Finally, Sartre’s thesis, that because human nature is more about becoming than being, individuals are responsible for their actions that need to be viewed within the context of their individual lives, gave IPA critical insights for interpreting individuals’ lived experiences (Smith, et al., 2009). As an individual’s engagement with the world is always evolving; meaning-making is always unfolding for both the research participant and the researcher (Charlick et al., 2016). Smith, et al. (2009) suggested that the works of these philosophers move IPA researchers towards a more interpretative focus on understanding the perspectival directness of an individual’s personal involvement in the lived world but is a property of our relationship with others.

Hermeneutics. IPA is influenced by Schleiermacher, Heidegger, and Gadamer, three most influential hermeneutic theorists (Smith, 2007b; Smith, et al., 2009). Based on Schleiermacher’s work, the IPA researcher can provide added value by presenting an interpretation of the text of experience that is not his. Heidegger’s work provided the IPA researcher the benefit of bringing fore-conception (prior experiences, assumptions, and preconceptions) to the encounter (Shinebourne, 2011). Heidegger’s work also unraveled the relationship between interpretative work and the fore structure of the IPA researcher’s understanding and causes the researcher to reevaluate role of bracketing in the interpretation of the data (Smith, 2007b; Smith, et al., 2009). Gadamer’s work helps the IPA researcher to understand the connection between the past and present in the total context of the lived experience of the participant and helps him/her recognize that the interpretation of the meaning of the text will be strongly influenced by the moment the interpretation is made (Smith, et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important for IPA researchers to be aware of their own biases, so that
during data analysis, “the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meaning” (Charlick et al., 2016, p. 208).

**Idiography.** Smith et al. (2009) suggested that idiography functions at two levels: first, in the sense of detail, with a meticulous and logical depth of analysis and second, with an understanding of how a specific experiential phenomenon has been understood from the viewpoint of a particular group, in a particular context. Because idiography is concerned, it provided IPA philosophical underpinning at two levels: First, through a commitment to the sense of the depth of analysis and second, through a commitment to understanding how particular experiential phenomena have been understood from the perspective of a certain group of people in a particular context (Smith, et al., 2009). Based on the idiographic focus, an IPA researcher plays an integral and active part in the generation and interpretation of data (Wagstaff, et al., 2014). Therefore, idiography provides IPA researcher a way to locate the study findings in the particular context of experience and a different way for establishing generalization (Smith, et al., 2009). The idiographic focus of IPA warrants utilization of a small homogeneous, purposefully selected and conscientiously situated research sample. Because IPA’s idiographic philosophical underpinning emphasize the detail of an individual in a specific context, it prescribes a different way for establishing generalization (Charlick et al., 2016; Smith, et al., 2009). Charlick et al, (2009) suggested that “in some ways the details of the individual also bring us closer to significant aspects of the general (Charlick et al., 2016, p. 209).

**Key Scholars**

IPA originated with “the publication of Jonathan Smith’s (1996) paper in Psychology and Health (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 4). Since then, Jonathan Smith has, through ongoing scholarly publications, made the most scholarly contributions to the development and advancement of IPA
As coauthors of “Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Approach” (2009), Paul Flowers and Michael Larkin are considered as scholars who have made significant contributions for developing and advancing IPA. Similarly, the works of Larkin (Larkin et al., 2006; Larkin et al., 2011) and Flowers (Reid et al., 2005; Smith, et al., 1997) have made significant contributions to the advancement of IPA.

As a coauthor of the chapter, “Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis” (Smith & Osborn, 2008) and other scholarly articles, Mike Osborne also articulated an approach to conducting an IPA research project. Additionally, Rick Hood (2016) provided insights into combining IPA with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that may be valuable in conducting an IPA research from a critical realist perspective. Pnina Shinebourne’s (2011) discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of IPA confirmed philosophical underpinnings of IPA as described by Smith et al. (2009). Linda Finlay (2011) and Rachel Shaw (2010) have provided a detailed approach for conducting an IPA research study.

**Scholarly Debate Surrounding IPA**

Pringle et al., (2011) suggested that through a recommended series of research steps, IPA has attempted to operationalize phenomenology. Citing several publications (e.g., Smith, 1996, 2004; Smith, et al., 1997; Smith et al., 1999; Smith & Osborn, 2003) in her article, *Troubling Methodology*, Kerry Chamberlain (2011) suggested that the codification of method offered through these publications has legitimated the use of the method without due reflection and rather indiscriminating use without consideration of its value for, or need for adjustments to meet the needs of particular research projects. Fade (2004) suggested that based on the true phenomenological research requirements for the use of reflexive techniques to present a more
accurate representation of the researcher’s pre-cognitive world view, IPA could be viewed as not being phenomenological. However, she asserted that because “it seeks an insider perspective on the lived experiences of individuals”, IPA is phenomenological; and because IPA “acknowledges the researcher’s personal beliefs and standpoint and embraces the view that understanding requires interpretation”, it is interpretive (p. 648).

Chamberlain (2011), Finlay (2009), and Giorgi (2010) questioned whether IPA is phenomenological. Chamberlain (2011) suggested that IPA connections to the core principles and tenets of phenomenology need to be clarified. Similarly, Kaptein (2011) and Todorova (2011) asserted that IPA primarily focuses on experience of individuals and largely ignores the social contexts of the participants’ experiences, an assertion agreed to by Smith (2011b). Smith (2010) provided a sound rationale in responding to Giorgi’s (2010) questioning of whether IPA is phenomenological. In questioning whether IPA is interpretative, Chamberlain (2011) raised issues with the widely offered IPA guidelines that do not really consider hermeneutics but guide the researcher to look for sub-themes, classify them and connect them to broader themes or analytical categories – a method similar to grounded theory analysis. Chamberlain (2011) also asserted that IPA needs to clarify the researcher’s engagement in hermeneutic analysis in the interpretation of the data. Additionally, based on her questions regarding whether IPA is phenomenological and interpretative, Chamberlain (2011) also questioned whether IPA is analytical enough. Smith (2011b) has provided a rebuttal to the concerns raised by Chamberlain (2011). Brocki & Waerdon, (2006) also suggested that the interpretative role of the researcher as it relates to data analysis has been an issue in IPA research studies.

However, even with the above referenced criticism, most of the scholars agree that IPA has made phenomenological methodology accessible to most researchers (including
Chamberlain, 2011); in conducting a qualitative research study (e.g., Brocki & Weardon, 2006; Clarke, 2009; Finlay, 2011; Hood, 2016; Shaw, 2010; Sinebourne, 2011). Therefore, as the research question and sub-questions dealt with the personal meaning and sense-making of peace and conflict studies educators in the specific context of educating students to use community engagement for addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression, this debate could be viewed as validating the appropriateness of IPA for conducting the planned research study (Smith et al., 2009).

**Pre-Data Collection Process: Selection & Recruitment of Research Participants**

To enhance the reader’s ability to situate the context of this IPA research study, the following discussion purposefully presents a detailed discussion of the adequacy and appropriateness of the research sample size, sampling strategy: criteria for a purposefully selected and carefully situated sample, recruitment and access to participants, and informed consent.

**Adequacy and Appropriateness of the Sample Size**

IPA’s idiographic approach encourages a study of a small, purposively selected and carefully situated research sample (Charlick et al., 2016; Cooper, Fleisher, & Cotton, 2012; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). Smith et al. (2009) suggested that because “IPA is an idiographic approach, concerned with understanding a particular phenomenon in a particular context”, a small sample size is acceptable (p. 49). There have been IPA studies that focus on the experiences and meaning-making activities of as few as one research participant (Charlick et al., 2016; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). There is no right answer to the sample size. Qualitative researcher scholars have suggested that qualitative researcher need to interview as many participants as necessary for the researcher’s needs, i.e. until it reaches saturation point
(Englander, 2012). Because the IPA emphasizes a detailed account of an individual experience and the intricacies of a human phenomenon; IPA studies usually use a relatively small sample (size of about six participants) to benefit from the concentrated focus on the detailed account of individuals’ experience (Smith et al., 2009). Although a purposive sample of six participants is considered to be sufficient, sample size of three to 15 participants is acceptable (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). A sample size of four to ten is considered appropriate for doctoral dissertations (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011; Smith et al., 2009).

This research study had planned to use a purposefully (not randomly selected) selected homogeneous sample of four to six peace and conflict studies educators rather than the general population of educators including those in related fields such as conflict management. Based on the review of other IPA studies, IPA research methodology-based dissertations, and the review of IPA literature, the sample of four to six participants was considered to be sufficient for providing rich description on the meaning-making lived experience that is relevant to the context of the problem of practice being investigated under this research (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, based on the assessment of IPA scholars and other similar IPA studies (non-focus group studies), the planned sample size of this research study was appropriate for conducting this research study.

**Sampling Strategy: Criteria for Purposefully Selected and Carefully Situated Sample**

The research questions and sub-questions as well as the selection of IPA as research methodology dictated the sampling strategy and the associated inclusion criteria for selecting the most appropriate research participants. To gain access to the experience of peace and conflict studies educators in the specific context of educating students to use community engagement for addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression, collection of data was
achieved through a purposefully (not randomly selected) selected homogeneous sample. The following gender-neutral criteria was used for purposefully selecting and carefully situating research participants: Adults (over 18 years of age) who have a doctorate degree in peace and conflict studies and who are educators in advanced degree programs in peace and conflict studies. As this researcher noticed that many educators do not have education in peace and conflict studies or conflict resolution and many have education in law; the criteria for participation in this research was modified to include education in other fields (e.g., education, social sciences, sociology, psychology, etc.). Ideally, potential participants needed to have demonstrated interest in using community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Based on this researcher’s belief that experiences of the participants are most likely influenced by their socio-economic status, this researcher had hoped that the research participants would include both male and female educators and would also include white, black, and Hispanic educators in peace and conflict studies.

**Recruitment and Access to Participants**

For accessing a purposefully selected and carefully situated research sample, this researcher used his organizational and professional network with peace and conflict studies educators, peacebuilding practitioners, and NGOs in the peacebuilding field to identify, locate, and to access the individuals who meet the inclusion criteria (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008). This researcher was interested in having research participants who had experience with the research phenomenon, but also were furthering their understanding of the phenomenon and were willing to participate in an extended interview that includes open-ended questions about their lived experience and potential follow-up inquiries (Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). The gender-neutral inclusion criteria allowed this research to include both male and female research
participants regardless of their ethnicity/race, socio-economic status and health. Additionally, as each contacted participant was asked to recommend other participants, the participant recruitment process evolved into a snowball or chain sampling method that has been used successfully in other qualitative research studies (Berg, 2009; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2013; Groenewald, 2004; Merriam, 2009; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008).

To gain access to the experience of educators in the specific context of educating students to use community engagement for addressing social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression, collection of data was achieved through a purposefully selected homogeneous sample of five participants. This researcher’s following criteria was used for purposefully selecting and carefully situating research participants: Age, gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status and health were not used to limit inclusion in this study. Recruitment was based on voluntary participation. No compensation was provided as an enticement and participants will not be coerced in manner to participate in this study.

Following approval by Northeastern University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), this researcher initiated the process of contacting the potential research participants who meet the inclusion criteria to be participants in this research study for exploring their interest in participating in this research. This researcher sent via email to potential participants a Letter of Invitation (Appendix A: Letter of Invitation). After the initial contact with the potential participants, individuals who meet the study’s participation criteria and were interested in being research participants were sent an email confirming the interest of the potential research participant and for scheduling the interview (Appendix B). All participants in this research study were required to execute the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C). All emails throughout the study originated from this researcher’s Kulkarni.d@husky.neu.edu email address.
Concerns regarding the availability of peace and conflict studies educators from underserved populations. This researcher believes that the following experience of this researcher in recruiting educators from underserved populations may provide a validation of the research topic and the problem of practice and should concern the educators and institutions in peace and conflict studies. Many potential participants, who had met the inclusion criteria and who had agreed to participate, after receiving the research questions and in-depth interview, suggested that their experience was either not appropriate or was inadequate to address the research focus of using sustained community engagement for educating students in addressing the challenges of social injustice or institutionalized oppression. As such, they declined to participate in this research. Similarly, after using a snow-ball approach for contacting many educators and practitioners, this researcher came to the realization that the number of black African and Hispanic American educators in peace and conflict studies is very small. This realization has raised a concerned for this researcher and for other educators also. Additionally, after an exhaustive search, although this researcher was able to find one black American educator, he was unable to find a Hispanic American educator who met the requirements of the inclusion criteria and was willing to voluntarily participate in this research. Having interviewed five research participants (two female and two male white American educators and one African American educator), this researcher concluded that as he was not getting additional insights, he had reached the saturation point. Therefore, although this researcher believed that inclusion of a Hispanic American educator may have potentially provided different socio-economic status-based insights into the problem of practice, he proceeded with analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with five participants.
Informed Consent

The Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) was included as an attachment to the email confirming the participant’s interest (Appendix B). Attachment C: The Informed Consent Form included the purpose and details of the study; the interview process; what the participants were agreeing to do as a participant in the study; the risks, benefits and compensation associated with the participation in the study; the information regarding the protection of their privacy; and their rights as a participant in this study. This researcher informed the participants about the use of a numeric identification (e.g., Educator 1) for protecting the confidentiality; ensuring that the research participants are aware that they don’t have to answer any question; and informing them of their right to withdraw anytime from the research. At the beginning of the interview of each participant, this researcher provided a detailed explanation of the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) and answered the participant’s questions. Interviews were initiated only after the participant has executed the Informed Consent Form. The participants were provided a copy of the executed Informed Consent Form. As the study included participants with fluency in English, translation of consent information was not be required.

Procedures

Data Collection

The interviews of the research participants were the primary vehicle for obtaining a thorough and significant description of the everyday lived experience of the research participants, as described by them, in the specific environment of their experience and life (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Therefore, to benefit from their lived experience-based reflective responses, prior to their final concurrence for participating this research, all participants were provided research question and sub-questions, definitions of key terms and concepts used in this research,
and in-depth interview questions. The open-ended introductory and in-depth interview questions were purposefully founded in this research study’s theoretical framework of critical theories and transformational learning theory within the context of community engagement-based service learning (See Appendix E). All interviews followed the Interview Protocol (Appendix D) conducted at a private facility and at a time of the participant’s choosing (Katz & Lawyer, 1992; Katz, Lawyer, & Sweedler, 2011; King & Horrocks, 2010; Kvale & Brinckmann, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seidman, 2006). All interviews were conducted in accordance with an established interview schedule established by the research participants (Smith et al, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). Additionally, prior to agreeing to be a research participant, this researcher informed the potential candidates that they would need to participate in an introductory interview of about 30 minutes and an in-depth interview of 60 to 90 minutes in duration and that both interviews will be transcribed by an entity that has entered into a non-disclosure agreement with the student researcher.

Prior to the initiation of the interview, the research participants were re-informed of their rights of withdrawal, privacy, confidentiality and that the in-depth interviews and possibly introductory and follow-up interviews will be audio taped. The research participants were encouraged to openly and candidly respond to each interview question. The research participants were provided an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the accuracy of the transcription as it relates to the accuracy of their responses and experiences to suggest changes or additions. Additionally, each research participant was provided an opportunity to review the research findings and provide comments to validate the accuracy of the findings as it relates to his/her life experience (Gibbs, 2007).
In keeping with Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann’s (2009) definition of an interview, the interviews followed a purposeful approach for obtaining the description of the life world of the research participants. In-depth semi-structured interviews of the research participants were used for collecting the research data (Brocki & Waerdon, 2006). As the data collection for this research was committed to a degree of open-mindedness, in collecting the data and conducting interviews, this researcher made efforts to bracket off his preconceptions, assumptions, and biases (Smith et al, 2009). In conducting the interviews, this researcher followed the following suggestion of Smith et al. (2009, p. 89): “The plan for an IPA interview is an attempt to come at the research question sideways” and use the semi-structured interview to facilitate the discussion of relevant topics.

This researcher recognized that IPA research is driven by the experiences of the research participants and not by the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon of the research study. Therefore, the phenomenological research interviews used the “dialogue as method” that will not only allow the research participants to describe their experience, but also facilitated the clarification of what the experience meant to them (Pollio et al., 1997, p. 29). Additionally, by reflectively listening, this researcher used the interviews to discover the central themes of the research participants’ lived world (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). To develop rapport with the research participants, this researcher initiated each interview session with a social conversation (Smith et al, 2009). This researcher created an environment that enabled the research participants to freely describe the meaning of the stories of their lived experiences (Smith et al, 2009). Additionally, this researcher carefully and unobtrusively observed and noted impressions of the research participants’ demeanor, including the tone of his/her voice, and compile memo notes after the interview.
Data Storage

This researcher maintained the integrity of all data by protecting it from damage, loss, or theft. Such measures allowed the researcher to carefully manage this research study. To protect the confidentiality of the research participants, this researcher used pseudonyms to identify research participants. The researcher took all precautionary steps to save all field notes, audiotapes, and data transcriptions on a back-up drive. All electronic files and transcriptions were saved with numeric identifiers to protect the identity of the participants. Interviews were transcribed by TranscribeME, a professional transcription service approved by the Northeastern University’s IRB. Written notes taken by the researcher, along with documents and communications collected from participants, were in a locked file cabinet and will be burned or shredded after three years. Similarly, all electronic information associated with this research will be permanently deleted. Upon completion of the doctoral thesis, the researcher will destroy all electronic communications and files containing participant names. A master list of types of information gathered was safeguarded by password (Creswell, 2013).

Confidentiality

This researcher ensured that any information that was obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with an individual will remain confidential. All data gathered for this research was labeled with numeric identifies. This researcher was the only person who had the knowledge of the password protected relationship between the numeric identifies and the participants. Names associated with any interview information and any information that could reveal the identity of the participants were altered to protect their privacy and confidentiality. The transcription service provider and this researcher were the only parties that had access to the interview data.
Audiotaped interviews were transcribed by TranscribeMe, a professional transcription service that had entered into a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement. Additionally, the transcription service provider only had the data that was based on the use of numeric identifies. Other than this researcher and the transcription provider, only the Principal Investigator could have been provided access to the pseudonym-labeled, transcribed interview information, if it was absolutely needed. However, such occasion was not needed. Additionally, the data would be primarily used only for my dissertation research and potential future publications. Even in these instances, the information will be based on the use of the numeric identifies.

**Data Analysis**

By carefully listening to the audiotapes of the interviews and making the required changes to accurately reflect what the participants had said, this researcher insured the accuracy of the transcripts. After ensuring the accuracy of the transcripts, all participants were given the opportunity to review the interview transcripts and to provide comments or clarifications to confirm that the transcripts accurately reflected their lived experiences. After receiving the participants’ comments and clarifications, this researcher initiated the iterative and inductive process of data analysis (Gibbs, 2007).

The unique features of IPA can be captured in alliterative three parts: idiographic, inductive, and interrogative (Smith 2004; Smith et al, 2009). Because it does not prescribe a single method for data analysis, “IPA can be characterized by a set of common processes (moving from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative) and principles (e.g., commitment to an understanding of the participant’s point of view and a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in a particular context) which are applied flexibly, according to the analytic task (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79). Smith (2007c) suggested that
IPA analysis is an iterative and inductive cycle. Smith et al. (2009, p. 79) asserted that IPS draws upon the following strategies that were followed by this researcher.

- Line-by-line analysis of the experiential claims, concerns, and understanding of each participant;
- Identification of emergent patterns (i.e. themes) within this experiential material, emphasizing both convergence and divergence, commonality and nuance, usually for single cases, and then subsequently across multiple cases;
- Development of a ‘dialogue’ between the researchers, their coded data, and their psychological knowledge, about what it might mean for participants to have these concerns, in this context;
- Development of a structure, frame or gestalt which illustrates the relationships between themes;
- Organization of all of this material in a format which allows for analyzed data to be traced right through the process, from individual comments on the transcript, through initial clustering and thematic development into the final structure of themes;
- Development of a full narrative, evidenced by a detailed commentary on data extracts, which takes the reader through the interpretation, usually theme-by-theme, and often supported by some form of visual guide; and
- Use of the researcher’s reflection on his/her own perception, conceptions, and processes.

Inescapably, the analysis was a collective product of the participant and this researcher. Even though the participant’s lived experience and its meaning to the participant was the primary concern of this IPA study, the end product, produced by IPA’s double hermeneutic process, was an interpretation of what this researcher believed that the participant was thinking (Finlay, 2011; Hood, 2016; Shaw, 2010; Smith, 2007b; Smith et al., 2009). This research study’s IPA analysis
was based on substantial verbatim excerpts of the transcribed interviews (Reid et al., 2005). IPA recommended steps were used to move analysis from the first case to subsequent cases (Finlay, 2011; Smith et al., 2009). Recognizing that different levels of interpretation is a current issue in IPA, heeding Smith et al.’s (2009) guidance, this research study made every effort to have at least three levels of interpretation. Figure 3-3 depicts the conceptual framework of this research study’s IPA’s seven-step data analysis (identified below Figure 3-3) of multiple cases.

![Figure 3-3. The Seven Steps of IPA Data Analysis](image)

*Figure 3-3. The Seven Steps of IPA Data Analysis (Adopted from Charlick, S., Pincombe, J., McKellar, L., & Fielder, A. (2016))*
● Step - 1 Reading and re-reading: Immersing in the data to ensure that the participant becomes the focus of analysis;
● Step 2 - Initial coding: Using a table to display exploratory commenting consisting of descriptive comments, linguistic comments, and conceptual comments;
● Step 3 - Developing emergent themes: Development of concise statements or phrases that are based on the researcher’s interpretation that speak to the essence of participants’ experience, that can contain enough information to be grounded in the participant’s experience and also contain enough abstraction to be conceptual. Emergent themes reflect on the participant’s original words and thoughts as well as the researcher’s interpretation;
● Step 4 - Developing connections across emergent themes: Use of different ways (e.g., abstraction, polarization, contextualization, numeration, function) for charting or mapping emergent themes to reflect the researcher’s interpretation of how they fit together in a structure that addresses the research question;
● Step 5 - Moving to the next case: Repeating the process with bracketing the analysis of the previous case;
● Step 6 - Searching for patterns across cases: Developing a master table or a graphical display of the themes for identifying themes that have connections across the cases and the themes that have strong relevance to the research question.

To avoid interpretation findings being too descriptive, analysis included across cases emergent themes based on at least three levels of interpretation supported by extended quotes from the interview transcripts.

Therefore, the data analysis was achieved through a systematic process involving the following steps (Table 3-1), suggested for IPA moving from the particular to the shared and from
the descriptive to the interpretative (Smith et al., 2009). Microsoft® Word was used for
conducting data analysis as described above.

Table 3-1
IPA Analytical Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1: Reading and Re-reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immersing into the interview transcript, engaging with the data to understand, to move from broad to specific details</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 2 Initial Noting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergent Themes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Original Transcript</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploratory Comments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excerpts from the transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excerpts from the interview transcript with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive comments</strong>: Focused on the description of what the participant said in the interview (normal text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic comments</strong>: Focused on the specific language used by the participant (italic text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptual comments</strong>: Focused on engaging at a more interrogative and conceptual level (underlined text)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 3: Developing Emergent Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergent Themes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Original Transcript</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploratory Comments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronologically ordered concise statements of what was important and grounded in abstraction to be conceptual and hermeneutics based on researcher’s interpretation. Clear linkage to exploratory notes which tie to interview transcript excerpts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including relevant excerpts from the transcript</td>
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<tr>
<td>Including relevant exploratory comments from Step 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 4: Searching for Connections Across Emergent Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The research questions and the theoretical framework used to structure emergent themes and for developing super-ordinate themes and relationships among the emergent themes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 5: Moving to Next Case</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping with the idiographic commitment of IPA, bracketing the ideas from the previous case.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step 6: Looking for Patterns Across Cases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presented in graphical format or a table showing how themes are nested within super-ordinate themes and identifying each participant.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Interpretation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presenting analysis across cases emergent themes with at least three levels of interpretation supported by excerpts from the interview transcripts:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research questions-centered understanding, classifying, and interpreting the data was achieved through an iterative cycle of coding facilitated consolidation of codes into themes.

Reflexive self-reflection was used to ensure that my analysis was based on the worlds of the participants (Creswell, 2013). In the *in vivo* coding, the participant’s actual words that were used
as codes or could be used as themes or ideas were highlighted (Creswell, 2013, 2015). These highlighted texts were included to provide the participant a voice in the findings of the report. To facilitate a comprehensive picture of the data analysis, all information of the initial coding was included in a Microsoft table. This table identified the line number location of the coded text.

The highlighted text represented the codes and potential themes and ideas (Saldaña, 2016). Additionally, comments were included to reflect prompts for memos or reflections and questions. After the initial coding, the research questions of the study were used to group all codes into themes that represented the meaning of participant’s experience as it relates to the research phenomenon. Themes were used to aggregate data from several codes that represented a common idea or concept. The themes and subthemes presented significant ideas that addressed the research. Data analysis revealed themes and supporting subthemes that are discussed in Chapter 4. Additionally, a hierarchy diagram that depicts the interrelationships between the major themes is included in Chapter 4.

The Role of the Researcher

The IPA researcher uses inductive and iterative procedures to develop and document an “insider’s perspective” in the form of an interpretative account of what it means for the individuals to have their thoughts in their particular contexts, requiring the researcher to have both emic and etic positions (Reid et al., 2005). Therefore, this researcher’s role was open and process oriented. Because the IPA researcher tries to make sense of participants’ trying to make sense of what is happening to them and the researcher’s own sense-making is second order, this researcher engaged in a double hermeneutic (Finlay, 2011; Smith, 2004, 2011a; Smith et al., 2009).
In this qualitative research, the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Therefore, this researcher, as a human instrument, was cognizant of the potential influence of his shortcomings, biases, assumptions, and presuppositions on the study (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 2013). As such, this researcher was fully aware that his behavior, actions, and perceptions were an integral aspect of this IPA research and that he needed to contextualize the research not only within the shared lived experiences of the research participants, but also within his own life experiences and his positionality. Therefore, his self-reflexivity and self-questioning were important elements of the research methodology. In this research, this researcher’s role was fourfold: 1) to view the research phenomenon holistically; 2) to engage throughout the research process in a systematic reflection on the conduct of the research; 3) to remain cognizant of his own biography and social identity and their influence on the research; and 4) to focus on the emergent rather than predetermined research process (Kulkarni, 2014). This researcher’s foundational responsibility was to proactively comply with the word and the intent of the “informed consent” executed by each research participant; to abide by the ethical requirements for conducting the research; and to execute all actions to protect the research participants as “human subjects” (Kulkarni, 2014).

**Criterion for Quality of Qualitative Research**

This research study was conducted in a manner to fill Lucy Yardley’s (2000) four characteristics of good qualitative research consisting of: 1) sensitivity to content; 2) commitment and rigor; 3) transparency and coherence; and 4) impact and importance. Using these characteristics of good qualitative research, the following discussion addresses the specific criteria established by the Northeastern University.
**Ethical Consideration**

As this research recognized that ethical issues will emerge during all phases of this research study, this research was conducted by using John Creswell’s (2013) process for managing “ethical issues in qualitative research” (pp. 58-59). The ethical conduct of this research was guided by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) established ethical guidelines and will address the IRB protocol for informed consent, confidentiality, right to withdraw, do no harm, participants’ wellbeing, limitation of the role of researcher, use of incentives (Creswell, 2013; King, 2010; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seidman, 2006). Additionally, based on his self-acknowledged awareness of his biases, this researcher used a positionality statement and self-reflective statement to identify the bias-based ethical concerns (Babbie, 2010).

In keeping with Moustakas’ (1994) guidance, prior to the execution of the Informed Consent forms (Appendix C); this researcher established a clear understanding with the research participants and fully disclosed the nature, purpose, objective, and requirements of the research. As stated previously (Kulkarni, 2014), this researcher discussed with every research participant the research methodology including the nature of their voluntary participation without any compensation and the right to withdraw anytime, the duration of the interviews, this researcher’s intentions to audio-tape the interviews, and the processes for ensuring their confidentiality (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Rudestam & Newton, 2007; Smith et al., 2009). Because this researcher self-funded the study, this researcher avoided ethical issues regarding the academic freedom of the researcher and contractual conditions or legal consequences imposed by the funders, a concern raised by (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002). Self-funding also mitigated ethical issues of divided loyalty (Bell & Nutt, 2002). However, this researcher’s perceptions, regarding
the adequacy of the education in peace and conflict studies for engaging the community to address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression, had potentially subjected the research to his bias and raised ethical questions about his neutrality and objectivity (Gillies & Alldred, 2002).

In conducting this research study, this researcher abided by his ethical responsibility to safeguard participants from harm and to protect their rights and anonymity (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001). To avoid ethical issues associated with the informed consent, each participant was required to execute the Informed Consent Form - Appendix C (Alldred & Gillies, 2002; Babbie, 2010; Christians, 2005; Miller & Bell, 2002). The research methodology, data collection, interview notes, research data, and data analysis procedures were proactively managed ethical issues related to informed consent, confidentiality, self-determination, disclosure of the purpose of the study, and benefits of research over the risks to the participants (Berg, 2009; Babbie, 2010; Birch & Miller, 2002; Christians, 2005; Creswell, 2013). To overcome ethical consideration associated with the real or perceived power differential between himself and the research participants, this researcher ensured that prior to the data analysis, each research participant was provided the opportunity to review the transcribed interview and make any modification. Additionally, this researcher provided each research participant an opportunity to review the research findings and to provide comments to validate the accuracy of the findings as it relates to his/her life experience (Gibbs, 2007; Willis, 2007b).

Trustworthiness

To assess the trustworthiness of the findings of a qualitative research study, Samantha Sin (2010) advocates the following four criteria: 1) credibility; 2) fittingness; 3) audibility; and 4) confirmability. Flick (2007) suggests that rigor indicates that a researcher strictly adheres to the
application of the research method and will stick to the sampling scheme and analytical methodology. Throughout this research, this researcher’s personal commitment to attaining methodological skills and his dedicated time to patiently, extensively, and thoughtfully engage with the research participants reflected his rigor in conducting this research (Yardley, 2008). In addition to extended interviews, this researcher spent a significant amount of time communicating with each of the research participants, conducted multiple levels of data analysis, and used several procedures for validating the accuracy of the research findings (Creswell, 2013). The purposively selected and carefully situated sample size of voluntarily self-selected and well-educated research participants also represented this researcher’s commitment and rigor to recruit participants with experience in the research phenomenon (Yardley, 2008).

Osborne (1990) asserted that in the end the trustworthiness of the results of a research project is determined by the readers. Therefore, this researcher put forth every effort to present as plausible as possible an interpretation of the phenomenon. The trustworthiness of this research study was founded in the credibility, confirmability, dependability (reliability), and transferability of the results of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Drisko, 1997). Therefore, for enhancing the plausibility of this research study’s findings, this researcher made every effort to use the words of the research participants in illustrating the themes that emerged from my data analysis (Pollio et al., 1997; Smith et al., 2009).

By following Moustakas’s suggestions (1994), this researcher checked for the presence of the research themes within the transcripts of the research participants’ interviews: 1) can the themes be found in the transcripts of the interviews; and 2) if they were not explicitly expressed by the co-researchers, are they compatible with data provided by the co-researchers? Similarly, to ensure credibility of this research study’s findings, this researcher used Creswell’s guidance
(2013) to address the following: 1) did the transcribed interviews accurately convey the meaning of the experience provided by co-researchers in the interviews? 2) did I, as the researcher, avoid influencing the content of the participants’ descriptions? and 3) did I, as the researcher, use reflexivity throughout the research process? As this process was used to ensure that the voices of the research participants as well as my voice as the researcher are evident in my interpretation, it has enhanced the authenticity of my interpretation (Ajajawi & Higgs, 2007).

**Protection of the Research Participants as “Human Subjects”**

This IPA-based dissertation was a systematic qualitative research investigation consisting of interviews of living individuals for developing and contributing to knowledge. Therefore, this research complied with Northeastern University’s IRB approval, confirming that this research study satisfied the regulatory requirements regarding the protection of human subjects. Adhering to the requirements established in the IRB approved protocol, this researcher took every action to protect the rights of the research participants as human subjects and comply with the IRB requirements for voluntary, informed consent; confidentiality; respect for persons: treatment as autonomous agents; right to end participation in the research at any time; right to privacy; right to safeguard integrity; protection from physical, mental, and emotional harm; access to information regarding my research; and protection of privacy and well-being (King & Horrocks, 2010; Singleton & Straits, 2010).

All the research participants were required to execute the Informed Consent form (Appendix C) approved by Northeastern University’s IRB. This researcher’s illustrative actions to protect the rights of the research participants as human subjects included the following: informing the research participants of the purpose of the research study; transcription of interviews by an IRB approved entity; voluntary self-selection by the research participants;
interviews in private settings at a place and time of research participants’ choosing; interview with just the research participant and the researcher being present; monitoring the physical and emotional state of the research participants; instructing the research participants about the confidentiality of their information and their anonymity; securing the information in a password protected computer and locked cabinet; insuring that the research participants were aware that they don’t have to answer any question; and informing them of their right to withdraw anytime from the research.

Credibility

Credibility of findings refers to whether the perceptions of the research participants are in congruence with the researcher’s presentation of them in terms of whether the researcher accurately represented what the co-researchers feel, think, and have experienced (Kulkarni, 2014). Therefore, to benefit from their lived experience-based reflective responses, prior to their final concurrence for participating this research, all participants were provided research question and sub-questions, definitions of key terms and concepts used in this research, and in-depth interview questions. To enhance the credibility of the data generated through the interviews, every interview was conducted with maximum focus on using reflective listening skills, making it possible for this researcher to remain non-judgmental while elucidating what was being said and encouraging the research participants to participate in the dialogue (Katz & Lawyer, 1992; Katz, Lawyer, & Sweedler, 2011; King & Horrocks, 2010; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seidman, 2006). To further the credibility of the research findings, this researcher made notes about his reflections regarding how the findings were being obtained from the data analysis. Similarly, this researcher used the review of the interview transcripts by the research
participants and the review by the dissertation committee to assure the credibility of the research findings (Gibbs, 2007).

**Transferability**

This IPA research’s small, purposively selected and carefully situated research sample potentially will experience difficulties in generalizability of research findings (Charlick et al., 2016; Wagstaff, et al., 2014). The generalizability and transferability of the findings of this study would be ultimately determined by the readers and the users of my study who would ultimately judge to what extent the findings of this study could be applied to their context (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Therefore, the transferability of the findings of this idiographic IPA research may be more appropriate to readers or groups in similar context (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011).

As this study provides sufficient details of the context of the study itself and includes rich descriptions of the lived experiences of the research participants, the readers of the study would have the ability to compare the context of my study to their context and to determine whether the findings of this study are relevant to their context (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008; Smith et al., 2009). To achieve this objective, verbatim excerpts from interview transcripts are included to make rich descriptions of the meaning-making experiences of the research participants which in turn would allow the readers to make their own inferences regarding transferability of the research findings to their own contexts.

Transferability of this IPA research would be reflected in the ways the research findings are found to be useful to others in similar situations when faced with similar research or practice questions (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). As such, the research questions, the interview protocols, purposively selected and carefully situated sample criteria, and the
quality of experience of the research participants along with the context of the information that
supported the research findings may enhance the transferability of the research findings (Sin,
2010). As this research includes a rich, transparent and contextualized analysis of the accounts
of the participants, it would enable readers to evaluate its transferability to individuals who are in
a similar context (Smith et al., 2009).

**Internal Audit**

A record of procedures conducted during the analysis documented this researcher’s
decisions regarding the analysis of the data, questions and reflections in making interpreting the
data (Shaw, 2010). This researcher’s decisions trail included notes on the evolution of research
and interview questions, revisions of research proposal and interview protocol, audio tapes,
annotated transcripts, revisions to draft dissertation chapters and the final dissertation (Smith et
al., 2009). Johnny Saldaña (2016) viewed this trail (memos) as sites of researchers’ conversation
with themselves and a place to “dump their brains” about the research participants, the
phenomenon or the process by thinking and then rethinking about them. John Creswell (2013)
defined the process of memoing as a researcher’s process of writing down ideas about the
evolving process of the research. Similarly, Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg (2009) suggested
that continual memo writing is an indispensable requirement for conducting a research study. In
addition, a memo can be defined as a piece of analysis that captures the emergent ideas of the
researcher (Singleton & Straits, 2010). Therefore, this researcher used a process for facilitating
the documentation of his self-questioning and self-reflections in conducting this research.

This researcher made every effort to document his thoughts about what he heard and
what he observed in his interviews and to include his reflections about his research activities.
Throughout the research process, this researcher’s self-reflections and self-questioning enabled
him to recognize his biases and to mitigate the influence of his beliefs, preconceptions, and assumptions. Throughout the research process, this researcher made efforts to document his thoughts about how the data analysis was coming together and how he views the development of his themes and clusters (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

**Self-Reflectivity and Transparency**

The transparency of this research will be reflected by how well a reader can understand exactly what was done and why (Yardley, 2008). Therefore, this research study has presented a clear and coherent argument that is supported by sufficient details of the IPA (e.g., how the research participants were selected, how the interview schedule was developed, the interview process, what steps were used in analysis of the data, etc.,) and provided support for the findings with an appropriate trail of this researcher’s analysis (Smith et al., 2009). The research analysis used quotations, text excerpts, and graphical presentations of summarization of themes to show the reader the basis of data interpretation. Reflexivity is a critical element of transparency (Yardley, 2008). Reflexivity is a concept that refers to the explicit consideration of particular ways the researcher can influence the research study including influence of the researcher’s background and interests on data interpretation (Creswell, 2013). The comprehensive discussion about the influence of this researcher’s positionality and the role of the researcher reflected this researcher’s reflexivity.

Reflexivity, an important part of the transparency of the study, was used to explicitly consider specific ways in which the study could be influenced by the researcher (Yardley, 2008). Therefore, this researcher’s reflexivity was used to identify his preconceptions that have the potential to influence the research process and to systematically question himself for minimizing the effects of this researcher’s preconceptions at every stage of the research (Sin, 2010). The
comprehensive positionality statement provided a clearly articulated positionality of this researcher and this researcher’s self-reflexive questions about his decisions and judgments. This process helped to mitigate the influence of his biases, suppositions and assumptions on the conduct of this research study. Reflexivity recognizes that the product of a qualitative research inescapably reflects some of the world and presuppositions of the researcher’s predilections; no researcher can guarantee an unbiased objectivity (Kulkarni, 2014). Therefore, this researcher used his reflexivity and self-questioning as a valuable tool for assessing the impact of his position and to facilitate his efforts for obtaining insights into the research phenomenon through his examination of individual responses and interpersonal dynamics between my co-researcher and myself (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

To ensure that this research study reflected his reflexivity, this researcher used his observation notes about the influence of his interactions on the research participants and his interpretations as well (Rudestam & Newton, 2007; Willis, 2007b). To reflectively present the phenomenon of the lived experience of the participants, this researcher used his positionality and reflective personal statement to bring to the surface his experiences, values, and biases and to use it as a “way of seeing” in order to allow the phenomenological understanding and hermeneutic interpretations to emerge (Creswell, 2013).

As discussed in Chapter One and this chapter, this researcher used his reflective personal statement to minimize the influence of his bias, to make his bias visible, and to maintain a dialogue with the research participants (Hosking & Pluut, 2010). For including reflexivity, this researcher engaged in a “reflexive exercise” to self-reflect on the influence of his lived experience on interviews and the analysis of the data (Hesse-Biber, 2007). The research process was purposefully structured to overcome any concerns about the research participants' views.
regarding the impact of the study report on them or about their being offended by inaccurate representation of their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Mruck & Mey, 2007). To overcome research participants’ concerns, the research participants were provided opportunities to review the findings (Creswell, 2013; Doucet & Mauthner, 2002; Gibbs, 2007; Merriam, 2009).

Reflexivity, the process of the researcher’s critical self-reflection as the “human instrument”, allowed this researcher to explain his or her biases, assumptions, worldview, and dispositions regarding the research study (Merriam, 2009, p. 219). Therefore, this researcher’s reflexivity would enable the reader to understand how his values may have influenced the conduct and conclusions of the study (Merriam, 2009).

Implications and Limitations of the Study

Following are the implications and the limitations of the study.

Implications

Based on the extensive literature search, this researcher suggests that this research may be the only study whose findings result from the experience of the educators in peace and conflict studies regarding their meaning-making experience in using community engagement to provide students transformational learning for proactively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression-based community conflicts. Therefore, the findings of this study has several implications for practice, theory, and research in peace and conflict studies education and the practice of peacebuilding.

Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations that are inherent to a phenomenological research, especially an IPA study. Because of the idiographic focus of this IPA study, the findings of this research represent meaning-making experiences of five peace and conflict studies educators who
have been exposed to the phenomenon under this research study. Limitations of this research study include the IPA methodology-based limitations caused by the composition of the study's sample. For example, the selection criteria for a purposeful and carefully situated sample, which limited research participants to educators having doctoral degrees in peace and conflict studies, excluded educators having masters’ degrees or degrees in other fields. As the research participants are educators in different educational institutions, it is possible that the cultures of their institutions or even regional factors may have influenced meaning of their experience. Therefore, the findings of research may not be easily transferable to peace and conflict studies educators in all institutions. It is possible that even with this researcher’s commitment to confidentiality, some participants may have been apprehensive about candidly sharing their experience and perceptions of the degree of the support of their institutions for sustained community engagement and partnership.

As this research indicated that peace and conflict studies educators are predominantly first white American women and then white American men, the research study may suffer from insufficient representation of the meaning-making experiences of black or Hispanic Americans and other minority groups as well as socio-economically depressed groups. Similarly, as the selection criteria limit research participants to educators in peace and conflict studies; the research findings may not represent the experience-based views of the peacebuilding practitioners, community and political leaders and alumni of higher education in peace and conflict studies. As such, these limitations could provide fertile ground for further research.

Therefore, the findings of this study reflect the Smith et al. (2009) argument for “theoretical generalizability, where the reader may be able to assess the evidence in relation to their existing professional and experiential knowledge” (p.4). In other words, the findings of the
study would be transferable to other groups in the context that is similar to the context of this research study (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). As such, this research may offer valuable insights to those who are interested in assisting communities in preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Yardley2000).

**Conclusion**

For justifying the selection of IPA, this paper first provided this research study’s problem of practice and the statement of purpose of the research study. That was then followed by a discussion of the alignment of IPA’s methodological approach with the research questions and sub-questions. The discussion of philosophical underpinnings of IPA, scholarly debate and the methods for data collection (purposefully selected homogeneous sample and open-ended semi-structured interviews), and data analysis (double hermeneutics) demonstrated that IPA, because it is both phenomenological and interpretative and has an idiographic focus, was very appropriate for conducting this research. As such, it facilitated capturing of the sense of an intentional, embodied, and situated person and “lived experience” of research participants with meaningful interpretation of the lived aspect of the participants ‘experiences of ‘being in the world’ within the unique context of the challenges of educating students to address social injustice and inequality through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts.

This chapter included a discussion of the research procedure including the researcher's role, the criteria for participation in the study, the selection and recruitment of the research participants, the data collection via phenomenological interviews, protecting the co-researchers as “human subjects”, and ethics for conducting this research. This chapter included a detailed description of the IPA data analysis process. In addition, this chapter addressed the elements of the criteria for quality of qualitative research. The discussion included in this chapter confirms
that IPA is the right methodological approach for IPA for conducting the planned research study to address the research question and fulfill the purpose of the study.

The next chapter, Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis, uses the words of the research participants to present the review of findings of the study.
Chapter Four: Research Findings

As indicated in Chapter One, the purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges in providing students with transformational learning opportunities for community engagement-based service-learning to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Consequently, the primary objective of this research was to discover new ways for facilitating and fostering change in peace and conflict studies to provide the students with community engagement-based experiential learning for proactively managing communal conflicts and creating conditions that are conducive for the sustainment of a more equitable and peaceful world in the twenty-first century.

To address these research questions, five educators were interviewed. The open-ended semi-structured interviews used interview questions (included in the Interview Protocol) to generate a rich description of the participants’ experiences in the context of the research problem and the research questions. Therefore, the research problem and research questions are provided first. Then, to provide the context of the findings, this chapter includes research participants’ group profile and a profile of each participant. Following the research participant profiles, the researcher presents a discussion of superordinate themes and subordinate themes, findings that emerged from the analysis of the data generated from the individual one-on-one interviews with five research participants. These themes captured the defining aspects of this research from the perspectives of the participating educators. Lastly, the chapter provides a summary of findings and concluding remarks in preparation for Chapter 5.
Research Problem and Research Questions

As indicated in Chapter One, the research problem dealt with the need for developing a better understanding of the challenges of peace and conflict studies educators in providing community engagement-based education that empowers students with the ability to preemptively address the issues of social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression, the root causes of communal conflicts.

The Research Questions

The following overarching research question and sub-questions were purposefully structured to gain insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning and integrating critical theories; especially CRT and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Overarching Research Question

How do peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage their experience in educating students to address social injustice and inequality through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts?

Research sub-questions.

1. How do the peace and conflict studies educators think about the appropriateness of the current curricula in preparing students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

2. How do the educators in peace and conflict studies make sense of their personal experience in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning to help the communities preemptively address the issues of social injustice and
institutionalized oppression?

3. How do the peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage the effectiveness of their institution’s support for using community engagement to prepare students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

4. How are the educators in peace and conflict working with practitioners to improve education for effectively engaging a community to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

**Interview Protocol and Process**

For addressing the research question and sub-questions, introductory and in-depth interviews were conducted with five research participants. These phenomenological interviews were the primary vehicle for obtaining a thorough description of the participants’ experience in the specific environment of their experience and life. Interviews of four participants were conducted at their office and one interview was conducted in the participant’s living room. Prior to the initiation of the interview, the research participants were re-informed of their rights of withdrawal, privacy, confidentiality and that the interviews would be audio-taped and would be transcribed by an entity that had entered into a non-disclosure agreement with the researcher.

Both introductory and in-depth interviews were conducted on the same day. However, by mutual agreement, there was about a twenty-minute break between the introductory and in-depth interviews. As the participants had total freedom to take as much time as they wanted to respond to questions, introductory interviews lasted from about 45 to 70 minutes and the in-depth interviews lasted from about 70 to 125 minutes. Because of an emergency family situation, the introductory and the in-depth interviews of one participant were conducted twice. The research
participants were provided an opportunity to give feedback regarding the accuracy of the transcription as it related to the accuracy of their responses and experiences and to suggest changes or additions. Four participants did provide clarifications and comments. Additionally, research participants were provided opportunities to vet the research findings and provide comments to validate the accuracy of the findings as it related to their life experience.

**Research Participants: Group and Individual Profiles**

**Concerns Regarding the Recruitment of Research Participants**

Recruiting of participants brought to the surface issues that should raise concerns regarding the ability of peace and conflict studies educational institutions to provide students transformative learning that will be essential for resolving conflicts arising out of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. For example, this researcher is concerned about the very small percentage of faculty or practitioners from underserved communities, especially African and Hispanic Americans, that are currently engaged in the field of peace and conflict studies. Even with sustained recruiting efforts and inviting many educators who met the inclusion criteria, this researcher was unable to enlist even one Hispanic educator to participate in the study.

Based on his knowledge of the management and employment practices of the educational institutions, he is concerned about the potential retaliation and negative consequences the participants may experience, if their institutions suspect that their educator participated in this study. As the pseudonyms selected by the participants reflected the gender of the participant, the possibility existed that the pseudonyms used may enhance educational institutions’ ability to guess the identity of the participant. Therefore, for minimizing the potential negative impacts, participants in the study were identified by a gender-neutral numeric identification (e.g.,
Educator 1) and did not include any information related to their current or previous professional associations/employments or programs.

**Research Participants’ Group Profile**

This research study included five participants who are currently educators in advanced degree programs in peace and conflict studies at universities located in the United States. All participants were born in the U.S and included two white male educators, two white female educators and one black male educator. They indicated that they all were significantly influenced by growing-up experiences and by their parents and/or grandparents. Based on the introductory and in-depth interviews, it was clear that the participants did not come from economically distressed families. Therefore, their lived experiences may not reflect the life experiences of the poor or economically distressed members of communities in the U.S. Based on their individual community service experience, they all exhibited a commitment to provide students experiential and transformative education that is based on the use of partnership between educational institution and communities. They all believe that as educators in peace and conflict studies, they can work towards using non-violent changes to develop more just societies. They all were struggling with institutional commitments to sustained community partnerships for providing students experiential and transformative education to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, the root cause of communal conflicts.

Two participants have earned doctorate degrees in conflict or peace studies and two other participants have master’s degrees in conflict studies. Two participants have earned Juris Doctoral degrees. In their introductory interviews, they suggested that the current social order perpetuates social injustice and institutionalized oppression, and that nonviolent and collective consciousness-based change is necessary for tackling social injustice and institutionalized
oppression. They all indicated that their education was predominantly focused on resolution of conflicts and not on a preemptive approach for addressing the root causes of communal conflicts. Four participants indicated that their education was either not adequate or that social justice aspects were underdeveloped for preparing them to address issues of social injustice. The same four participants indicated that community-engagement-based service-learning was not sufficiently included in their education. However, two participants seem to consider the types of education they received (e.g. law) to be the only indicator of the adequacy of their education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Individual Profiles of Research Participants**

This researcher suggests that the participants’ responses to the interview questions were influenced by their view of how their significant life experiences contributed to their becoming educators in peace and conflict studies; especially their motivations for becoming educators as well as the meaning they associated with being an educator in peace and conflict studies. The following individual profiles that use the words of the participants (identified with the Introductory Interview transcript line numbers), provide the context of the lived world of participants in terms of the experiences that led them to become an educator in peace and conflict studies, their motivation for becoming an educator, and the meaning of being an educator.

**Educator 1.** The following excerpts from the interview explain Educator 1’s significant life experiences that contributed to becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies:

Things I experienced that got me thinking about conflict and violence. And the other one is just chance opportunities. (LN: 68-69) … I definitely did not have a concept-- when I went to college, - I was not in the state of mind of, "Oh, I want to be in the field of conflict analysis and dispute resolution. It did not exist… So, I've had personal experiences and professional experiences that have kind of led in this direction. And so, by 1985, it was pretty clear this is the direction I was heading. (LN: 101-106) …I got advice from a woman… and she said, "Do what makes you happy." And that's how I wound up being an educator. (LN: 126-128)
Similarly, the following words describe the motivation of Educator 1 in becoming an educator in this field:

Well, I enjoyed it, for one thing. (LN: 211) ... So, the complexity motivates me. (LN: 216) ... A key word there for me is also educator. I get to do this. I get paid to do this. This is kind of fun actually. (LN: 217-218) ... My friend asked, "Well, what do you like to do?" And I'm like, "Well, I like to practice, and I like to do this training stuff, and I like working with communities. (LN: 222-223) ... And so, the educator thing kind of stuck in there because it's -- where can you advance in knowledge of the field, be able to practice, and train people at the same time? And that's an educator role. (LN: 226-228)

Additionally, the following excerpts highlight the meaning of being a peace and conflict studies educator for Educator 1:

I translate that also to purpose. Am I actually doing something worthwhile? Not just for a vocation, but for other people. And it kind of goes like being a Boy Scout, helping other people. And for me, this is one-- about the helping and giving professions, if done right, our field is definitely a helping and giving profession. (LN: 234-238)

**Educator 2.** The following interview excerpts highlight Educator 2’s significant life experiences that contributed to becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies:

I've always been uncomfortable with violence. It just never seemed to me to be a useful contribution to human interaction (LN: 66-67) … I was a prosecutor for a number of years, over 12. (LN: 82-83) … It happened in, within my family, and the, the notion of seeing another human being, as a fellow traveler on Earth rather than someone to dominate or hurt or inflict pain on, is what I've practiced and what I've thought about, and it was consistent. So, when, when I left the practice and went in international law and diplomacy, my first foreign assignment was in XXXX working with people, in the XXX-era… I saw a change in all of them as they came to recognize that they had an opportunity to see each other in a different way and to change the structure of their society and to change the relationship they had with people that were different. And so, I've seen the power of peaceful transformation. (LN: 106-117)

Similarly, the motivation of Educator 2 in becoming an educator in this field is summarized in the following words:

I really became enamored with a lot of my professors. I can think of my international law professor. I can think of my human rights law professor. I can think of my government professor. All of them were able to point me in a direction not only of learning, but of learning how to learn. (LN: 236-239)
Additionally, the meaning of being a peace and conflict studies educator for Educator 2 is reflected in the following excerpts:

I'm excited about this. I love this information. And if I had been able to learn how to learn, perhaps I can help others do that as well. (LN: 242-243)

**Educator 3.** The following excerpts from the interview illustrate Educator 3’s significant life experiences that contributed to becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies:

It starts really in college, when I studied sociology and anthropology. It was kind of a framework that I looked at things through (LN: 34-35) … So, there was really a revelation about how much inequality there exists in the world today and it has existed since, basically for thousands of years in human society. So, I got a real sense of, I think, I already had a sense that it was important to address injustice and try to make things right. But I think when I was in college that's really when I got a sense of the magnitude of the problems that were out there. (LN: 38-43) … One of the things that I had done is that I volunteered in the … So, I really started to get a sense of some of the challenges facing some of these kids. And so, anyway, then I really learned about how people that get in trouble with the law, cope with the law, and how they cope with their lives. So, that led me to become aware of, for the first time, conflict resolution as a term. (LN: 49-53) … So, anyway, those, those two areas came together, and I decided that, “I do really want to pursue the field of conflict-- “I thought of it as conflict resolution. I didn't think it was Peace Studies at the time…ended up at … and that's where I started learning about the more tangible theories and practices that are in that field and then my interest grew. And I was particularly attracted, when I went to conferences in the area of Restorative Justice, which fit both my sort of understanding of what-- how to create peace and better communities in the domestic sphere but also in the international sphere. And it was more of a values-based work than technical work in some ways. So, anyway, that's kind of where I came to be, where I'm at right now. (LN: 69-78)

The following words highlight the motivation of Educator 3 in becoming an educator in this field:

My personal background, I think, makes me understand why it's worthwhile. It gives me sort of motivation to, to continue to do it. (LN: 99-101) … And I kind of ended up just finding my way into teaching and I enjoy teaching. And one of the things I did when I was in XXXX, was a teacher that was my main role there. And I always liked the idea of teaching. (LN: 226-229)

Additionally, the meaning of being a peace and conflict studies educator for Educator 3 is highlighted by the following interview excerpts:
So that kind of work that I've done, I think brings a lot of meaning to it. So, I guess the education side makes me sort of intellectually adept at kind of bouncing around and looking at a lot of different ways of doing research and doing practice. And then my academic or my personal background gives me a sense of what injustice means to me. What a valuable contribution this field could potentially make to the world and how it can address some of the fundamental things that we're facing in society. (LN: 104-110)

**Educator 4.** Educator 4 used the following message to describe significant life experiences that contributed to becoming an educator in peace and conflict studies:

I grew up with two parents who were very devoted to equal justice. (LN: 68) … And that's how I was raised. So, the whole notion of being interested in peace and conflict came I think from childhood… And one of my careers I was also an attorney and I was working for social justice as a …. representing under-served people. And so, for me, it was a natural. I don't think you can have a democratic nation and say that people have rights when some people have rights and some people don't (LN: 86-91).

The following words highlight the motivation of Educator 4 in becoming an educator in this field:

To make a difference!... And what I find as an educator in the field is, I'm training people (which is very gratifying) to be my colleagues and to go out and do similar things and different things in the community. And I really do believe that it takes all of us to make a change in society. It simply does. (LN: 180-186)

Additionally, the meaning of being a peace and conflict studies educator for Educator 4 is highlighted by the following interview excerpts:

It's a huge meaning for me. It's a huge role that I play, hoping to have impact in people's lives so that they can go out and have impact in other people's lives. So that people can see a different way of looking at things and also a different way of experiencing themselves because I really do believe that conflict is about identity. (LN: 189:192)

**Educator 5.** Educator 5 expressed significant life experiences that contributed to becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies in the following manner:

I came to the field itself almost by accident. And yet, it really is the ideal field for me. …I just wanted to have cross-cultural experiences. I wanted to see the world through the eyes of others… But I really didn't want to do academics… my parents were academics, and it didn't seem very glamorous to me…. So, I chose to go into international development, mainly because it was a logical next step after XXXX. (LN: 88-98) … I got involved with the national reconciliation processes, the peace processes… it was both
state-building and peace-building processes (LN: 105-107) … I really was interested in this big picture, looking at the whole of society, not just the economic, but also the political. (LN: 113-114) … I liked the whole of society approach. I liked looking at all the sectors and all the levels. And, my undergrad was in sociology and anthropology and then my master's, of course, had a bit of an economics focus because it was development. (LN: 117-120) … I have worked many years in Washington and with international organizations… And increasingly, I came to understand the extent to which the international aid industry, particularly the international aid industry funded by, by the nation-states, was not really working for social justice at all. (LN: 133-137)

The following words express the motivation of Educator 5 in becoming an educator in this field:

My motivation, I see that as my role. And that means, for me, at this point in my life anyway, that means creating the next generation of change agents….and in many ways, teaching, it really is the way one does that. But teaching is better than training because with teaching, you have a long engagement with people. (LN: 357-364)

Additionally, Educator 5 expressed the meaning of being an educator in peace conflict studies program in the following words: “I feel like life is only meaningful if you're working for the greater good.” (LN: 349-349)

**Summary of research participants.** Through their responses to the interview questions, the research participants expounded on interrelated topics related to delivery and management of education in peace and conflict studies, especially regarding the use of community engagement for providing students experiential and transformative learning for preemptively addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The remainder of this chapter includes a discussion of superordinate themes and subordinate themes findings which emerged from the analysis of the data generated from the individual one-on-one interviews with five research participants.

**Thematic Analysis: Definition of Superordinate Themes and Subordinate Themes**

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the introductory and in-depth interview of five participating educators revealed five superordinate themes and nineteen
subordinate themes. The following five superordinate themes (Figure 4-1) were identified: 1) Inadequacies of the current education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Lack of community engagement-based experiential and transformative education; 3) Lack of pre-conflict long-term community partnerships; 4) Inadequacy of institutional support; and 5) Influence of institutional constraints and governance.

Figure 4-1. Superordinate Themes

These superordinate and subordinate themes are presented in Table 4.1. For situating the experiences within the domains of the lived world of the participating educators, these research findings include illustrative excerpts that are identified by line number from the transcripts of the introductory interviews and in-depth interviews.

This chapter includes a detailed description of each superordinate theme and each associated subordinate theme, and an illustrative description of their interrelatedness and
interdependencies, and conclusionary remarks. Only the participating educator’s experience that was relevant to any theme was included.

Table 4-1

*Superordinate Themes and Subordinate Themes*

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Superordinate Theme 1: Inadequacies of the Current Education for Addressing Social Injustice and Institutionalized Oppression

The first superordinate theme, *Inadequacies of the Current Education for Addressing Social Injustice and Institutionalized Oppression*, captured the essence of the participating educators’ views regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This superordinate theme presented a foundational view of the effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, this superordinate theme supported other superordinate themes. This superordinate theme consisted of the following six subordinate themes (Figure 4-2): 1) Ineffectiveness in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Insufficiencies in pre-conflict focus; 3) Inadequacies in the consideration of the nature of students’ experiences and socio-economic status; 4) Insufficiencies in questioning the social order and societal power structures; 5) Inadequacies in helping students to question their own world views; and 6) Ineffectiveness in teaching students to be change agents. The following sections include detailed insights into each subordinate theme.

**Subordinate theme 1.1: Ineffectiveness in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.** This subtheme explores experience-based views of the
participating educators about the effectiveness of the current education for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

In response to the question of whether the education in peace studies or conflict studies or practitioners are effective in addressing communal conflicts coming out of social injustice, Educator 4 stated, “I suspect no. I think that more needs to be done.” (Introductory Interview LN: 328). Similarly, Educator 5 stated:

We have failed. We have 100% failed.” (LN: 16) … So, we’ve failed, we've utterly failed. The field has utterly failed. (Introductory Interview LN: 626-627)

These blunt assessments of Educator 4 and Educator 5 encapsulated the views of the peace and conflict studies educators regarding the effectiveness of the current education for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Effectiveness of the current education was one of the biggest concerns the participants. Except for Educator 2, all Educators shared their concerns regarding the effectiveness of the current education for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Indicating that the current programs that are effective in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression are exceptions and outliers, they raised concerns and suggested that the current education in peace and conflict studies is not effective in addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Educator 4 diplomatically stated, “I basically think that in our current peace and conflict studies, I'm not sure whether they completely make the mark in terms of the challenges of social injustice.” (LN: 14-16) This researcher suggests that Educator 1’s statement, “[Effective program] it's the exception to the rule. I won't go as far as to say it's ineffective. I think part of it's
the limitation (LN: 14-16)”, politely supports the earlier stated assessments made by Educator 4 and Educator 5.

However, Educator 1 expressed the following:

Well, for the most part, I think there are three answers. One is no, because it kind of goes back to what does higher education look for? And it's like that preparation thing. It's not the doing. The second thing is there are band-aid things. (Introductory Interview LN: 465-468) … if one gets the problem solved, no; because the source is still out there. So, the band-aid thing is a short-term, just getting people not to fight. The long-term is addressing the root cause. (Introductory Interview LN: 485-488) …When you have a fire, you take your fire extinguisher and you aim at the base of the flame, you don't fire up here (raising his hands); you aim at the base. And we're not doing enough of that. And so, there's a third answer to this in terms of educators and practitioners effectively addressing communal conflicts; in some instances, they are. But they're not the type of educator you and I are used to. They're the Amish or Quaker, mostly Quakers. I know that they uproot from Pennsylvania, and they move to a small village in Zimbabwe. And they spend 45 years as a mission doing their work. (Introductory Interview LN: 489-495)

Educator 4 added:

We have to be more engaging with policy shapers who help to bring forth some of these issues. I think one of the things that is important is for us to inform the policymakers who are basically the politicians and the bureaucrats. The politicians are the ones who make the laws and they're the policymakers, but we need to shape them a little bit more. We need to make sure that they're aware of the concerns that we have. And that's why one of the areas I think we need to do more work in the area of peace and conflict is to be more of a policy shaper. (Introductory Interview LN: 360-369)

Educator 2 provided the following:

Are we effectively teaching injustice? I think that there is a danger that schools are using more business-like model. And that we're treating students more and more like consumers. (Introductory Interview LN: 358-360) … We do have this business-like model that says, "Yes, we should keep things relatively safe."… I would say, "That it's harder to teach about injustice than, than before." (Introductory Interview LN: 374-377)

Therefore, with the sole exception of Educator 2, the collective experiences of all participating educators indicated that the current education includes the following limiting factors: 1) lack of connection between peace and conflict studies; 2) absence of community engagement-based experiential education; 3) constraints imposed by the current institutional
governance model that limit the ability to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 4) lack of an independent (accreditation) body to implement standards for providing students experiential learning; 5) people who are invested in the system prefer the status quo and resist the change; and 6) except for theological institutions, education in peace and conflict studies does not place priority on social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The following discussion further demonstrates that the current education is not effective in training students how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Educator 1 offered the following elaboration:

And just by looking at the curriculum, you kind of get a feel for what they do. And, a lot of programs have process courses and theory courses and methods courses ... You really can't tell much. But the ones that stick out are the outliers. And they're the ones that have people doing these: going out and volunteering in community, kind of things, externships, clinical programs, really effective practicums in longstanding sites. It's the exception to the rule.... I won't go as far as to say it's ineffective. I think part of it's the limitation effect again.  (LN 10-14)

Educator 1 added:

You have a lot of people invested in the system in terms of the status quo. So, you have resistance with people who want to maintain the status quo... but I think a lot of programs go so far as to show these things, but they don't go far enough to show how to get engaged in preventing them or changing them... Social transformation programs are found primarily in theological seminaries. So, I feel like for masters and PhDs in social transformation, you're going to find them in religious institutions... You're not going to find them too often in public institutions. So, it's iffy. (LN: 21-37)

In an educational database if you look at the name of the university, the name of the department, program, institution, or school.... and if you go just for the courses, social injustice doesn't come up. But, when it does, it's like these theological seminaries and, and when you look at social transformation, the same thing happens there too. (LN: 45-49)

Three educators attributed the ineffectiveness of the current education to unclear definition of the field and the lack of integration of peace and conflict studies. For example, Educator 1 also stated the following:
I think it's a harsh way to put it. Some programs, some peace studies programs say, "Look, we're trying to figure out what peace is." And you ask them, "What is it? What does it mean?" Some people say, "Coexistence." They don't use the Galtung negative peace, positive peace, or an array of peaces. It's just can people exist with each other. Can they coexist? Can we appreciate one another? Whereas other programs; do have sort of maybe an ideological perspective that run through the program. (LN: 70-76) …. We don't have a connection as a field - peace studies, conflict intervention, ADR- any connections at all to that sort of forecasting that you see in future studies. (LN: 337-339)

Discussing the value of an accreditation board, Educator 1 observed the following: Social work schools are departments in schools and these departments have outside accrediting bodies… Not just the university, but the school… Now, the institution, the university has to accommodate an outside accreditor's demands that students… are supervised by a licensed professional and/or a, professor. We don't have that in our field, at all. (LN: 243-253)

Educator 3 used the following to echo Educator 1’s comments regarding the issues associated with the definition of the field and the integration between peace and conflict studies:

In some ways there is an artificial distinction between peace studies and conflict resolution in this field. And it's never been reconciled… There is a lack of talking about things like social injustice, oppression, things like "How do we change society to make it a fairer place?" Instead of, "How do we change people in order to fit into it?" The conflict resolution side tends to be more skill based and kind of not very moralistic in its viewpoint… There was this division that I couldn't articulate at the time between these two fields that I view as the same field, if it is a field at all. (Introductory Interview LN: 175-185) I would say that recognition that we're part of the same field would go a long way towards making social injustice a part of what we do. (LN: 3-4)

Educator 3 further elaborated:

There's no organization of our field…In social work…there is an accreditation body, every-every seven years they go to a program and say, "Are you teaching these things in social work? Are you doing it in these ways?" If not… your students are not going to be certified social workers. So, in our field there is nothing. There is nobody saying that this is what our field is, this is what you need to teach, and this is how you need to teach it. (LN: 98-108)

Educator 5 also asserted that the failure to integrate peace and conflict studies is hindering the ability to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression:

It goes back to the, the failure to integrate conflict resolution with peace studies and it goes back to our failure to include non-violent or activism approaches with traditional collaborative conflict resolution approaches that are more confrontative. And it has to do
with the fact that we are obsessed with employment for our students which means that that limits the range of things we can actually teach. (LN: 17-22)

Additionally, Educator 5, raised the following concerns about the ability of educational institutions to teach students about preemptively addressing social injustice:

It's not about social justice, it's about conflict management… We're not teaching our students how to think critically about institutions and donors. We teach, sure, to think critically in a class, maybe, but we don't really think in the workplace. How do you think critically? And how do you transform anything you do? How do you look at social justice from the institution on out? I think we really fail in that, in that department. (LN: 39-51)

These educators suggested that to improve the education in peace and conflict studies for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; educational institutions need to: 1) integrate peace and conflict studies; 2) establish clearly defined requirements for using community engagement to preemptively address social injustice; 3) develop sustainable relationships with communities; 4) have an independent body to promote the standards and the educational content to address social injustice; and 5) require educational institutions to use community engagement for providing transformative education about addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Subordinate theme 1.2: Insufficiencies in pre-conflict focus.** This subtheme validated this researcher’s literature review-based perceptions that the education in peace and conflict studies is primarily focused on the post-conflict environment and mostly ignores any education to train students to preemptively address communal social injustice and institutional oppression challenges faced by communities seeking to mitigate conflict causing conditions.

Educator 4 succinctly stated, “It's more focused on afterwards. I think that's really clear.” (LN: 818) This assessment represented the consensuses of the views of all educators that because the current education is defined by its ‘conflict orientation’, it emphasizes the post-conflict
situations and mostly ignores considerations for preemptively engaging communities in pre-
conflict environment. The following interview excerpts substantiated the quotation above.

For example, Educator 1 stated the following:

A lot of people in our field aren't trained to be forecasting analysts. They got their PhD in
some social science...But they don't know a trend analysis...and so they make these
really kind of wild assumptions... The field is largely reactive. (LN: 1342-1354)

Educator 1 further explained:

My personal experience suggests that circularly there's not enough emphasis on that. And
the research I've been doing for the last 23 years looking at curriculum tells me that a lot
of the preemptive stuff that we need to be preparing students is inadequate.

Educator 4 further elaborated:

I think it enhances the opportunities when people are trained specifically to be able to
recognize what's going on, why is it going on, and where do we think this is going, and to
become more engaged in the community with the notion of helping and joining with the
community to see what's happening, why it's happening, what are the root causes of it and
what can we do about it? (Introductory Interview LN: 119-127)

Educator 3 offered the following:

Because even, if you like talk to the provost or the, the dean or whatever, they would
perceive our field as not being about preventative measures, they might perceive social
work as being something like that. But they would perceive us, as after you have a
conflict these are the guys you call. So, there's very little understanding of it. That might
be part of the picture and, depending on the program that you work with that's where the
division between peace studies and conflict resolution matter. (Introductory Interview
LN: 421-426)

Educator 2 affirmed that the field is focused on post-conflict (LN: 770) and added, “I'm
not sure that we focus on preemptive actions, but I think that we need to. And, I think it would be
a poor use of time to only focus on things after the conflict. (LN: 815-817).

Educator 3 reflectively expressed:

We struggle with that one…. because that's really where we should emphasize more.
Usually a preemptive kind of action will help people in a longer, bigger kind of way than
if something happens later on. But I don't think we, as a field, prioritize that, because we
define ourselves around the notion of conflict”. (LN: 645-652)
In asserting that the field has a post conflict focus, Educator 4 stated:

I think that too frequently there's that emphasis on resolution and less emphasis on analysis. And I think in particular when we look at areas of social injustice, they're like a simmering pot… It's typically that simmering pot that's been going and going and then like a volcano it erupts. But it has had warning. It's had symptoms. It's had those pre-conflict phases that we teach. But oftentimes it's gone unnoticed or it's seen as the normative. (LN: 170-178)

Educator 4 offered the following suggestions:

All you have to do is look to the history of a community. All you have to do is look to how have problems been identified, not solved necessarily, but even identified. Look at the history because history will teach you." And think historically, we need to understand more about that in order to see the injustices that have been pervasive and how they've been accepted by all parties. And I think those are areas that from a peace education and a conflict resolution perspective need to be emphasized more in education…And so, I think from the analysis perspective I'm thinking of some of the courses that I took that looked at the how's and the why's and the root causes, but I think they need to be expanded. If I were in school now as a student and as a professor in the field, I emphasize that more… I think really emphasizing, even more, the analysis, looking at the historical memory, looking at the ways in which people have an understanding and going beyond the box, you know, not only outside the box, you got go well beyond the box. (Introductory Interview LN: 142-164)

Regarding the preemptive engagement, Educator 1 presented further elaboration:

[Provide] more externships in the community, being out there. Literally, a university is only as good as what it provides the community, what it gives back… A lot of peace studies programs, a lot of conflict management programs do talk a lot about social conflict, but how many of them are out there actually working on them, helping to manage things, or to think ahead. That just doesn't ring too well, a lot of programs fall flat on that. And part of it could be resource based. They can teach, but do they have full-time clinical people out there that have roots in the community that could make that bridge? Some programs do but the overwhelming majority doesn’t. (Introductory Interview LN: 191-199) ... There’re not enough connections between the policy, what is the real root of the problem connected to the conflict prevention, management, resolution, how to solve it. It just-- there's not enough there. (Introductory Interview LN: 206-208)

Educator 5 commented, “When it comes to prevention, conflict resolution does not address it as a field. Peace studies in theory have a lot to say about prevention.” (LN: 1302-1304) Stating that “But mostly it doesn't.” (LN: 1332), Educator 5 shared the following critical observation, “But I also think that's partly not driven by the field. But it's driven by the donors,
by funders: USIP or state department or USAID or any of these donors, mostly they're not interested until it's (conflict) erupted, it's in the news; where it's violent conflict.” (LN: 1332-1337)

Educator 5 also recommended:

Prevention-wise, it should actually take us back to social change, what does social change look like? It's really about social change and social justice or social justice directed or focused. Social change is multi-sectoral, I mean it’s social programs and it's political change, economic change and it's those tools that go with that which are multiplex. (Introductory Interview LN: 336-342)

**Subordinate theme 1.3: Inadequacies in the consideration of students' experiences and socio-economic status.** This researcher suggests that for students to learn about how to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, it essential for them to understand how the socially situated nature of their experiences and their socio-economic status influences their world views about just societies. Therefore, this researcher suggests that it is essential that in providing students peace and conflict education, educators intentionally consider the influence of the socially situated nature of their experiences and socio-economic status on their abilities to put in practice the theories they are learning. Hopefully, these intentional considerations will help students in effectively working with socially situated and socio-economic status-influenced experiences of the marginalized communities. Therefore, the participating educators’ views that are described below present unique insights (that have not been articulated in the literature) into the current education in peace and conflict studies. Consideration of the socially situated nature of students’ experience is discussed first and it is then followed by discussion of the accommodation of the socio-economic status of students.

*No consideration of the socially situated nature of students’ experience.* Educator 4 emphasized the importance of considering the socially situated nature of students’ experiences:
“I think that's hugely important.” (LN: 338) Educator 5 more bluntly stated. “But it's also that they don't even really understand who our students are.” (LN: 614) These statements and the discussion below give critical insights into the ways the current education considers the experiences and socio-economic status of students. The participating educators collectively suggest that although it is hugely important, it is not easy; and the current education focuses on employability of students which reinforces social constriction. The participating educators stressed the importance of this consideration that has been largely either taken for granted or ignored.

For example, Educator 1 said,

Do we have courses in that (consideration of the socially situated nature of experience)? No. Look at the curriculum; do we have any courses on, introspection and reflection on us...We kind of come up short on this. (LN: 558-562) …. But here there's major institutional force that works against that…If you…just ask a parent why your son or daughter is going to university: To get a good paying job. So, in a sense, if you're just looking at just one variable of class, poor and privileged, and we have an institution that reinforces success by becoming privileged or gaining access to resources, it makes our job even harder. (LN: 575-580)

Educator 3 stated, “The idea that our identities are socially constructed is at the core of that kind of concept. But it's not something that I necessarily have to teach about, but it is something that I have”. (LN: 286-292)

Educator 4 stated:

I think it's, it's not easy because people need to be able to see where it is situated and also how it was socially constructed and how does it impact the identities of those people who are marginalized. (LN: 359-364)

In commenting on the socially situated nature of students, Educator 5 stated:

Our concept of diversity is problematic…I feel like most of the faculty, especially the white faculty tend to still look at whether you are brown or not.... I think a lot of our faculty, especially, the white ones, especially the liberal ones, are still focused on this diversity thing, that really superficially says, you're a person of color or different
nationality so you are therefore oppressed and we're going to make you teach the class about oppression or we're going to make you teach the class about marginalization, which is totally unfair. But it's also that they don't even really understand who our students are. (LN: 594-614)

*No accommodation of the socio-economic status of students.* Educator 1 stated, “I'd say the vast majority of people in our field don't do that at all.” (LN: 773) Echoing this assessment, other participating educators (except for Educator 2) suggested that education in peace and conflict studies does not take into consideration students’ socio-economic status; does not consider students’ status-based views; does not create for students a sense of belonging; and the faculty does not adequately recognize the influence of the socio-economic status of students on their learning.

For example, Educator 1 suggested:

So, we have some professors at every institution, who say that you do it my way or no way at all. It doesn't matter about your socioeconomic status or your race or your gender. I'm right and you're in my class, you do it this way. And so, -- there's this question, actually, impacts the entire educational system. Not just, not just our field. (LN: 706-714)

Additionally, suggesting that it is not being done adequately, Educator 4 stated:

I think we're all the products of our experiences. And I think as a faculty member, we need to be really aware of the things that have shaped us and understanding how our students have been shaped and what has gone into that, and to help them talk about it if they want to, to help them-- It's like turning the dial in your mind to be able to see things a little bit differently. (LN: 478-482)

Educator 5 expressed:

But I don't think that we really address it other than through kind of this diversity-identity politics, kind of an identity politics or diversity concept… one of the things that really shocked me when I first came here was that nobody would talk about race. They didn't want to talk about the students…. Like, because everybody is so PC [Politically Correct]. They're PC. They won't really talk about it. My colleagues will…tiptoe around-- they'll tiptoe around them; they walk on eggshells. (LN: 746-770)

**Subordinate theme 1.4: Insufficiencies in questioning the social order and societal power structures.** Based on the literature review, this researcher suggests that education in
peace and conflict studies needs to help students develop their understanding of how the hegemonic power of “Whiteness as Property”, dominant ideologies; and realignment of societal power structures are used to perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Similarly, education in peace and conflict studies needs to provide students the knowledge that would help them in developing strategies for realigning societal power structures in order to have more just societies. The following responses of the participating educators to the question of whether the current social order is contributing to perpetuation of social injustice, powerfully illustrated the critical need for peace and conflict studies educators to help students to learn about how to consider the influence the social order and societal power structures on the perpetuation of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

In response to the question of whether the current social order is contributing to the perpetuation of social injustice, Educator 5 succinctly responded, “Absolutely.” (Introductory Interview LN: 599) The following statement of Educator 4 endorses the views of Educator 5, “I think, unfortunately, yes.” (Introductory Interview LN: 316) Similarly, Educator 1’s following elaboration highlights the challenges of the current education in teaching students about how the current social order perpetuates social injustice:

If you look at education and educational institutions, it's disproportionate in terms of the impact it has on communities. We know that there's social reproduction of poverty because education, schools in poor communities often have less resources; so, it does reproduce itself (social injustice). (Introductory Interview LN: 465-468)

Finally, Educator 3’s following message highlighted the challenges of the current education in teaching students about how the current social order perpetuates social injustice:

But when you are in institutions and when you are part of the university system (there's a way that universities are racist or sexist or classist), it's very hard to determine how to change things…. But it's easier to think about it analytically from a distance than it is to change a lot of the things. (Introductory Interview LN: 331-337)
Not facilitating students’ understanding of how the hegemonic power of whiteness as property, dominant ideologies, and societal power structures perpetuate social injustice. The following quotation of Educator 1, “How often do programs do that? Very rarely…is it required, 2% of the time.” (LN: 617) and “But do we go far enough to talk about the hegemony, I don't think so.” (LN: 632) as well as the following quotations of Educator 4, “‘It has to be intentional. It can't be happenstance.’” (LN: 371-372) illustrated the lack of importance the education in peace and conflict studies places on these fundamental requirements of peace and conflict studies.

Recognizing that “Whiteness” as a privilege exists, the participating educators collectively suggested that programs in peace and conflict studies do neither require it nor focus on experiential exposure to the effects of the social power structure. They added that it needs to be intentionally built-in to the curriculum and it cannot be just an academic exercise. They also indicated that it is not a program priority supported by institutional leadership; it is entirely dependent on the interest of the faculty and students. The following discussion of the participating educators’ comments supports the above quotations.

Although in his teaching, Educator 3 emphasizes hegemony and the influence of dominant ideologies and social power, Educator 3 stated that it is not required by the institution.

Educator 4 expressed:

I think it's got to be built into the curriculum intentionally… It can't be happenstance… And in order to do that, as educators, we ourselves need to sit and think about it and mull about it, write about it, and then talk about it. I think we need to explore that because, when you look at white privilege, for example, do people who are white really understand what that means? If you're a white person who comes from a low socioeconomic background, do you still consider but you're also white? So, while you may come from the same background that a black person or a Hispanic person comes…you still have a privilege? Because that's not something that necessarily hits people in the face. They don't necessarily understand that that is still a privilege. (LN: 371-389)
Educator 4 added:

I think the bottom line is that faculty has to be educated first, and they have to recognize what it is, and then intentionally put it into the curriculum. It can't just be something that's an academic exercise. Its how do you actually see it? Do you bring in people who have been impacted by that...But I think until you're up close and personal and see it and experience it, it's difficult. (LN: 402-410)

Educator 5 articulated the following:

Again, faculty by faculty maybe... But I don't think as a program, as a department; I actually don't think our leadership is really on board with this. (LN: 645-650)

**Not providing students the knowledge to develop strategies for realigning societal power structures in order to have more just societies.** Educator 4 emphatically stated, “I think societal power structures do need to be realigned.” (LN: 416) Similarly, Educator 1 noted, “Peace studies and conflict resolution come up kind of short.” (LN: 641) These quotations illustrate that peace and conflict studies need to place more emphasis on teaching students about developing strategies for realigning power structures to have more just societies. The participating educators collectively indicated that as the current education accepts and possibly reinforces the status quo, realigning societal power structures is not specifically emphasized; correction of this recognized program deficiency would require changes in the curricula of peace and conflict studies education.

For example, Educator I stated:

Peace studies and conflict resolution come up kind of short. How many public policy and legal theory courses do you see in the curriculum, very few? But, when you're looking at how to create strategies for real-life social power structures, those are some things that are key elements in legal policy that run institutions that run societies. And if we don't teach students policy, how laws are written, how they're enforced, how they reinforce a status quo with intended and unintended consequences and discriminatory and non-discriminatory aspects to it; we're running into a problem (LN: 641-649)
In responding to the question about realignment of the societal power structure, Educator 2 raised the following questions: “How do we do that? How do we recognize when we're doing that? I think that has to be called out. (LN: 489-491)

Educator 3 suggested:

We talk about realigning organizational structures, but we don't really go into broader societal structures very much. (LN: 350-351) … Very few of them are targeting the social structure...So we don't really cover that a lot...So that's very structurally focused. (LN: 355-361) …It really depends on the class and in one of our basic classes …we teach things like nonviolence, diplomacy, things that would, maybe along the lines of challenging power structures in authority. But it varies from class to class and faculty members teach the things very differently. (LN: 366-377)

Educator 5 stated:

Accepting the status quo and not questioning the status quo; learn to accept the status quo is the message of our program. It really is in so many ways…and it's not even reform…. It's really just putting out fires…conflict management, tapping it all down so we would all be nice to each other. (LN: 692-701)

I think some people (faculty) are really committed to it but remain in the academic world… But I don't think they see as their job to actually to change it, to create changes. I think everybody thinks their job is to get these people jobs, get them employment. (LN: 711-718)

Subordinate theme 1.5: Inadequacies in helping students to question their own world views. The literature review suggested that for helping communities to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, students in peace and conflict studies need to learn about how to question the basis of their world views and be open to new ideas that may question their own beliefs, values, meanings, and assumptions. Therefore, this subtheme explored the views of the participating educators regarding the effectiveness of the current education in helping students develop abilities to self-question their own beliefs, values, meanings, and assumptions, especially regarding the oppressed and marginalized communities.
The following quotation of Educator 5 “Our program, absolutely not, not our program at all.” (LN: 940) and the quotation of Educator 1 “I don't think the field overall does a good enough job.” (LN: 934) succinctly represent the effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies in helping students to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions for incorporating new ideas that may help communities in their efforts to become more just societies. The participating educators recognized that the current education in this field is not encouraging students to question their own world views and therefore, not enhancing their abilities for developing new ideas to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. They suggested that this is a deficiency in peace and conflict studies and is primarily based only on theoretical perspectives.

Educator 3 stated, “My perception is that a lot of them aren't open to that (questioning their own values, beliefs, meanings and assumptions)”. (LN: 473-474) Educator 4 expressed, “Practicum, service-learning and the scholarship engagement are important because they put into action what I think helps that transformation.” (LN: 649-651)

The following comments of the participating educators offered further insights into the effectiveness of the current education in raising students’ awareness of their world view and in helping them to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions that underlie their world views.

Educator 3 articulated the following:

But my perception is that a lot of them [students] aren't open to that, that they come to school with an agenda…. So, it depends on the class you teach and the students you have in a particular class, whether they're going to be receptive to it. And then, we do have the tools to challenge people's beliefs. But again, it's really up to the professor and it's really up to the way they [students] perceive the class, rather than it being something that's expected, I think, in our field. (LN: 470-498)
In describing what needs to be done, Educator 4 presented the following:

I think it has to be intentional, so that students are given the opportunity to be reflective. They're given the opportunity to learn and then be able to sit back and say, how does this relate to me? How is this in line with my own values, my own understandings, my own social construction of the realities that I was taught over the years and I grew up this particular way… And then you have to give people the tools to make those changes because the changes can't just be intellectual changes. They also need to be attitude and behavioral changes and those are more difficult changes. The intellectual changes are not so bad and not that difficult because we're adding knowledge, we're having new understandings…And that's where I think practicum, and service learning, and the scholarship of engagement are important because they put into action what I think helps that transformation. (LN: 633-651)

Educator 5 expressed the following thoughts:

Our program, absolutely not, not our program at all. I don't think so. (LN: 940) …. and certainly not exploring new relations and actions to develop more just societies, absolutely not. They would never even say anything like that…That's why I've been really pushing for us to teach ontology and epistemology because that's where you start looking at values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions. And nobody wants to talk about that because they probably don't understand it. (LN: 985-985)

**Subordinate theme 1.6: Ineffectiveness in teaching students to be change agents.**

Based on the literature review, this researcher believes that education in peace and conflict studies needs to supplement the current educational approach by educating students to be change agents to help communities in reforming their social structures to become more just societies. Unfortunately, all participating educators collectively indicated that it is not the focus of the current education in peace and conflict studies. They also suggested that the focus of the current education is to improve students’ knowledge and abilities to find better jobs that are also the focus of the students. Therefore, these participating educators are hoping that students will learn to be change agents in their work environment. The following discussion gave further insights into the views of the participating educators.

Educator 5 simply stated, “I don't even think anybody assigns Freire in our program or anything similar or any of his counterparts.” (LN: 1560-1561) The following is the response of
Educator 1 to the questions about whether the education in peace and conflict studies is teaching students to find employment or to be change agents as envisioned by Freire:

That's a left leaning formula for social action. It doesn't show up so much in the practice; it shows up in the theory…. So, if I were to reread the question and say, do we want to be revolutionary [this researcher is not sure how being a change agent can be considered revolutionary] or do we want people who maintain the status quo; and in a sense, we need a little bit of both. (LN: 1645-1660)

In response to the question, are we raising the self-consciousness of students towards a better and more just society, Educator 1 stated, “We should be doing that…That's again one of the sorts of maybe answers. But it depends on the faculty, the course, and the program.” (LN: 1697-1703) Educator 2 expressed, “It’s part of the learning blocks; whether or not we keep focused on it or not; not so much.” (LN: 873-874) Referring to the interest of students, Educator 3 stated, “So, when I feel like they're not moved by that, I feel that they would not be particularly seeing themselves as change agents in society. But I don't know that. That is just my perception of it.” (LN: 786-787)

Educator 4 provided the following elaboration:

I think it's unfortunate if we only see it as mutually exclusive because I think that people can be change agents and also get jobs; understanding that the jobs that they're seeking may be in environments that are resistant to certain elements of change. And so therefore, how do we help students understand that they are a change agent, but they also want to be an employee change agent… I'm acutely aware of this, that the vast majority of my students are in graduate school because they have a vision… for being a change agent. They have a vision for making things better for the people that are in their community…. I'm acutely aware of the fact that in the end, most of them want a job... So how can we continue to help them understand that they can have a job but also, they can be a change agent at the same time. So how do you do that and how do you do that in an institution or in an organization that really desires the status quo and lives by the status quo? It's a significant question. It's an excellent question. (LN: 914-945)

Superordinate theme 1: Interrelatedness and interdependencies of subthemes. These six subordinate themes are interrelated and interdependent (Figure 4-3). Therefore, although each subordinate theme is meaningful on its own, all subordinate themes collectively depict
integrated aspects of a more holistic understanding of the inappropriateness and ineffectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

For example, for the education in peace and conflict studies to become effective in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subordinate theme 1.1), educators would need to help students to know about how to consider the social order and societal power structures (Subordinate theme 1.4) which would require students to learn about questioning their world views for incorporating new ideas (Subordinate theme 1.5). To help students learn about how to question their own world view, educators in peace and conflict studies would need to accommodate the influence of the nature of students’ experiences and their socio-economic status (Subordinate theme 1.3).
Additionally, without fulfilling the objectives of these subordinate themes, the education in peace and conflict studies would most likely have very limited abilities to empower students to become change agents (Subordinate theme 1.6) and therefore, potentially, the education in peace and conflict studies will continue to be focused on the post-conflict environment and to mostly ignore the need for pre-conflict community engagement (Subordinate theme 1.2).

**Conclusion of superordinate theme 1.** The participating educators collectively agreed that the current education in peace and conflict studies has been inadequate for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. All of them concurred that the current education in peace and conflict studies is primarily focused on...
the post-conflict environment and mostly ignores any education to train students to preemptively address communal social injustice and institutional oppression challenges faced by communities seeking to mitigate conflict causing conditions. They concluded that the current education fails to consider the influence of the socially situated nature of students' experiences and the impact of the socio-economic status of students. Similarly, these participating educators suggested that the current education is not training the students about how to help communities in becoming more just societies by questioning the influence of the current social orders and societal power structures. They also asserted that the current education is not helping students to learn about how to be open to incorporating new ideas by questioning their world views. They questioned whether the current education is teaching students to be change agents or is only focused on helping them find employment that may perpetuate the existing social order and societal power structures. Consequently, all the educators raised great concerns about the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies.

This superordinate theme suggested that the institutions need to reflect on the real purpose of peace and conflict studies (which this researcher suggests is to create more just societies) and to question whether they are more interested in student enrollment even if they do almost nothing to address the perpetuation of the existing social order and societal power structures-based social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, this superordinate theme made this researcher question the adequacy of the current education for generating future educators and practitioners capable of addressing the social injustice and institutionalized oppression-based conflicts of the 21st century.
Superordinate Theme 2: Lack of Community Engagement-based Experiential and Transformative Education

The second superordinate theme, *Lack of Community Engagement-based Experiential and Transformative Education* capsulized the spirit of the participating educators’ experienced-based views regarding the challenges of peace and conflict studies educators in providing students experiential and transformative education. This superordinate theme consisted of the following four subordinate themes (Figure 4-4): 1) Lack of curricula for including experiential learning and the ineffectiveness of practicums; 2) Deficiency in providing to students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences to change their frame of reference regarding social injustice; 3) Absence of theory-practice integration - Inadequacy of the use of scholar-practitioners and 4) Lack of professional doctorate programs.
Subordinate theme 2.1: Lack of curricula for experiential learning and the ineffectiveness of practicums. Based on the review of the curricula of peace and conflict studies programs and this researcher’s ongoing conversations with peace and conflict studies educators, this researcher wondered whether the institutions are primarily relying on the use of practicums to fulfill their publicized emphasis on providing students community engagement-based experiential learning and whether the practicums are effective in providing the students community engagement-based experiential learning. Therefore, this researcher wanted to get insights into the effectiveness of the use of practicums, by the current education in peace and conflicts, for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning. As such, this subtheme presents the participating educators’ views regarding the effectiveness of the use of practicums in adequately providing students opportunities to get community engagement-based experiential learning.

Educator 1’ stated, “I will say, first, if you were to measure effectiveness in terms of having students get that experiential learning experience, across the field it's, it's ineffective.” (LN: 168-169) and Educator 5’ suggested, “It's totally inadequate… It's very, very superficial… These practicums we have, they're very, very superficial.” (LN: 139-142) These quotations offer a summarized assessment of the effectiveness of peace and conflict studies in providing students experiential learning.

All participating educators endorsed the criticality of experiential learning and considered the use of the practicum as an excellent vehicle to provide students experiential learning. All participating educators also indicated that their programs primarily rely on the use of practicums to provide students experiential learning. However, it appeared that as these educators seem to view practicums as the only way to provide students experiential learning, they seem not to be
inclined to include experiential learning as an integral element of other courses. All the participating educators suggested that the effectiveness of the practicums is mostly driven by the interest of the student and that it is neither required by the educational requirements of the institutions, nor it is founded in the institutions’ interest in helping students to learn about how to assist communities in preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The following discussions elaborate the participating educators’ views and insights into the effectiveness of the current peace and conflict studies in providing students experiential learning and the effectiveness of practicums as a tool for providing students experiential learning.

Educator 4 shared the following insights regarding the use of practicums:

Frankly, there are some students who approach it [practicum] with, "Oh, this is something I have to do. And let me do the least…" (LN: 660-662) … I think a lot of times people choose a site because it's convenient, because it fits easily into their schedule… I think sometimes to choose the right site requires a bit more thought and a bit more exploration than sometimes people are willing to put into it. (LN: 668-672)

Educator 1 suggested the following:

I will say, first, if you were to measure effectiveness in terms of having students get that experiential learning experience, across the field it’s, it's ineffective. And, if you look at the curriculum, if you look at practicum courses, internships, clinics, externships, and supervised mentorships in particular; it shows up. But, it's not in every program; by far it's not every program. And when it does show up, oftentimes, about half the time, it's an elective that you don't have to take. And when it shows up, it's more after thought to meet the requirement, check the box…There are very few programs that require that you must have practical experience at the graduate level in peace and conflict studies. (LN: 171-179)

Educator 1 added:

We require it. The students, at the undergraduate and graduate levels, must take a course doing practical work in the community. Taking what you've learned in the classroom, all those theories and models and research, and put it into use for two reasons. One is to see, is it working? Does it help? And if it doesn't, learning something from it; and to give students the opportunity to see, “do they really want to be practicing in certain areas?” (LN: 181-189)
Educator 2’s institution emphasis is further illustrated in the following comment:

I think our program, the …program is strong because of not only the commitment to teaching things that are within the purview of coexistence, but there's a practicum component, where students spend six months in the field. And they have to design the practicum, to go out and study some aspect of conflict, some aspect of coexistence… They go to The World Bank. They go to WHO. They go to The Carter Center. They go to all kinds of places. And then, they write up their whole experience-- and then they present that as part of their degree. They have a 20-minute speech in which they have to document all the stuff they've done…. but students have done work at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). They've done work at small organizations in places that focus on youth in sports, for example, and a whole bunch of things. (LN: 142-166)

This researcher noted that these organizations (e.g., World Bank, the USIP, and the Carter Center) are not focused on pre-conflict community engagement and they work within the existing social order and societal structure. Additionally, Educator 2 implied that the practicum is largely driven by the interest of students’ focus on employment.

Educator 3 used the following comments to reflect the institutional experiential learning requirements:

In our program, I think in a lot of conflict programs, there's a practicum that the students do and that's part of the end point to their training. They get to practice and talk about it with their fellow students. So, I think there is an element of experiential learning. Some classes might explicitly incorporate service learning [experiential learning]. (LN: 63-66) …I always felt like it's very much up to the professor and there aren't really a lot of policy goals or big picture things. (LN: 86-87)

Educator 4 explained the challenges of providing students experiential learning in the following manner:

There are challenges from a student perspective. Because most graduate students who are engaged in these types of studies are mid-career working professionals…So, there are issues and challenges that I think the students have because of their own lives and depending upon when they come into the field and want to study it. (LN: 76-88)

Educator 4 further added:

If there were funding mechanisms so that students who truly wanted to engage in social injustice activities and try to bring about justice could get paid for…that would be very helpful…I think part of the problem boils down to resources. (LN: 89-104)
Educator 5 succinctly expressed:

And our students, most of them are so busy working and raising families that they don't have the time. (LN: 142-143) ...At the five universities in which I have worked, the emphasis has not been on practice, of any kind. (LN: 176-177) ...Probably what we need to do is, we actually need a faculty-level person whose job is to work on the practicums...We need somebody who really understands the field, knows what it is, and knows the communities. (LN: 1048-1051)

**Subordinate theme 2.2: Deficiency in providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences for understanding social injustice and institutionalized oppression.** Educator 1’s expression, “That's [critically reflective and transformative learning] a big hole.” (LN: 820); Educator 2’s statements, “I don't know.” (LN: 617) ....” I hope we all intend to do that.” (LN: 629); and Educator 3’s indication; “That is a challenge.” (LN: 420) indicated that the education in peace and conflict studies has not placed enough emphasis on providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences for guiding their actions regarding social injustice. The participating educators collectively suggested that critically reflective and transformative learning is a program deficiency in current peace and conflict studies. They also acknowledged that as most students appear to be interested only in getting a job and not interested in issues of social injustice, currently the ability of educational institutions to provide students critically reflective and transformative learning is mostly dependent on the interest of the student and the faculty.

For example, Educator 1 stated the following:

That's [critically reflective and transformative learning] a big hole. (LN: 820) .... But is there curriculum that's specifically towards this... but, it's asking a lot of one course or one program. (LN: 829-830)

Educator 1 added:

As a field, how well are peace studies and conflict studies educators providing their students reflective and transformative learning: Some aren't, some are. There are so many variables here to think about...So, there are the teachers themselves. It's the support of
their department or their program. It's the support of the school and the university. It's the mission of the program…My experience is that the people who really do this, this was their mission in the first place… but just not everybody, that's for sure. (LN: 874-883)

Educator 3 articulated the following:

That is a challenge and that is something I face in all of my classes because I do have a predisposition towards wanting to talk about social injustice. And I have a particular, sort of, theoretical lens that says education is fundamentally transformative if it's done well. (LN: 420-423) … So, when students come in and they feel like, no, I don't want a transformative education, what I want is that you give me the skills so that I can do things in my way in my job. Then it makes it this sort of yin and yang of how much, how far I can, kind of, go along that path versus what the students want… it's not like that you can say they're all the same… but I'd say, the majority, or at least a large group of students, perceive their education in very utilitarian terms. (LN: 423-431)

In the following words, Educator 4 acknowledged the importance of providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences:

Well, that's a really good question. It's like the ultimate program outcome. It’s like how do you know that what you're teaching is taking effect? How do you know that the students that are graduating from the program have absorbed the learning and are now prepared to put it into action? And that's, that's an interesting question because I do think that we do help the students change their frame of reference. Numerous students, well before they even graduate, tell us, "I'm not the same person I was when I came into the program…. I had a student say to me one time, …. now I understand myself better. Now I can also express myself better. Now I look at life differently… and I look at my actions differently, and I act differently." …. And so that's the ultimate outcome. It's that word transformation. Its like, how do we bring about transformative change in individuals so that they are looking at things differently than they looked at before… And with social injustice, that's huge. You can't go back. (LN: 605-622)

Educator 5 provided the following concise response, “The program is not. If anything, the program is the opposite; it's to teach employment skills.” (LN: 859-860)

**Subordinate theme 2.3: Absence of theory-practice integration -Inadequacy of the use of scholar-practitioners.** This researcher suggests that like education in social work, the clinical aspect is an essential requirement of the education in peace and conflict studies.

Additionally, based on the literature review and this researcher’s knowledge of educational
institutions in peace and conflict studies and his experiences with peacebuilding organizations, this researcher has come to believe that the practice and education in this field are operating in two separate worlds. Therefore, this researcher believes that the education in peace and conflict studies is not benefiting from the experiential knowledge of the practitioners and that very little progress seems to have been made in making peace and conflict theories more relevant to addressing the 21st century’s challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

The following two comments, first by Educator 5, “Our institution doesn't even use the term scholar-practitioners.” (LN: 1223) and the second by Educator 3, “I can't think of any school off the top of my head that would prioritize practice… in terms of it being a priority for the school, that is the lowest level priority for them.” (LN: 579-584) and “I would say that this is a teaching school. It’s made very clear that teaching is the priority.” (LN: 575-576); define the challenges associated with the use of a scholar-practitioner model in the education of peace and conflict studies. Therefore, not surprisingly, although all participating educators seem to indicate that a scholar-practitioner model would be valuable, they presented mixed views. These views suggested that programs don’t encourage a scholar-practitioner model and raised questions about what it means to be a scholar-practitioner. These views also indicated that as the scholar-practitioner model would provide an on-going loop between theory and practice, it would be beneficial and should be applied. Additionally, by referring to the challenges of financial constraints, student demographics, and the employment practices of educational institutions, the participating educators expressed doubts about the commitment of their institutions to provide students meaningful opportunities to become scholar-practitioners or faculty to be scholar-practitioners. Therefore, it seems that the use of a scholar-practitioner
model reflects a programmatic question that the education in peace and conflict studies has not yet addressed.

For example, without providing any substantiation, Educator 2 suggested that all educators in the program are practitioners, while Educator 1 and Educator 3 presented the challenges of using the scholar-practitioner model in peace and conflict studies. Educator 4 primarily stressed the importance of the use of a scholar-practitioner model. Following are the views of Educator 1 and Educator 3 that describe the challenges associated with the use of a scholar-practitioner model and the importance of the scholar-practitioner model as expressed by Educator 5.

Educator 1 stated:

The way universities are set up, there are these artificial camps. There's the scholar and the practitioner, and it doesn't need to be that way. And if you jump between the two of them, people don't like you. Make up your mind, are you going to be a world class scholar or are you going to be a practitioner? You can't be both. Because the people who just throw all their work into scholarship or just into practice will feel really uncomfortable about something like that (Scholar-practitioner model) being competent in doing two things. And, there's going to be resistance to that...I am going under the assumption that this field has a practical clinical element to it and that professors should be practical clinicians and scholars. And I'm saying yes. (LN: 1095-1115) ...Practitioners need to keep up with the science. The science is the knowledge and the scholars need to keep up with the practice to do it. (LN: 1160-1161)

Educator 3 shared the following perceptions regarding the challenges of using a scholar-practitioner model in peace and conflict studies education:

There's this big division again between the practitioners and the educators, or the scholars... and that doesn't necessarily need to be there, but it exists. Because, my impression is anyway, that the scholars have gotten where they are because they've succeeded in school and the practitioners have gotten where they are because they succeeded in the real world; and so, they don't trust the other side because there's not a lot of crossing of the streams... So, when you try to get to community engagement and the relationship between the practitioners and the scholars, you have to find special people that are willing to recognize the value of both sides. And right now, a lot of times I see a lot of resistance to that because everybody's sort of defensive about what they know and what their experience is... And, when you have this rift that is very hard to bridge, it
requires the people on each side of that bridge to be open to the other side. And then it also requires, I think, a basic understanding that we're in this together. We're on the same side and if we start learning from one another it's actually a plus it's not a minus. (LN: 213-234)

Educator 3 further elaborated:

There seems to be a rift from my standpoint between the scholar world and the practitioner world. And while people tend to try to bridge it, and they call themselves scholar-practitioners…it is never clear to me what that means most of the time. Most of the time people say that when they want to have a foot in both worlds, but it's not clear, like, are you spending 98% of your time on this (teaching) and 2% of your time on that (practice); or are you engaging with other people that are scholars or other people that are practitioners? So, there's a lot that is unstated when people say they're a scholar-practitioner…And-- but I do think that overall, there is a division there that has not been bridged properly. (LN: 534-544)

In commenting on institutional support to faculty to be scholar-practitioners, Educator 1 stated:

What do institutions typically do? My institution and other conflict institutions, they say and sometimes they kind of mean what they say, we want you to be a happy and productive worker. We want you to go out and do these things. And some institutions like the …. Institute at …. University, they provide the resources, time or whatever to get things done. That's what you would expect. Look, that's what you expect in social work and in education...And I think that kind of level of commitment would really accelerate our field. (LN: 1247-1258)

Using personal identity as a paracademic, Educator 4 told the following narrative to express the importance of the scholar-practitioner model:

Well, I think that for our field in particular, it is really important. I describe myself as a pracademic. I have a foot in practice, and I have a foot in the academics… So, I see myself as a pracademic, as a practitioner who's also an academic, an academic who's also a practitioner. So, the scholar- practitioner is how I would see myself. So as a result, I think the role is important because I think it's all like a loop. It's when you're out there practicing, and then you're doing some research on that, and then you're able to take that and build it back into your practice, and then you're able to look at it theoretically, and you're looking at it from a methodological perspective, it all informs each other. So, it's a constant informational loop that really helps. And I think it helps students because they're able to see that even though we're faculty, we're engaged in the community. We're out there engaged in practice, and they can do the same thing. (LN: 732-744)
Therefore, because of the lack of the use of a scholar-practitioner model, the field may continue to deprive students of the benefits of practice-based knowledge. Additionally, the lack of an infusion of practice-based knowledge may limit the advancement of theories in these fields and the practice may not benefit from the advancement of new theories.

**Subordinate theme 2.4: Lack of professional doctorate programs.** Based on the literature review assessment that the current doctoral programs appear to be focusing primarily on research and not sufficiently on practice, this researcher was interested in understanding the views of the participating educators regarding the usefulness of a professional doctorate program in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, this subtheme focuses on the participating educators’ understanding about the usefulness of professional doctorate programs in peace and conflict studies education.

All participating educators collectively agreed that although they are currently not offered anywhere, professional doctorate programs would be appropriate and would be of great value. For example, in response to the in-depth interview question, “Would you please describe your thoughts about the usefulness of peace and conflict studies awarding a Professional Doctorate degree instead of or in addition to a PhD”, Educator 2 simply responded, “Absolutely, Oh, whoa.” (LN: 729). Similarly, Educators 1, 3, and 4 indicated that their schools had considered having a professional doctorate. However, the participating educators indicated that although professional doctorate programs make real sense, provide a new source of knowledge and would be useful; these programs, because of their emphasis on practice, would be fundamentally different than the current PhD programs and may require a different kind of faculty. The following discussion provides greater insights into the participating educators’ perspectives of the usefulness of professional doctorates in peace and conflict studies.
For example, Educator 1 stated, “You know there isn't a professional doctorate. It's like a PsyD in conflict or peace studies. And, we had a conversation about this like a year ago. Is it appropriate; is it useful? Yes.” (LN: 1182-1187) Educator 1 supplemented this emphatic comment with the following:

It's funny that people get PhDs in our field so, that they could quote, "open more doors." But one door that's already open is practicing. So, they'll say, "Well, why do I get this? What is the value?" I mean I'm looking at it from a consumer student point of view. "What am I getting that's going to be different?" You're getting an experience that is fundamentally different than the other thing in the field. And you're going to be practitioner savvy… So, is it useful? Is it reform or revolution? Because we could reform the curriculum to place more of an emphasis on practice, we've got to build it in programs and structure. Well, the revolution is just, say, "Screw it. Let's just do a PsyD period and, be the first one. And then, see who follows suit."…George Mason took the revolution thing and said, "We're going to offer a PhD," and people go, "Why do you need a PhD for this…In 30 years--it's clear. So, is it useful? Yes. (LN: 1192-1212)

However, Educator 1 pointed out that some PhD programs are already exhibiting flexibility in allowing students to use practical experience in completing their dissertations:

There are some PhD programs that are getting away from the basic research, saying, "You want to do applied research? You want to go out and evaluate non-profit programs in Nepal? Do you want to make your dissertation practice oriented, go right ahead.”? So, there's been a little bit of loosening. (LN: 1228-1233)

Educator 2 stated, “I was just thinking about the gap in the knowledge of practice and education. And, if we focus enough on it, there might be something there that could be a source of learning…. If there is such a gap, it would seem like there should be some benefit of studying what that gap is and what it's made of, because that could be a source of learning.” (LN: 760-765)

The following comments reflect Educator 3’s perceptions about the usefulness of professional doctorates:

We were planning on it, we were looking into it at my previous university, … I was very much in favor of it… I think it would be a great value to this particular field because most people don't get into it to become researchers, and when they get in their PhD program,
they tend to slant towards trying to do as little scholarship as possible, or cut corners there, because they really want to get into practice. So, I think it makes a lot of sense to have a different kind of degree for people that want to practice... If my current school asks me whether it should have a professional doctorate, I would say, no problem. I'd go ahead with it. One of the issues, though, is when you're starting a new degree that's not been done before...so, our field may or may not have good feelings about that. Because of DSW or PsyD kinds of degrees, there's a way to do it. But, if you just kind of do it, there would be a lot of ambiguity, and universities don't like a lot of ambiguity. And maybe a lot of people that want this to become a more cohesive field might not like it.

But I would certainly be in favor of it. (LN: 553-571) ...I would certainly support it, and I think that it really reflects better what people want to get out of the doctoral program. There are a few people that are really into research, but most of them just want to do advanced practice, and they have a lot of skills, and they want to bring them to the next level. So that kind of degree would be very helpful, but it has to be recognized by people in our field. (LN: 835-840)

Educator 4 stated:

I think it is appropriate. We've talked about it at our institution whether something like that would make sense, just like in psychology you have a PsyD and you have a PhD. You can get a PhD in education or an EdD. So, I think that there is room for that. I think that not everybody who wants to get a doctoral level degree necessarily wants to be a researcher or a professor. I think there are people who are primarily practitioners and who would like to have more education. They would like to enhance their skill base. They would like to enhance their knowledge and what they can offer everybody. And they would like to be a doctor. And I think there's room for them. I really do. (LN: 768-778) I think it would have a different focus because you don't want to just take a PhD program and say, "What would I change in it to make it, let's say, a doctorate of conflict resolution or whatever; what would I make it?" No. You've got to build it from the bottom, and you're building it with a different perspective, less of an emphasis on research, more of an emphasis on practice. And I think the faculty would even be different in certain ways. You'd have people who have really devoted themselves much more to practice. They may not be as published or whatever. Who cares? Their focus is in a different area. And I think it would lend itself to our field. I really do. (LN: 781-791)

Educator 5, simply expressed, “I've often thought we ought to have something like an EdD. I think that makes some sense.” (LN: 1130-1132)

**Superordinate theme 2: Interrelatedness and interdependencies of subthemes.** These four subordinate themes are interrelated and interdependent (Figure 4-5). All subordinate themes collectively represent integrated aspects of the lack of experiential and transformative education in the current peace and conflict studies programs. For example, curricula for including
experiential learning (Subordinate theme 2.1) would facilitate the educators’ ability to provide students critically reflective and transformative learning (Subordinate theme 2.2). Additionally, the use of a scholar-practitioner model (Subordinate theme 2.3) would enhance the abilities of educational institutions in developing curricula for including experiential learning (Subordinate theme 2.1) and in providing students critically reflective and transformative learning (Subordinate theme 2.2). Finally, the initiation of a professional doctorate program (Subordinate theme) would require curricula that emphasize experiential learning (Subordinate theme 2.1) and enable educators to provide the ability to use a scholar-practitioner model (Subordinate theme 2.3). A professional doctorate program (Subtheme 2.4) could be effectively used for integrating the following: 1) Curricula that include experiential learning (Subtheme 2.1); 2) Providing students critically reflective and transformative experience to change their frame of reference regarding social injustice (Subtheme 2.2); and 3) Allowing the effective use of scholar-practitioners (Subtheme 2.3)
Conclusion of superordinate theme 2. The participating educators collectively acknowledged the criticality of experiential and transformative education and they also unanimously recognized the institutional challenges associated with providing students experiential and transformative education. The participating educators collectively indicated that, as currently practiced, practicums are superficial (Check the box approach). Therefore, they seem to suggest that current education in peace and conflict studies, which primarily relies on practicums for providing students experiential and transformative education, is inadequate. Similarly, the participating educators suggested that critically reflective and transformative learning, which is also primarily dependent on the interest of the student, is a critical program deficiency. However, it seems that although the participating educators appear to recognize the
value of the scholar practitioner model, based on their mixed views and their indication that practice orientation is not an institutional priority, education in peace and conflict studies has not yet embraced the scholar-practitioner model. Based on the views of the participating educators regarding the inadequacy of the current education in providing students experiential and transformative education and critically reflective and transformative learning, it is not surprising that all participating educators unanimously endorsed the idea of having professional doctorate programs in peace and conflict studies.

This superordinate theme and the associated four subordinate themes portray the challenges of the current education in peace and conflict studies for providing students critically reflective and transformative learning that is founded in experiential learning. This superordinate theme suggests that the educational institutions need to question whether the practicums are effectively using long-term community engagement for accomplishing the objective of providing meaningful experiential learning. Similarly, these educational institutions need to recognize that their reluctance toward the use of a scholar-practitioner model will most likely result in the continuation of the use of theories that are not best suited for the 21st century’s challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Similarly, this researcher was unable to comprehend the reasons for these institutions not initiating professional doctorate programs, an initiative that was endorsed by all participating educators. Therefore, this superordinate theme made this researcher wonder about the commitments of institutions in peace and conflict studies for providing students experiential and transformative learning that is essential for peace and conflict studies shifting its post-conflict orientation to a pre-conflict and preemptive orientation that uses community partnerships for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.
Superordinate Theme 3: Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships

The third superordinate theme, *Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships*, distilled the essence of the participating educators’ experience-based views regarding the challenges of developing and sustaining long-term partnerships with communities. This superordinate theme depicts a conglomeration of the following three subordinate themes (Figure 4-6): 1) Lack of community engagement for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Lack of community engagement-based service-learning; and 3) Lack of pre-conflict long-term community partnerships.

**Subordinate theme 3.1 Lack of community engagement for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.** Educator 1’ stated, “Looking across the field, I don't think it's, extremely effective.” (LN: 275); Educator 4 stated, “I don't think it's as effective as it could be.” (LN: 169-170) and Educator 5 observed, “No, we're not doing it; we're not doing it in any significant way.” (LN: 226-227) These quotations portray a summarized assessment of the participating educators regarding community engagement for preemptively addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

This subtheme focuses on the participating educators’ views and an understanding the effectiveness of the current peace and conflict studies in engaging the community for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression experienced by large
segments of communities. All participating educators recognized the need for working with communities to preemptively address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Educator 1 indicated that because the engagement of communities for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression is subject to potential legal constraints placed by institutions, it is challenging. (LN: 290-294) Some of the participating educators confessed that requirements of their institutions make achievement of a sustained community engagement even harder. They also recognized currently that community engagement depends on the interest and initiatives of the individual educator. Additionally, these educators suggested that educational institutions seem to emphasize conflict resolution rather than conflict prevention and have not established an integrated institutional approach to community engagement. The participating educators’ views regarding engaging community for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression are described below.

Educator 1 expressed the following:

Overall, looking across the field, I don't think it's extremely effective. There are those programs that are designed to do it, are finding a way do it but for the most part, when it comes to preemptively addressing or pre-conflict stuff, it is rarely effective. (LN: 275-278) …That's missing in the field. We don't have enough going on. We are not doing as good of a job in engaging the community for preemptively addressing pre-conflict issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. (LN: 340)

Educator 1 provided the following insights about the potential legal constraints in conducting community engagement:

Are we as an institution and as individuals liable for any harm that happens to a student like that? You know that happens. The reason I'm saying this is because every university has a lawyer or if it's a state institution, it has the Attorney General saying there are contracts and there are liability clauses and all that that have to be taken care of before you send a student out in a field. (LN: 290-294)

Educator 2 provided the following insights into challenges faced by educators in peace and conflict studies:
This is a thinking kind of question. How to think around consequences? Pre-conflict analysis is to think through the implications of the choices and the implementation of things that you do in the community, or things that you think that you're teaching that should be done in the community. And what is the potential for conflict in preparing people to enter certain professions and fields? That is really a good question… But right now, we have to concentrate on the business plan. Or we have to concentrate on, the PhD requirements or we have to concentrate on something else without looking at how that might connect with things that people will actually do, and whether it will contribute. (LN: 208-224)

Stating that it is mostly a faculty led initiative, Educator 3 articulated the following:

It varies dramatically from person to person and different people would articulate their practice very differently. So, it's hard to tell sometimes the extent to which they might emphasize a more preventative approach versus a more sort of reactive approach. (LN: 140-143) … It's sort of faculty led initiatives…. Does our school have any big inroads in- in creating social justice in this community? I haven't seen a lot of that. (LN: 162-164)

Educator 4 provided the following insights:

I don't think it's as effective as it could be. I think that too frequently there's that emphasis on resolution and less emphasis on analysis. And I think in particular, when we look at areas of social injustice, they're like a simmering pot… It's typically that simmering pot that's been going and going, and then like a volcano it erupts. But it had warning. It's had symptoms. It's had pre-conflict phases that we teach. But oftentimes it's gone unnoticed or it's seen as the normative. Again, I'll refer to Ferguson and communities like that…. I said, this did not happen overnight. Yes, there was an incident that precipitated these riots, but it didn't come out of the blue. (LN: 169-185)

Educator 5 stated,

We're not doing it in any significant way. (LN: 226-227) … But no, there's nothing like that, maybe there are things I don't know about. (LN: 233-234) … the prevention piece; nothing substantive. I don't know that much about the rest of the school…If they do, I don't know about it and whether our department does it, no. (LN: 239- 249)

**Subordinate theme 3.2: Lack of community engagement-based service-learning.** The following comment of Educator 1, “And the fact of the matter is that even in peace studies programs, it's not [using community engagement-based service-learning].”(LN: 985-986) and the comment of Educator 5, “We give it [using community engagement-based service-learning] a lot of lip service.” (LN: 995-996) indicate that community engagement-based service learning is
either not emphasized or not included in the current education in peace and conflict studies. All participating educators recognized the need for using community engagement-based service learning as a critical element of peace and conflict studies. They also acknowledged that in the current education in peace and conflict studies, community engagement-based service-learning is a program deficiency. They suggested that the following factors contribute to this program deficiency: 1) not an essential program requirement; 2) not really supported or valued by the educational institutions; 3) dependent entirely on the interest of the student and the faculty; and 4) constrained by the challenges of the students’ demographics and employment focused interests. The following discussions describe the participating educators’ views and insights regarding the use of community engagement-based service-learning.

Educator 1 stated:

Well first of all my view is it [Service-learning] has to be a part of what we do because there’s a clinical nature to peace studies and peace building. And, like I said earlier if you're [not] practicing, you are perpetrating a fraud. (LN: 974-977) ... And, so my view is, when it comes to service learning, it should be an ethical thing that is included in every curriculum. And the fact of the matter is that even in peace studies programs, it's not. (LN: 984-986) ... In the whole field [of peace and conflict studies], it's hit or miss, it really is... But overall, I don't think there is a consistency across programs in effectively using community partnership to provide student service learning and the use of a sustained community relationship makes it even less often. (LN: 1017-1029)

Educator 2 expressed, “I would hope so.” (LN: 664) Educator 2 seemed to believe that the practicums somehow facilitate students’ community engagement-based service-learning (LN:668-670). Educator 3 added, “I don't think I've taught a class yet where I've incorporated that version of service learning, except when I did a study abroad class.” (LN: 511-512) This researcher suggests that Educator 3’s study abroad class does not meet the definitions of community engagement and service-learning (See Chapter 1). In response to the question of whether the school would support community engagement-based service-learning, Educator 3
stated, “I don't know. I mean, the school wouldn't oppose it.” (LN: 517) And “the school has certain rules and regulations that govern it, like how you can go about service learning and doing service-learning contracts and things like that. But, if you do it, it's basically up to the faculty” (LN: 517-520) … Similarly, in response to the question of whether any course requires service-learning. Educator 3 stated, “As far as I know, it does not.” (LN: 523)

Educator 4 articulated the following:

I think it needs to be more emphasized.” (LN: 694) … “I think oftentimes they [students] do [use community engagement-based service learning], but sometimes they don't. I think a lot of it has to do with motivation of the student.” (LN: 659-660) …So I think if students choose service learning or scholarship of engagement, practicum experience wisely, they would be aligning it with their own sense of…: how is it going to enable me (them) to continue on my (their) path of transformation? And I think if students thought of it that way, they might choose different practicum sites. (LN: 663-668)

Educator 5 emphatically expressed, “We talk about it. We give it a lot of lip service. We've never had a discussion about it.” (LN: 995-996)

**Subordinate theme 3.3: Lack of pre-conflict long-term community partnerships.** The following quotations present the views of participating educators regarding the challenges associated with establishing pre-conflict long-term community partnerships: Educator 1: “But for the most part my thoughts are, in terms of what we do in our field, we don't have it. It's very much an exception to the rule to have long-term. It's rare.” (LN: 422-424), “It would be hard to have something like that [long-term community partnership] in a small public university with limited resources.” (LN: 451-452), and “We have the institutional limitations, and we have the personal limitations.” (LN: 467-468); Educator 3: “It's not really institutional in a sense, its faculty driven.” (LN: 272-273); Educator 4: “I think there are huge challenges.” (LN: 266) and Educator 5: “I don't see it happening at my university.” (LN: 403) and, “It is on an individual rather than a departmental basis.” (LN: 487)
These quotations indicate that the participating educators think that establishing pre-conflict long-term community engagement is extremely challenging and that very few institutions have been able to successfully establish pre-conflict long-term community partnerships. It seemed that establishing long-term community partnership is not a priority of their institutions and the development of community partnerships is mostly left to initiatives of the faculty to pursue on their own time and without a commitment of institutional support and resources.

Based on their responses, it seemed that all participating educators have acknowledged that pre-conflict long-term community partnerships present huge institutional challenges that have the following characteristics: 1) Very few presidents are community-engagement oriented; 2) Sustained commitment of institutional resources is a challenge for small institutions; 3) Lasting commitment is not sufficiently emphasized by programs; 4) Long-term community engagement is faculty driven and dependent; 5) There are difficulties associated with the institutional and community changes; 6) The community’s perception of higher education is problematic; 7) There are institutional legal constraints; 8) There are challenges associated with student demographics and changes in their interests; and 9) It is constrained by faculty employment contracts.

The participating educators described the following views regarding the success of peace and conflict studies institutions in establishing long-term community partnerships. Educator 1 described the following challenges:

People come and go. And governments come and go, and all sorts of things kind of get in the way. So, to have a long-term relationship, you also have to look at what's going on. Things aren't stagnant, mayors change, community leaders change, and different organizations come and become involved. And so, it makes it a little bit more challenging, but it can happen. But for the most part my thoughts are, in terms of what we do in our field, we don't have it. It's very much an exception to the rule to have long-term.
It's rare. I mean I can probably, out of 135 programs that we've looked at in depth in the United States, I would say, only a handful have been able to pull this off. (LN: 417-427) … Theological institutions do better because that is their ministry. It’s their calling. (LN: 428-437)

Educator 1 used the following narrative to describe why some private [theological] schools whose mission is community service are better at establishing long-term community partnerships:

Well, for some people it is their mission. And in the private schools, it's ministering to the community… You look at their programs, even the way they describe their program mission and the courses that they teach, you can definitely tell these students are out in the field doing something…It's a private institution, and it is part of its mission, it is an expectation. That's what they're going to do. So, their mission is one thing that they achieve. A ministry is what they have dedicated their lives to do. And you look at individuals who are in a ministry; they're going to take the good times and the bad times. And if there are bad times, the mission people at an institution might just say, you know what, it's time to close that program up. It would be hard to have something like that in a small public university with limited resources. (LN: 444-456)

Although it did not directly address how the school has established long-term community partnerships, Educator 2 provided the following insights: “That's challenging because a lot of our students in this program don't come from the area where school is located (LN: 316-317) … I think we have to be thoughtful of these things when we design and evaluate the effectiveness of our coursework”. (LN: 331-333)

Educator 5 shared the following perspectives:

I'm just not aware enough of what other programs are doing. I don't see it happening at my university. (LN: 397-403) …I thought if I could bring in grants, where I could actually take students and get them involved that way. (LN: 430-432) …. We really do need to have projects, as a department, that we can involve all of us. (LN: 441-442)

The participating educators also provided the following insights into the challenges that are faced by peace and conflict studies educators, institutions and communities in making long-term partnerships for addressing social injustice. Educator 1 stated, “We have the institutional limitations, and then we have the personal limitations.” (LN: 467-468) Educator 1 also illustrated
how institutional efforts for establishing long-term community partnerships can be subjected to drastically different institutional liability perspectives. For example, Educator 1 described how one attorney prevented community engagement activities while the other attorney indicated that Educator 1 should be doing the community engagement activities. (LN: 471-481)

Educator 1 also put forth the following community perception-based difficulties associated with community engagement:

Some communities are suspicious and hostile to higher education and think that it's kind of like these privileged elite kids coming [in their community]. So, there are the stereotypical walls. However, if you have a good relationship as a practitioner scholar with the members of the community, and you're banking your cultural capital with these folks and you bring students along, the acceptance is easier… And, if you break trust just once, it's gone. But if there's a basis to trust and if you always do what you say you're going to do, there's no reason for somebody to shut it down. (LN: 484-498)

Educator 3 expressed the following:

It's not really institutional in a sense, its faculty driven. It is people that had a specific interest, they know certain people, and they create this sort of program. If those faculty members were eliminated, the program would be eliminated. (LN: 273-277)

Educator 4 comprehensively elaborated the following insights:

I think there are huge challenges. Resources are challenges, students coming and going are challenges, and sustainability of students’ interest in a particular topic of injustice are challenges. (LN: 266-278)

Educator 5 stated:

It is on an individual rather than a departmental basis. Since it is up to the individual professor and since we get virtually no support from our department and the university, many of us are engaged with the community in ways that are totally outside the department and the university. Our school is not doing anything to develop a relationship. (LN: 487-493)

Educator 5 also described the following challenges:

Over 5 years, 10 years, even if they were changing faces, if they were still dealing with somebody, it could be done, but, when you look at it from the community's side, you got to be bringing something….And that's where, in some ways, I feel like, a lot of communities are really voiceless; and we are well-placed to be conciliators, to bring
people together and to get people to the table as a university… It's harder for the community and we can be their voice. We write the op-eds or do the radio interviews, where we're speaking for a community if it can't necessarily do so by itself in a way that's effective…. We don't get any support from the university for doing it…and the employment contract is problematic. (LN: 509-543)

**Superordinate theme 3: Interrelatedness and interdependencies of subthemes.** This superordinate theme recognized that sustained partnerships with communities are essential to preemptively address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression and to move away from the current post conflict approach of putting on band-aids without addressing the root causes of the conflicts. As such, these three subordinate themes are interrelated and interdependent (Figure 4-7). For example, without engaging community for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subordinate theme 3.1), it would be very challenging to provide students community engagement-based service learning (Subordinate theme 3.2) and to achieve the objectives of providing students community engagement-based service learning. Educational institutions in peace and conflict studies would have to find ways to overcome the challenges associated with establishing pre-conflict community partnerships (Subordinate theme 3.1). Similarly, lack of pre-conflict long-term community partnership (Subtheme 3.3) will make it difficult for educators to provide students community engagement-based service-learning (Subtheme 3.2) and it would also minimize opportunities for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subtheme 3.1).


**Conclusion of superordinate theme 3.** All participating educators recognized the need for working with communities to preemptively address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. They also recognized that currently community engagement largely depends on the interest and initiatives of the individual educator. They also acknowledged that institutions seem to emphasize conflict resolution rather than conflict prevention and have not established an integrated institutional approach to community engagement.

This superordinate theme and the associated three subordinates presented a real picture of how institutions in peace and conflict studies have overlooked the crucial need of having a sustained relationship with communities, especially communities that are experiencing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This superordinate theme suggested that the education in peace and conflict studies may only be focused on teaching students to address post-conflict situations without addressing the root causes of conflicts that probably are embedded deeply in the social order and societal power structures that perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, as the current education is not providing students community
engagement-based service learning, it may not be adequate for developing students capable of addressing the 21st century’s challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Superordinate Theme 4: Inadequacy of Institutional Support**

This superordinate theme rendered a collective picture of the following three subordinate themes (Figure 4-8): 1) Inadequacy of institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Inadequacy of institutional support for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning; and 3) Inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships.

**Subordinate theme 4.1: Inadequacy of institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.** The following quotations of the participating educators reflected the institutional support that is neither communicated consistently and clearly nor is it executed in a manner that would allow educators to experience the sustained commitment of their institution for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression:

Educator 2: “I wish I knew.” (LN: 92); Educator 3: “I’d say by and large they’re [addressing of social injustice issues] supported. It might not be a priority.” (LN: 20-21); Educator 4: “Not sure whether most institutions emphasize it enough.” (LN: 35) and “I can’t say that I can really address that.” (LN: 65); and Educator 5: “It’s not generally supported.” (LN: 84-85)
This researcher suggests that for addressing the problem of practice and the research question, educators in peace and conflict studies need the sustained commitment of support from their institutions for effectively addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Similarly, this researcher believes that it is critical that educators’ abilities in addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression are not constrained by the president’s and the trustees’ need to accommodate the requirements of political and societal powerbrokers or major supporters.

The participating educators’ collective responses did not indicate that they experienced a strongly felt commitment of their institution for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. They seem to suggest that their experience with their institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression included the following: 1) It is Institution dependent; 2) It is not a priority of the institution; 3) Institutional support is uncertain; 4) It mostly depends on the initiatives of the faculty; 5) It is haphazard; 6) It is mostly lip service; 7) Institutions don’t fully understand the need for addressing social injustice; 8) Employment contracts create an environment of “don't rock the boat” and the continuation of the status quo; and 9) It is influenced by the institution’s business and governance model.

For example, Educator 2 stated, “I wish I knew. I don't know what drives the thinking.” (LN: 92) Then added:

Well I know that our dean here is very convinced in the importance of coexistence and the importance of social justice. This school, you know, practically all the degree programs have some aspect of social justice that they're working on. (LN: 92-95) …I think the dean is on board with this here, of focusing all of our studies around a set of ideas that build toward social justice, whether you're getting an MBA or whether you're getting an MA in social policy. (LN: 103-106)

Educator 5 shared the following:

And I don't know whether it's the culture of the university, it's the employment contracts, …. but whenever I take issue, they would always say, "Now, we have to focus on our
little arena… with what we are able to do in our little arena…. Focus on getting your work done” It’s like don't take on these big issues…. We never make statements about anything…. So, it's keeping us busy. (LN: 354-366)

This researcher noted that Educator 2 was expressing his perception of the intentions of the dean but without indicating any real experience with the institutional support. This researcher also suggests that although focusing on diversity and inclusion is commendable, it by itself is not enough for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Educator 1 expressed the following:

Now, at [my previous] university, there was a program, the nonviolent conflict of change, (because it takes one person to look at this number and say, "That's too low; we're going to close the program.") closed after 25, 30 years. Part of me just says that gets away from the true meaning of a university, universta. (LN: 77-87) ... Now, when it comes to support for educators doing this, again, this kind of gets back to, why is it that some programs thrive? Why is it that what they do at Notre Dame seems to be going so well? Well, if you look at Notre Dame's mission, and you'll realize that Kroc Institute and all their peace studies do fall squarely within their mission. And so, it's really hard not to support because it's part of Catholic social justice, part of Pax Christi, the Catholic peace organization's mission stuff. So is the program in the right institution is one way to, to look at that. But overall, that's the definite exception to the rule. (LN: 89-98)

Educator 3 stated:

I'd say by and large they're supported. It's just that it might not be a priority to have professors work on social injustice kind of issues in their classroom as much … So, the students that pursue that have been very supported. And there are a lot of professors that probably share their dispositions towards social injustice. But it's sort of haphazard. It's dependent on the students' interest. (LN: 20-25)

Educator 1 presented the following views regarding institutional support:

They would just say, there are three things you’ve got to do. You’ve got to be an excellent teacher. You’ve got to be an excellent scholar, and you have to do some form of community service. As long as you're doing something, we'll check that box off. So, I would not call it support. It's just an expectation. (Introductory Interview LN: 549-554)

Educator 4 articulated the following:

I am not sure whether most institutions emphasize it enough. I think they put it out there and think it's very nice in theory. But in order to really practice it, it takes a lot of concerted effort, and it takes funds, and it takes time. And I'm not sure that many institutions completely understand that it's not a mere academic exercise… Again, from a
foundational perspective, yes, that's important. But if you really want to teach the notions of how to bring about social justice from a climate of injustice that takes time and it takes a lot of effort. And you've got to be able to have faculty and researchers and students who have the ability to do that; have the time and the resources to do that. And those are the challenges. (LN: 35-46)

Educator 5 put forth the following:

We get lip service...It's not generally supported... Not, not many schools support revolution, but my school doesn't even support reform...I mean, the support is not there. If anything, it's squashed...When everybody's on a contract that they may not renew if you make somebody mad...It means being loyal and you don't rock the boat, and you don't criticize, and you don't complain. (LN: 84-98)

These participating educators’ responses (to the question regarding the constraints they may have experienced because the President and the trustees of your institution did not want to experience pressures from political or societal powerbrokers or major supporters) seem to suggest that the participating educators may have been too busy being educators to develop insights into and the understanding of how institutional actions could be influenced by political and societal powerbrokers. It is also possible these educators may have accepted the status-quo of the current system of the governance of educational institutions.

For example, Educator 4 stated the following:

I'm not sure that I've experienced any particular constraints because the president and trustees of my institution did not want to experience pressures caused by my efforts to address social justice issues from political or societal power brokers. So, I can't say that I can really address that. (LN: 62-65)

Educator 1 stated:

[My] private university did not have this constraint. But they had other constraints, such as financial, that would get in the way of us being able to do our work. And, frankly, as long as you brought in your numbers, as long as you had the right number of students and right amount of money going into the pot, they left you alone. But if they saw you do all sorts of other things, and you weren't contributing to the, the main column, then they would, they would come down on you. (LN: 150-156)
This researcher thinks that political and societal power brokers and major supporters of the institution do influence the required bottom line the institution needs to comply with.

Educator 2 expressed:

I put strong support [for addressing social injustice] here. Because, we have reforms that have taken place here. They are at the university level. Last year they hired for the first-time a vice president of diversity. And then, not only do we have a dean who came from the Obama administration working on those, those kinds of issues, but now, is the dean of this school. And there was an assistant or an associate dean of diversity and inclusion here at my school. I know. It wasn't true here for a while. (LN: 125-136)

Based on his literature review or knowledge of public announcements of educational institutions, this researcher has not become aware of any such appointments that have resulted in any reduction of tuitions, any increases in salaries or treatment of faculties, any increases in scholarships provided to students, or any increases in institutional support for community engagement. However, such appointments possibly increase the support of major donors and potentially increase the ability of institutions to convince major political and societal brokers of the importance of the educational institutions for receiving grants or other favorable legislative or political treatment. Therefore, this researcher suggests that the addition of the vice president of diversity and the dean who came from the Obama administration may reflect the influence of the political and societal powerbrokers and major supporters of the institution.

Educator 3 added:

And then there are different kinds of schools. There’re non-profit schools that are largely independent of state funding and they wouldn't be able to be manipulated in that way. But the political landscape does influence things. (LN: 42-44) … I notice that I have to be careful about how I might word something if it's related to oppression or injustice of a specific group now. (LN: 53-55)

It seems that Educator 3 has recognized that the state schools are potentially influenced by political powerbrokers as has been historically witnessed in many states including California and Wisconsin. However, this researcher suggests that Educator 3 may not be fully recognizing
or accepting the potential that the trustees of private schools must respond to the business model-driven requirements of the societal powerbrokers and major supporters. Educator 5 succinctly stated, “I don't know that they know any of my social injustice work anyway…. they would not have supported it if they knew.” (LN: 108-111) This researcher knows that based on the experience of working at five universities, Educator 5 is painfully aware of how the nature and the duration of educators’ contracts are driven by the financial business model of an institution.

This researcher suggests that mentoring of students is a critical element of providing them experiential learning. However, the participating educators collectively stated that they don’t receive adequate support from their institution to ensure that educators have enough time to mentor students for experiential and transformational learning about how to preemptively address communal conflicts arising out of social injustice. For example, Educator 1 stated, “Mentoring student situations, it's hit or miss.” (LN: 1303-1304) … “Do they support it? They all say they support it, but do they ensure that, not enough institutions ensure that that happens.” (LN: 1324-1326) Similarly, Educator 3 expressed, “It's very difficult time-wise to develop that intimate relationship between student and professor.” (LN: 623-624) Additionally, Educator 5 said, “At my school, they keep us so busy that we don’t even have time, hardly, to teach, let alone mentor.” (LN: 1256-1257). In response to the question of whether educators have adequate time to mentor students for experiential learning, Educator 4 provided the following response that highlights the challenges that are associated with mentoring of students:

No! I don't think that most faculties would say that they do. Because mentoring students, especially in the area of social injustice, requires a lot of time and it requires a lot of energy, because you mentor students in many different ways and for many different purposes. And for social injustice, again, you first have to have a solid understanding of that. And then in order to mentor students in it, it has to be an active engagement. (LN: 801-808)
Subordinate theme 4.2: Inadequacy of institutional support for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning. The following are the quotations of the participating educators that expressed their views of the support of their institutions for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning: Educator 1: “We receive support in a sense that they're not going to stop it.” (LN: 217-218) and “They (teaching institutions) don't want that main goal (of teaching) competing with doing this community stuff because it takes faculty away from the main mission for teaching.” (LN: 232-234); Educator 2: “I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment.” (LN: 181-182), “Oh, my goodness, we have a lot of work to do.” (LN: 190); Educator 3: “It's really up to the faculty members to provide community engagement-based experiential learning.” (LN: 120-121) and “But it's not something that they would push.” (LN: 125-126); and Educator 5: “But it's lip service. It's about checking the boxes.” (LN: 203-204) These quotations indicate that the participating educators think that their institutions are not placing enough emphasis on supporting educators for providing community engagement-based experiential learning. It seems that providing students community engagement-based experiential learning is not one of the top priorities of their institutions, but rather it is left it to the initiatives of the faculty.

This researcher suggests that for effectively addressing the problem of practice and research questions, educational institutions would need to provide students community engagement-based experiential learning. This would require educational institutions to provide educators committed support for helping students to benefit from experiential learning that is founded in sustained community engagement. The participating educators’ responses indicated that their institutions did not provide sustained support for providing students community engagement-based learning and primarily relied on the initiatives of the faculty. Except for
Educator 4, all other participating educators indicated that the support of their schools exhibited the following characteristics: 1) Not an institutional priority; 2) Supported by not stopping it; 3) Constrained by the institutional model of governance; 4) Subjected to financial constraints; 5) Primarily relied on the initiatives and commitment of the faculty; 6) Employed superficial (check the box) approaches to claim community engagement; 7) Pressured faculty to claim course work and campus-engagement as community engagement; 8) Mostly ignored the criticality of community engagement-based experiential learning; and 9) Failed to fully recognize the challenges of sustained community engagement.

For example, Educator 3 stated:

What is our school willing to do about that? It very much depends on if faculty members are pursuing that as an agenda item. If not, the school is not going to generally create relationships with organizations that are doing something about that. It's really up to the faculty members to do it… I think all the schools I've been in would love for faculty members to be engaged with these issues in the community. They would be very proud of it. But it's not something that they would push. They might even suggest, if a community member came to see the dean or something and said, "We have this problem. Is there any faculty member that can help us?" They would damn sure direct them to a faculty member, but they just won't initiate it. (LN: 117-129)

Educator 2 added the following:

I just put down the fact that this is something that needs money… And if we want to build people who are practitioners of this, I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment, ultimately, it's going to be an economic investment; but we need to have metrics that show a return on that investment, whether improved attitudes amongst people, whether customers or users of the service or whether the agency has higher levels of satisfaction, whether people are getting closer to meeting the goals of their mission. (LN: 176-187)

This researcher’s comment, “I know a school; it has a peace studies program and it also has a medical school; Most of the grants are used for the medical school, not peace studies”, made Educator 2 pause. After thinking about my comment, Educator 2 responded, “Oh, my
goodness, we have a lot of work to do. We have to build a brand and promote the brand.” (LN: 190)

Educator 1 articulated the following:

One thing that differentiates public institutions from some private institutions is that the public institution is where America goes to school. And so, part of their mission is to get students engaged in some way with the community. So, a public university wants students to engage with members of communities... So, it's kind of built into the mission of public education. (LN: 212-217) ...So, we receive support for that in a sense that they're not going to stop it. (LN: 217-218) ...The place I came from before here, there was some resistance to it if it impacted financial matters. (LN: 219-220)

Educator 1 added:

In teaching institutions, the primary focus is on teaching. They don't want that main goal competing with doing this community stuff because it takes faculty away from the main mission for teaching. (LN: 232-234)

Educator 5 provided the following that portrays a different aspect of the institutional commitment to providing students community engagement-based experiential learning:

So, yes, the university because of accreditation and because it is really obsessed with the rankings, it tries to show that it supports community engagement-based experiential learning. (LN: 192-193) ...And so, we actually have to do all kinds of checklists. But again, it's about rankings because they don't really care if we've done really substantive work. Whatever it is, they want us to write it down, so they can say that we did this. They're really focused on the undergrad because that's where the rankings are. So, now, they've got this whole new thing, run by administrators, not faculty, of experiential learning for undergraduates. That is required; every class has to have an element or something. But it's lip service. It's about check-checking the boxes. (LN: 195-204) ...And they say that it's the university that is community. Well, that's not what community engagement is. So, it's a check the box exercise. So, it's because of the focus on rankings. (LN: 217-220)

Based on the following comments, Educator 4 was the only participant who believed that the institution was giving students’ community engagement-based experiential learning.

Our institution does. Not only is it a part of our program in terms of practicums and other types of volunteer experiences, but really across the university that's pretty profound. And increasingly the university wants students to experience whatever it is they're studying, whether it's peace and conflict or whether it's something else. But there is a connection with community engagement for addressing social injustice. (LN: 141-145)
...And that's what certainly our department wants to do. It wants students to be engaged in the community, and that's why it's built into the program that they would do that. (LN: 153-155)

This researcher noted that Educator 4 clearly illustrated that the university wants to support educators in their efforts to provide students community engagement-based experiential learning. But Educator 4 did not elaborate how the university is supporting the educators in providing students community engagement-based experiential learning. Additionally, as Educator 4's comments, that are included under the subtheme Curricula for Including Experiential Learning - Effectiveness of Practicums, have created a different impression, this researcher wondered whether the institution of Educator 4 is providing adequate resources to achieve its proclaimed objective of providing students community engagement-based experiential learning. Additionally, based on the communications with past students and previous educators at Educator 4's institute, this researcher is wondering about why Educator 4's experience is different than the previous educators and students at the same institution.

**Subordinate theme 4.3: Inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships.** The following quotations of the participating educators can be viewed as an expression of the institutional support for developing sustained community partnerships that are essential for providing students community engagement-based service-learning as a basis for students’ experiential learning: Educator 1: “In teaching institutions, the primary focus is on teaching. They don't want that main goal competing with doing this community stuff because it takes faculty away from the main mission for teaching.” (LN: 232-234) and “I can tell you from a practitioner and from an educator and from an administrator point of view, all three would say that it would have to be funded.” (LN: 1048-1050); Educator 2: “I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment; it's going to be an economic
investment.” (LN: 181-182); Educator 3: “But it's sort of haphazard. So, I think to have any kind of lasting impact in either direction it requires a sort of a long-term commitment. And that's the problem.” (LN: 190-192); and Educator 5: “It is on an individual rather than a departmental basis. Since it is up to the individual professor and since we get virtually no support from our department and the university, many of us are engaged with the community in ways that are totally outside the department and the university.” (LN: 487-489).

This researcher has recognized that for effectively addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression, institutions in peace and conflict studies would need to shift their post-conflict orientation to pre-conflict community engagement that is founded in long-term relationships with communities. While collectively recognizing the need for long-term community partnerships, the participating educators presented a rather bleak picture of the interest or commitment of their institutions for developing and sustaining long term community partnerships. This apparent lack of institutional interest and commitment to maintaining long-term community partnerships has most likely limited the abilities of students for using practicum sites that would provide them meaningful service learning and experiential learning. The following discussions present the participating educators’ experience-based views of the commitment of their institutions to developing and sustaining community partnerships. For example, Educator 2 candidly shared:

Has our school had any big inroads in creating social justice in this community? I haven't seen a lot of that. So, it's hard to tell but there are some underlying things that there probably has-- there's been some influence there. (LN: 162-164)

Educator 1 provided following insights:

What could we be doing, other than making it a priority, is really closing off the whole notion or stopping the notion that there, there's walls around universities? And I think the more the university has that flow going back and forth, the better off we are. But I mean
that, that's pie in the sky. And then it boils down to, how are we going to do it? And how are we going to sustain it. (LN: 1042-1046)

Educator 2 provided the following interesting insight into how some institutions view community engagement: “They (schools) would consider it community service if you're doing committee work and things on campus more than in the community, because they need people to, you know, fulfill these voluntary roles on the campus.” (LN: 586-588) This insight of Educator 2 was supported by Educator 5’s following comment, “The idea of it (community engagement) and not in practice, is to think of our own department as being a community. And treating it as a community and building a community within the department.” (LN: 1153-1155)

Educator 2 also provided the following comparison of different institutional approaches to developing and sustaining community partnerships:

I mean certainly some of the big-name schools have ongoing sort of relationships with either an organization or have ongoing relationships with communities that are going through struggles. Like there are some programs that go year to year back to the same place. And that's part of what they offer. And in that kind of relationship things can happen both ways. You can have an influence on a community if you're committed to it. And the community can have an influence on you if you're constantly kind of going back and forth. But I think a lot of times there's these one-shot sorts of experiments. "Oh, we're going to take some students over there...there's a chance to do a little project in my community over here." But it's sort of haphazard. So, I think to have any kind of lasting impact in either direction it requires a sort of a long-term commitment. And that's the problem. (LN: 182-192)

Educator 5 shared the following thoughts:

It is on an individual rather than a departmental basis. Since it is up to the individual professor and since we get virtually no support from our department and the university, many of us are engaged with the community in ways that are totally outside the department and the university. (LN: 487-490)

However, the participants recognized that long-term community partnerships require institutions to overcome challenges of sustained institutional commitment of resources; especially commitment of funds. For example, Educator 2 stated:
I just put down the fact that this is something that needs money… And if we want to build people who are practitioners of this, I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment, it's going to be an economic investment…. to have metrics that show a return on that investment, whether improved attitudes amongst people, whether customers or users of the service or the agency have higher levels of satisfaction, whether people are getting closer to meeting the goals of their mission. (LN: 176-187)

Educator 1 added following insights to the institutional challenges:

I can tell you from a practitioner and from an educator and from an administrator point of view, all three would say that it would have to be funded. So, it's going to be funded from one of three places. Tuition - and we just have students run through this all the time. It provides faculty members and staff opportunities out there to do. It runs through grants, so we get us a grant to where it's not the institution providing funding, or you get an endowment. And the endowment really frees you up to do one-- especially an endowment that is not restricted. (LN: 1048-1054)

Educator 5 also surfaced the following institutional challenges:

How do we provide community engagement-based experiential and transformational learning for addressing social injustice in the context of a two-year master's program, and even a PhD? How do we pay for it? How do you get people to go live in a village for six months or live in a slum for six months? I mean, that's, that's where community engagement can come in. (LN: 1575-1578)

Some universities have whole offices devoted to this stuff. Like Georgetown has a whole office of community social justice action or something like that, community action… they're much more connected to organizations in the community…. Several universities have offices of international development that pull in grants to do international development projects, which is challenging because you're dependent on donors and their visions and their agendas. That's another way to do it, to have a whole office of people that are bringing in money to do projects. (LN: 1164-1172)

Educator 4 described the following impact of competing for funding:

And I also think that looking at the community, and looking at institutions, and looking at different agencies and organizations and groups in a community, they are sometimes in opposition to each other because they're sometimes competing - and we'll go back to resources - for the same funding…. Sometimes there will be a grant, and different organizations will be writing for the same grant, and they're vying to control, so to speak, getting the funding for that particular issue. And that can be very counterproductive because it means that people are not willing to be trusting and to be partners with each other. (LN: 283-290)
Superordinate theme 4: Interrelatedness and interdependencies of subthemes. These three subordinate themes are interrelated and interdependent (Figure 4-9). For example, the apparent lack of interest and commitment to maintaining long-term community partnerships (Subordinate theme 4.3) directly influences the institutional support for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning (Subtheme 4.2). Similarly, the adequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships (Subordinate theme 4.3) and for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning (Subtheme 4.2), impact the institutional support addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subordinate theme 4.1).

Figure 4-9. Superordinate Theme 4: Interrelatedness and Interdependencies of Subthemes

Conclusion of superordinate theme 4. All three subordinate themes are driven by institutional unwillingness and inabilities to make sustained commitment of financial and other resources for using community partnerships that are critical to enhancing the effectiveness of conflict and peace studies in addressing the 21st century challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, this superordinate theme portrayed that the effectiveness
of the current education in using community partnerships principally relies on the sustained institutional commitment to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This theme also suggested that sustained community partnerships are at the core of the institution’s ability to provide students opportunities for using service-learning and experiential learning to develop capacity for addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, this superordinate theme supported the other superordinate themes.

This superordinate theme and the associated three subordinate themes portrayed the inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships. This inadequacy for sustaining community partnerships directly reflects in: 1) The inadequacy of institutional support for providing students community-engagement-based experiential learning which in turn limits the adequacy of institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Providing students community-engagement-based experiential learning that is essential for preemptively addressing the communities’ challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, it seems that education in peace and conflict studies is almost disregarding their educational mission obligation to provide students community engagement-based experiential learning for developing the knowledge and skills to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Additionally, this superordinate theme suggests that the institutions in peace and conflict studies need to reexamine their institutional governance models for making sustained community partnerships as one of their most important educational priories. This researcher suggests that without the sustained commitment of adequate financial resources and the commitment of the faculty time, the education in peace and conflict studies will most likely educate students to continue the current
post-conflict resolution approach for dealing with issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression within the boundaries of the existing social orders and societal power structures.

The participating educators collectively recognized the inadequacies of sustained institutional support. For example, they recognized the following: 1) There is a lack of institutional support for using community engagement to provide students community-engagement-based experiential learning; 2) Institutional governance models are limiting the support for community engagement; 3) Teaching is the most emphasized priority of their institutions; and 4) Institutional support for community engagement has evolved into either a lip service or a superficial approach for taking credit for community engagement. This researcher suggests that by accepting the lack of institutional support, peace and conflict studies educators may need to acknowledge that they are co-contributors to perpetuating the education in peace and conflict studies’ ineffectiveness in using community partnerships for helping students to learn about how to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression.
Superordinate Theme 5: Influence of Institutional Constraints and Governance

This superordinate theme, *Influence of Institutional Constraints and Governance*, presented a collective picture of the following three subordinate themes (Figure 4-10): 1) Influence of students’ demographics and interests; 2) Lack of underserved communities in faculty and leadership; and 3) Influence of institutional business model and institutional governance.

**Subordinate theme 5.1: Influence of students’ demographics and interests.** The following quotation of Educator 5 succinctly presented the challenges in the peace and conflict studies encounter: “Most of them are so busy working and raising families.” (LN: 142) It is understandable that the abilities of educational institutions, to make the education in peace and conflict studies more effective in addressing the 21st century’s challenges of social injustice and institutional oppression, would be severely limited because students view the primary objective of their education as providing them employment skills. So, they don’t feel they need to learn about how to preemptively address social injustice and institutional oppression.

Describing the challenges of the students in their programs, the participating educators collectively expressed the need to accommodate students’ life and financial difficulties. The participating educators also indicated that a large percentage of students are from other countries.
At least four participating educators described the challenges of providing distance learning education in peace and conflict studies and the difficulties it creates for developing sustained community partnerships. However, it seems that these educators have not realized that, by accommodating students’ life constraints and the degree of such accommodations, they have helped education in peace and conflict studies to evolve into a superficial education designed to give students diplomas so that they can find employment. The educators in peace and conflict studies need to question whether they are failing in their responsibilities for educating students to have the knowledge, experiential learning and self-knowledge that will be required for preemptively addressing challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The participating educators openly shared their experiences with the challenges of students’ demographics, constraints, and interests.

Educator 3 shared the following experiences with the interests of the students and their attitudes regarding their education:

I'd say a lot of my students are more worried about getting a job than about learning stuff. And when I asked them specifically in a couple of my classes, what are you guys hoping to get out of your university? What would you consider a success? And, inevitably, a lot of them will say a job or a high-paying job. So, if students like that are looking as the end result being a job, they don't really want to tackle issues of social injustice very much, or maybe not as much as students that want to have more transformative education. In another place I taught, one of the professors used to ask the question, you got two professors, on one hand you can have a transformative education, and on the other hand, you get a guaranteed A. Which one would you take? And 80% of them, chose guaranteed A. So, the, the perception of students matters a lot here and their perceptions of what they're getting here (at a university). And if they're just coming here to get a piece of paper to get a job, then they're reluctant to have those intimate kinds of discussions about social injustice, and how it has affected them and how has it benefited them. (LN: 385-399)

The above description of Educator 3’s experience is supported by Educator 5’s following narration of the challenges that are associated with the interests and perspectives of students regarding their education:
I did a vote in my class, I asked the students; how many of them thought that higher education and graduate education was about getting a job, your employment skills. They all raised their hand. Then I asked them, how many of you think it's about self-actualization, being the best person, you can be, exploring your own passions or your own bliss or whatever... A third of them raised their hands. And then I asked, how many of you think that higher education’s purpose is to create citizens who are members of their communities and who will contribute to democracy and participate in democracy? None of them, not one person, raised their hand. And these are not students in another program... So that tells you a lot about what they're learning from our program or not learning... But it didn't even occur to them, I mean the thing is it didn't even occur to them, that is what education's about. And, to me, that's the first thing that education is about. (LN: 860-884)

The above described experiences of these two participating educators are reinforced by Educator 3’s following insights into the interest of students:

Higher education now is not about any of that (social injustice). It's really about teaching students the skills so they can enter the workforce and be a productive member of society. And it's to the degree that, at least in the places I've taught, the students internalize that. They're not clamoring for social justice education and they're not asking for us to go into that. In fact, a lot of them would feel like it's a tangent from why they're really here which is work-based skills. So, when education is perceived in that way, in makes it very difficult. (LN: 407-414)

Educator 3 further elaborated:

The majority, or at least a large group of students, perceive their education in very utilitarian terms...I've asked the question in my classes, if this program was called peace studies, how many of you guys would be in it? And less than a third or less of the students will put up their hands...So that means two-thirds of them want conflict resolution and they're turned off by the notion of peace. They're turned off by the notion of social justice. (LN: 429-336)

The following discussion reflects the views of Educator 4 regarding the challenges of the student demographics:

I think sometimes because so many students are mid-career working professionals, sometimes the students think they don't need to learn any more about it because they’re already a working professional. And I think that programs sometimes think, "You're, you're a working professional, and so you ought to be able to figure all this stuff out for yourself." (LN: 694-698) ...It's a very different experience if you're a working... It's another thing to juggle into your schedule. (LN: 707-710) ... Well, they (students) have huge challenges, because they are typically working. They may have a family. So, they've got a lot of stretches that they have to make in order to be a student, a professional,
maybe a parent, a spouse, whatever. They've got many roles and many hats they have to
play, and it's very, very challenging for them to do that. And I think that the programs are
aware of that. We're acutely aware of the fact that our typical student is not in their 20s.
Our typical student is in their 30s, 40s, or 50s. (LN: 749-755)

Educator 4 further elaborated the challenges of student demographics:

I think there are many challenges. There are challenges from a program perspective.
There are challenges from a student perspective. Because most graduate students who are
engaged in these types of studies are mid-career working professionals. So, they're not
necessarily 23 years old, supported by their parents and have the ability to only go to
school and not be working, and do not have other constraints placed on them. So, there
are issues and challenges that I think the students have because of their own lives and
depending upon when they come into the field and want to study it. And there are
constraints on what programs can offer in terms financial support. (LN: 82-90)

The following observations shared by Educator 5 augment Educator 4’s description of the
challenges:

I mean, most of them (students) are working so those (educational) requirements are very
burdensome for the students that are working. Some of them are eager, the younger ones,
and the ones who are not so financially strapped. Many of my colleagues' idea is that the
way to address that is to make sure that they're paid internships or practicums. But I don't
think that's the solution. I think the solution is we give fellowships and scholarships. (LN:
1534-1539)

Through the following comment, Educator 1 highlighted the reason behind the view of
the students that the main goal of education is to give them better opportunity to find
employment.

But there are like major institutional forces that work against that (helping students to
consider the socially situated nature of their experience). Because if you go to university,
just ask parents why their son or daughter is going to university: To get a good paying
job. So, in a sense, if you're just looking at just one variable of class, poor and privileged,
and we have an institution that reinforces success by becoming privileged or gaining
access to resources and whatnot, it makes our job even harder. (LN: 575-580)

Subordinate theme 5.2: Influence of the lack of underserved communities in faculty
and leadership. This researcher suggests that the primary objective of education in peace and
conflict studies is to provide students community engagement-based experiential learning for
developing the knowledge and skills that are essential for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, this researcher was rather disappointed to see that there are very few individuals from underserved communities, especially African Americans, in faculty or leadership positions in peace and conflict studies institutions. Most of the faculty positions are staffed by white American men and women and almost all of leadership positions are occupied by white American men. This researcher believes that lack of individuals from underserved communities in faculty and leadership has a two-fold impact on the education in peace and conflict studies: first, the education provided by largely white Americans lacks the real-life experience-based understanding of social injustice and institutionalized oppression and second, it makes engagement with underserved communities more challenging. Therefore, this subordinate theme discovers the views of the participating educators regarding the involvement of minorities in faculty and leadership positions in peace and conflict studies.

Educator 4 stated, “I think that that is an issue…. I think there needs to be more participation of minorities, particularly because when you look at some of the communities that are impacted, social injustice is experienced by the minority communities.” (LN: 888-890) This quotation wonderfully illustrates the critical need to have minority faculty and minorities in leadership positions in peace and conflict studies institutions.

All the participating educators collectively acknowledged the need to have minority faculty in peace and conflict studies. For example, Educator 4 provided the following explanation:

We need people from those communities who are going to be in leadership positions to help solve and analyze some of those (social injustice problems). I think that we need to be intentional about their participation… I think that's important. I think that we need to be actively engaging faculty and when we're recruiting faculty, we need to recruit more faculty that come from different backgrounds. And I think we need to do the same for students. It would be nice to enhance our scholarships and make it more affordable for
some people to become engaged in it. And to-- as we engage our communities, to be reaching out to the underserved communities. (LN: 896-905)

All participating educators endorsed Educator 4’s assessment. For example, in response to the question, “Do you think the management is still dominated by men, especially white American men?” Educator 3 provided the following response:

Definitely! I am not out there in the field as much as I could be, but my experience is that people that are in a leadership role of a lot of nonprofits in our field, or the people that are writing and getting recognized most for their writings in the scholarly world, are more often, disproportionately white men. (LN: 658-661)

Educator 2 simply stated, “There are not that many.” (LN: 852) … “I was reading the other day that only 6% of all African Americans have PhDs.” (LN: 873-874) This researcher suggests that it is possible that this very low percentage of African Americans earning PhD degrees could be a result of the social order in the U.S that has provided disproportionately fewer educational opportunities to African Americans and minorities; a reflection of the perpetuation of institutionalized oppression.

Educator 1 provided the following comprehensive description of the challenges that are associated with having minorities, especially African Americans, as faculty:

If you look across the field, peace and conflict resolution studies, there are practically no programs at all in historically black colleges and universities. (LN: 1503-1504)
So, when you find people of color in our field, they may not even be in our program. They may get their PhD at Syracuse, but they're over at Harvard doing the same work but they don't have a program. So, they're there but they're not in our program...And part of it is a recruitment thing that's institutional, which is above what the programs do… We've recruited some really good scholars over the years, and they get swiped. They wind up at American, they wind up at George Town…. they wind up somewhere else, because...they just kept on throwing more stuff at them. (LN: 1514-1524)

Educator 1 also provided the following insights into the evolution of African American educators and the ongoing challenges of having an African American as a member of the faculty:

Because it used to be like if you're an African American, you're going to teach at Howard University, or Clark Atlantic University, or somewhere in between University of
Maryland at Eastern Shore. And then, it kind of opened up and became sort of like a feeding frenzy… A lot of very excellent minority faculty wound up at places like Dartmouth, Stanford, University of Michigan, and Duke; and not at Clark, and not at Howard. And that same phenomenon, in a sense, still goes on today. So, we train people all the time in conflict resolution, and they may not wind up in conflict resolution but in a program at a prestigious university. (LN: 1552-1560) … There are programs, like we have a program where if you're a minority scholar, in particular African American, we have this $ 20,000 welcoming grant, just kind of added for easy transition. And, some of them we manage to keep and others, they stay a while and they leave. (LN: 1573-1577) …

However, Educator 5’s following comment provided a very valuable insight into the reason behind the lack of minorities in faculty positions in peace and conflict studies, “We need to make the field relevant to them (minorities)…. Why would we not pay a black woman an honorarium, but we'll pay a white man an honorarium?” (LN: 1434-1438)

**Subordinate theme 5.3: Influence of institutional business model and institutional governance.** This subordinate theme dealt with the influence of institutional governance and business models on the ability of education in peace and conflict studies in providing students community-engagement-based learning that addresses the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. All participating educators collectively recognized that both institutional governance and business model impact their abilities to help students in developing critical skills for preemptively examining the existing social orders and societal power structures. Therefore, the influence of an institutional business model is discussed first and then, the influence of institutional governance is described.

**Constraints of an institutional business model.** The following quotations of Educators 1 and 5 demonstrate the influence of the business model: Educator 5’s quotations - “Three factors (ranking, student enrollment numbers, and financial consideration) are all that matters; that is the main focus.” (Introductory Interview LN: 805-806); “It's all about rankings because they don't really care if we've done really substantive work.” (LN: 196-197) …” It’s a box-check exercise.
It's because of the focus on rankings.” (LN: 220-221) and Educator 1’s quotations - “Frankly, as we've gone in the 21st century, universities and colleges have become more dominated by business models.” (LN: 1453-1454) … “But if we're getting into this business model. Let's face it …. You don't make money; people lose their jobs.” (LN: 1464-1466)

All participating educators expressed their views regarding the influence of institutional business models that place disproportionate emphasis on factors such as ranking, student enrollment numbers or financial considerations versus the quality of peace and conflict studies education for providing students experiential and transformative learning. For example, in describing the influence of the institutional business model on the education in peace and conflict studies, Educator 1 offered the following comprehensive insights:

I've worked in private universities and public universities. And it's like a business. There's the quality and the quantity. And the quality is focusing on the students. The quantity is, "Do you have enough students in the program to keep it afloat?" …at some private institutions, it's all about the number of students and it's all about the third column: are you giving back? And that drives everything. And I left previous institutions specifically because of the number of student enrollment and financial considerations. We weren't being fair to the students on many levels…But, the ranking stuff comes up… I think it's totally bogus and is without merit. But the problem is just because I think it is bogus doesn't mean that the Dean and the President think it's bogus and they want to leverage it… But whether institutions are providing the students transformative learning: Some of them do it, and they fall in this continuum; there are universities and institutes that are just barely financially making it, and they don't care. They could be a Catholic university whose mission is to serve the poor. So, they're not interested in becoming a rich institution. They're interested in serving the poor. That's where you see a lot of transformative stuff going on…you look at the faculty that are getting attracted to these places…. They should've been priests or nuns, but they're lay people and they found a non-lay way of doing this sort of thing. On the other end of the continuum, you've got these mega-rich institutions where you go to a Dean and say, "Hey, I need $110,000 to do this project." And the Dean says, "Give me a two-pager, and, and if I give it to you, you got two years to get it going. Otherwise, it goes away." But that's the one percent here and the one percent there. That other 98%, have challenges. (Introductory Interview LN: 599-629)

Echoing the comments of Educator 1, Educator 5 asserted the following:
Three factors (ranking, student enrollment numbers, and financial consideration) are all that matters; that is the main focus. Our dean is absolutely obsessed with this stuff... it's because of the business model, the tuition-based business model. We never have a conversation about anything substantive about what would make our program actually better. It's always about what would help us to get more students…. I don't think any of these programs are transformative. (Introductory Interview LN: 805-831)

Educator 4 expressed the following conciliatory thought:

I think in the overall picture, the student enrollment count, of course, our financial consideration's important of course. Like any organization, it needs a type of infrastructure, so, I see that as kind of not necessarily being in opposition to each other but kind of like two trains running down two tracks. (Introductory Interview LN: 466-471)

**Constraints of institutional governance.** Collectively, all participating educators reflected their perceptions about how educational institutions view them or about the priorities of institutions in these fields. For example, Educator 5 expressed, “Institutional approach is to get the most out of the faculty, I mean, they view us as a deficit, we're debt. We cost the university money, so we're a debt. We're a deficit.” (LN: 1159-1162). Similarly, Educator 3 stated, “I can't think of any school off the top of my head that would prioritize practice.” (LN: 579-580)

All participating educators expressed their differing views regarding the influence of institutional governance on their abilities for offering students experiential and transformative learning. For example, in responding to this researcher’s comment, “I know one school, where the professors start with a one-year contract, then a three-year contract”, Educator 1 stated:

Not only that but at that institution, they don't have tenure. So, if they go out and really press things and make people uncomfortable, the university may say, "You are no longer needed. ...And at that institution, they have let faculty go for reasons; if they don't agree with what the professor is doing, not in the classroom. (LN: 1259-1270) ... So, the question is how institutions operate. So, if you're in a normal institution, most of them have tenure. Some are moving away from it, continuing contract. (LN: 1274-1276) ... So, [even with tenure] they can still screw you. (LN: 1289)

Educator 3 provided the following narrative to portray a different aspect of the institutional governance:
I've never been told anywhere I've worked, "Transform the lives of the students." …So, when you are kind of trying to prove yourself to your school in order to keep your job, transforming the students is not really a priority in that way of thinking about what you do. But what the main thing is, is not to anger anybody. Not to have students, basically, say, "This teacher's the worst teacher ever" … That actually hurts me in the sense that if he/she writes about it in his/her course evaluations that could really affect the trajectory for my career. So, those kinds of pragmatic concerns outweigh the broader understanding of what education is about on a day to day basis…I think that if the President here would regard this as a Liberal Arts school…the outcomes should be creating better citizens, creating more informed citizens, more capable citizens. So, having that big picture goal but how it translates into specific classes, we're kind of left to tackle on our own and not in your classes but some of the events that we have on campus, as a way to kind of bring that to students. It's basically up to a professor to what extent you want to do that because it's not really something that is a part of the way we're evaluated. (Introductory Interview LN: 436-455)

Educator 1 shared the following to describe the perspectives of the leadership of the institution:

We'll have people from the system; the boards of regents come down and say, "Oh, you're getting a degree on finance. You're going to get a good job. You got a degree in conflict resolution, what the hell are you going to do with that?" And they automatically discount it; and "How about working in the community?" "Is that just for a project? Is that a one-off kind of thing?" And they ask really tough questions and you realize … how this institution is going to operate. (LN: 1034-1040)

Educator 1 further elaborated:

The bottom line is being responsible for the taxpayer’s money. The bottom line is surviving and making a profit. If we're switching and fewer public resources are going to public higher education, we then have to start thinking a little bit more like the private sector…. But when it comes to meeting community needs is what I think gets shortchanged. (LN: 1468-1474)

In response to this researcher’s question, “How do you perceive that factors that are important to the President and the trustees of the institution influence the quality of education peace and conflict studies students receive for effectively addressing the challenges of the 21st century’s communal conflicts?”, Educator 2 responded, “It'd be nice if you could talk to our provost or our president because I don't know how they think about those questions. (LN: 844-
847) This response of Educator 2 made this researcher wonder about the effectiveness of Educator 2’s program in educating students about how they could address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression in the 21st century.

However, Educator 3 expressed the following picture of the priorities of institutions in peace and conflict studies:

I would say that this is a teaching school. It's made very clear that teaching is the priority. In other places, if it's a big-time research school, they're going to say your job is a researcher and you do teach part-time. But it would be a very rare school that would say, we want you to be a practitioner. I can't think of any school off the top of my head that would prioritize practice. (LN: 575-580)

In the following words, Educator 4 articulated the following perspectives:

And I think that it's important for the institution to recognize the students’ experience and what they're actually living on a daily basis, and also to understand that each institution is different. You might have an institution that's a bit more traditional. They may be able to accept just a few students, and they're able to give them all scholarships, or they're all graduate assistants. And so, they can devote themselves to their study and to work in the community and to work for the university without having to have full-time jobs and do everything else that other people have to do. So, I think it's like a reality check, so to speak. (LN: 757-765)

Educator 4 also provided the following explanation of the needs of students that educational institutions need to consider:

If there were funding mechanisms so that students who truly wanted to engage in social justice activities and try to bring about social justice could have those activities, paid for, at least that would be very helpful…. Because in some cases students may want to go to an area because there's something pressing that's important to them, but can they take that time away from their work? Can they afford to go there? Can they afford to stay there? Can they afford to do that? And in some cases, the answer is no. (LN: 95-104)

Educator 1 used the following interesting reflection to convey that institutional governance is influenced by the view of the society:

If we start looking like social work, start looking like education and clinical psychology, people will start to treat us that way. We know education is important, but as a society, do we really value it? And the answer is not as much as we should. So, somebody who gets an education degree in the United States versus England, the difference is tremendous in
terms. The student getting out of here can start their first job and make $31,000. How are you supposed to live? And in England, it’s state subsidized because education is important. So, they get their salary, and then get something on top of it. And it's actually prestigious and rewarding, and, and they love what they're doing. (LN: 1620-1628)

**Superordinate theme 5: Interrelatedness and interdependencies of subthemes.** These subordinate themes are interrelated and interdependent (Figure 4-11). For example, subordinate theme 5.1 and subordinate theme 5.3 have a mutually reinforcing cycle. In other ways, the accommodation of the challenges of students’ demographics, constraints, and interests (Subordinate theme 5.1) seems to have a direct influence on the institutional business model and institutional governance (Subordinate theme 5.3). However, it is possible that the institutional business model and institutional governance (Subordinate theme 5.3) have a significant influence on the types of students who may enroll in these programs, thus requiring educational institutions to find ways to accommodate the interests and the constraints of the students. Similarly, the lack of individuals from underserved communities (especially African Americans) in faculty and especially in leadership positions (Subordinate theme 5.2), has a potential to perpetuate the institutional governance by predominantly white American men and the continuation of an institutional business model that potentially limits development of future faculty and leaders from underserved communities in peace and conflict studies institutions. Therefore, it seems that all subordinate themes are driven by the business models of the universities.
Conclusion of superordinate theme 5. This superordinate theme presents the participating educators’ experience-based views about how the three subordinate themes are influencing the education in peace and conflict studies. All participating educators collectively recognized the following: 1) Students’ demographics and interests are a significant challenge (Although they have not yet acknowledged that this accommodation will potentially have a significant impact on the institutions’ ability to teach students about how to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression); 2) the lack of underserved communities in faculty and especially in leadership positions is problematic; and 3) The existing institutional business model and institutional governance have significantly impacted the abilities of educators for providing students community engagement-based training about how to help communities to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

This superordinate theme illustrated the influence of interrelated institutional challenges described in the three subordinate themes. Accommodation of the challenges of students’ demographics seems to have resulted in an institutional objective of giving students diplomas so
they can find better employment. However, this accommodation may have significantly limited the abilities of educators for providing students the knowledge, experiential learning and self-knowledge for preemptively addressing challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This superordinate theme highlighted the lack of underserved communities in faculty and leadership as a critical programmatic deficiency. Additionally, this superordinate theme suggested that for providing students education that gives them the ability to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, institutions in peace and conflict would need to undertake a major reform and restructuring of the existing business model and institutional governance. This reform and restructuring would need to include: 1) A process for selecting students who are interested in having more just societies; 2) A supportive and empowering environment for the faculty; and 3) A plan for having minorities in faculty and leadership positions.

Conclusion of Chapter 4: Research Findings

Interrelatedness and Interdependencies of Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

The researcher discovered through data analysis that, although each theme is meaningful on its own, all themes collectively portray integrated aspects of a more universal understanding of the effectiveness of the education in peace and conflict studies in providing students with transformational learning opportunities for community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The superordinate themes and the associated subordinate themes are interrelated, mutually interdependent, and not mutually exclusive (Figure 4-12).
For example, a mutually reinforcing relationship appears to exist between the challenges of students’ demographics (Subordinate theme 5.1) and the influence of an institutional business model and institutional governance (Subordinate theme 5.3). These two subthemes collectively most likely influence the effectiveness of current education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subordinate theme 1.1), post-conflict focus of the current education (Subordinate theme 1.2), and consideration of the social order and societal power structures (Subordinate theme 1.4); and these subthemes in turn influence institutional abilities to help...
students to question their own world views (Subordinate theme 1.5). Similarly, the subthemes under Superordinate theme 1 and Superordinate theme 5 potentially have a direct effect on the subthemes under Superordinate theme 2. Finally, it should be apparent that the Subordinate themes under Superordinate theme 3 and Superordinate theme 4, that are directly affected by the institutional business model and institutional governance (Subordinate theme 5.3), have a limiting influence on the ability of an institution to provide students effective education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Subordinate theme 1.1) and having curricula that include community engagement-based experiential learning (Subordinate theme 2.1).

Therefore, it is important to note that these themes and the associated subordinate themes present a unified portrayal of the participating educators’ experience-based insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided the results of the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the data gathered from the introductory and in-depth interviews of five educators in peace and conflict studies. As indicated in the beginning of this chapter, the research problem dealt with the need for developing a better understanding of the challenges of peace studies educators in providing community engagement-based education that empowers students with the ability to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression, the root causes of communal conflicts. As stated earlier, the purpose of this research study was to gain insights into peace and conflict studies educators’ challenges in providing students
transformational learning opportunities for community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Therefore, the open-ended introductory and in-depth interview questions were used to discover the insights from the participating peace and conflict studies educators’ experience and challenges in educating to address social injustice and inequality through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts. Additionally, these interview questions were purposefully structured to gain insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

The IPA analysis revealed five superordinate themes and nineteen subordinate themes. The following five superordinate themes were uncovered: 1) Inappropriateness and ineffectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Lack of experiential and transformative education; 3) Lack of long-term community partnerships; 4) Inadequacy of institutional support; and 5) Institutional constraints. As discussed earlier, the superordinate themes and the associated subordinate themes are interrelated and mutually interdependent and are not mutually exclusive (Figure 4-12). It is important to note that these themes and the associated subordinate themes present a unified portrayal of the participating educators’ experience-based insights into how peace and conflict studies education is integrating service-learning and transformational learning to empower students to question the influence of the social order on perpetuating social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

The five superordinate themes and nineteen subordinate themes highlighted the following:
• The concerns of the participating educators regarding the effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies and the need for educational institutions to act on fulfilling the real purpose of peace and conflict studies.

• The challenges of the current education in peace and conflict studies for providing students critically reflective and transformative learning that is founded in experiential learning and the questions about the effectiveness of the practicums in using long-term community engagement for accomplishing the objective of providing meaningful experiential learning.

• The criticality of sustained pre-conflict engagement and a real picture of how institutions in peace and conflict studies have overlooked the crucial need of having a sustained relationship with communities, especially communities that are experiencing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

• The inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships and the need for the institutions in peace and conflict studies to reexamine their institutional governance models for making sustained community partnerships as one of their most important educational priories.

• The challenges of students’ demographics that seem to have resulted in an institutional objective of giving students diplomas so they can find better employment and as a result significantly limiting the abilities of educators to provide students the knowledge, experiential learning and self-knowledge for preemptively addressing challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

• The lack of underserved communities (e.g., Blacks, Hispanics, and the poor) in faculty or in leadership positions is a critical programmatic deficiency.
The analysis of the data presented in this chapter has raised questions about the adequacy of the current education for generating future educators and practitioners capable of addressing the social injustice and institutionalized oppression-based conflicts of the 21st century. The data analysis has made this researcher wonder about the commitments of institutions in peace and conflict studies to providing students with the experiential and transformative learning that is essential for peace and conflict studies, shifting its post-conflict orientation to a pre-conflict orientation that uses community partnerships for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The data analysis seems to suggest that education in peace and conflict studies is almost ignoring the need to provide students community engagement-based service learning and it seems to be satisfied with providing students theoretical knowledge that may not be adequate for developing students capable of addressing the 21st century’s challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Based on the analysis of the data, this researcher suggests that without the sustained commitment of adequate financial resources and the commitment of faculty time, the education in peace and conflict studies will most likely educate students to continue the current post-conflict resolution approach for dealing with issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression within the boundaries of the existing social orders and societal power structures. Additionally, this researcher suggests that for providing students education that gives them the ability to preemptively address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, institutions that sponsor peace and conflict studies programs would need to undertake a major process of reforming and restructuring of the existing business model and institutional governance.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the Research Findings will describe the findings of this research study as it relates to the theoretical framework, existing literature, analysis of the data as it relates
to the research question, implications and limitations of this research study, recommendations for education in peace and conflict studies and future research, concluding remarks, and the reflections of the researcher.
Chapter Five: Discussion of the Findings of the Research

The literature review confirmed this researcher’s belief that the education in peace studies is ineffective in integrating community engagement-based service-learning for addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This researcher also thinks that education may be reinforcing the current social order and societal structures-based social injustice and institutionalized oppression experienced by underserved communities (Banks, 2010; Boland, 2014; Freire, 1970). Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to gain insights into peace studies and conflict educators’ challenges associated with educating students in using community engagement for preemptively mitigating conflicts by proactively addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. As the problem of practice and research questions were embedded in the overriding purpose of education, this research study was based on the educational philosophies of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Dewey (1916, 1938, 1959), Freire (1970, 1974), Jenlink (2005, 2014), and Senge (2009) as the foundational purpose of education.

This chapter discusses the relevance of the key findings of the research that were discovered from the analysis of the interview data and were described in chapter Four: Research Findings. This chapter first restates the key findings of the research and then describes how these findings relate to the literature and the theoretical framework of the research. This discussion is followed by the explanation of the implications of the findings, the limitations of the study, ideas for future research, and the closing reflections and remarks.

Key Findings of the Study

The superordinate themes and the associated subordinate themes as discussed in Chapter Four and as exhibited in Table 4-1 represent the findings of this study. Therefore, the
superordinate themes and associated subthemes are used to discuss the findings of the study. The relevance of these key findings to the theoretical framework is discussed next.

**Relationship of the Findings to the Theoretical Framework**

This research was founded on the assumption that peace and conflict studies programs need to find ways for providing students a critical reflection-based “transformative learning” for changing students’ frame of reference regarding social injustice and institutionalized oppression. As such, the theoretical framework of this research study was based on the integrated use of Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2005); Mezirow’s (1991, 1994, 1996, 2000), Transformative Learning Theory and Daloz’s (2000) Transformative Learning for the Common Good theory. The following discussion first addresses the relationships of the findings of the study to Critical Race Theory (CRT), and is followed by the analysis of the relationship of the findings of the study to Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory and Daloz’s theory of Transformative Learning for the Common Good.

**Discussion of the Study’s Findings in Relation to Critical Race Theory (CRT)**

The literature review indicated that CRT and critical pedagogy can be used to develop an understanding of the root causes of social injustice (Brantmeier, 2013; Cabera, 2014; Hirraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995). As the central goal of critical pedagogy and CRT is to critically examine the system of education and work toward change in dominant social and cultural values, it offered theoretical approaches to understanding how the current education reinforces the status quo and neglects opportunities for refining the processes of education.

**Overview of the relationship between the study’s findings and CRT.** Except for Educator 2, all participating educators suggested that the current education is ineffective in
training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The study’s findings confirmed Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (1995) assertion that social inequality is based on three foundational propositions: 1) Race continues to be a significant cause in the creation of inequality; 2) U.S. society is based on property rights; and 3) the intersection of race and property generates an analytical tool to understand social inequality.

**Relationship of the study’s findings to the five tenets of CRT.** The five tenets of CRT provide tools for understanding social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995; Hiraldo, 2010). The first tenet suggested that institutionalized oppression has become a socially accepted reality. The second tenet questioned the pure objectivity of the dominant groups in understanding how they benefit from their socially constructed identities and how minority groups suffer under the socially constructed oppressive system. The third tenet suggested that Whiteness as property is used to perpetuate a system in which non-whites are marginalized. The fourth tenet illustrated how the dominant groups receive more benefits than the oppressed groups from the actions that are specifically designed to benefit the oppressed groups. The fifth tenet advocated for utilization of different methods to understand the experiences of the oppressed groups. The following discussion describes the relationships of the findings with the tenets of CRT.

**Subordinate theme 1.1: Ineffectiveness for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.** The study’s findings suggested that the current education looks upon socially constructed institutionalized oppression as a socially accepted reality; the premise of the first tenet of CRT. For example, in response to the question of whether the education in peace studies or conflict studies is effective in addressing conflicts coming out of social injustice,
Educator 4 stated, “I suspect no.”; Educator 5 asserted: We have failed.”; and Educator 1 articulated, “It's the exception to the rule.”

Subordinate theme 1.3: Inadequacies in the consideration of students' experiences and socio-economic status. The following discussion of the two supporting subthemes portrayed their relationships with the tenets of CRT.

No consideration of the socially situated nature of students’ experience. The study’s findings stressed that the consideration of students’ experiences has been largely either taken for granted or ignored. Participating educators suggested that although consideration of the socially situated nature of students’ experiences is hugely important, it is not easy; and the current education’s focus on employability of students reinforces social constriction. For example, Educator 1 said, “We kind of come up short on this.”; Educator 4 stated, “I think that's hugely important.” and Educator 5 added. “But it's also that they don't even really understand who our students are.”

No accommodation of the socio-economic status of students. Participating educators suggested that education does not take into consideration students’ socio-economic status; does not consider their status-based views; does not create for them a sense of belonging; and the faculty does not adequately recognize the influence of the socio-economic status of students on their learning. These supporting subthemes indicated: 1) the current education has accepted institutionalized oppression as a social reality (The first tenet); 2) dominant groups are not making efforts to understand how the social order is continuing to oppress the underserved communities (The second tenet); and 3) the current education in peace and conflict studies is not using new methods to understand the experiences of the oppressed groups (The fifth tenet).
The following discussion of Subordinate theme 1.4: *Insufficiencies in questioning the social order and societal power structures* and two supporting themes demonstrated the relevance of the findings of the study to the third tenet of CRT.

**Subordinate theme 1.4: Insufficiencies in questioning the social order and societal power structures.** In response to the question of whether the current social order is contributing to the perpetuation of social injustice, Educator 4 stated, “I think, unfortunately, yes.” and Educator 5 responded, “Absolutely.”. The comments of Educators 4 and 5 were also supported by Educator 1 and Educator 3.

*Not facilitating students’ understanding of how the hegemonic power of whiteness as property, dominant ideologies, and societal power structures perpetuate social injustice.* Recognizing that “Whiteness” as a privilege exists, participating educators suggested that the current education neither requires it nor is focused on experiential exposure to the effects of the societal power structures. They added that it needs to be intentionally built-in to the curriculum. They also indicated that it is not a priority of the leadership and it is entirely dependent on the interest of the faculty and students. The following quotations of Educator 1, “How often do programs do that? Very rarely” and “But do we go far enough to talk about the hegemony…I don't think so.”; Educator 4, “It has to be intentional. It can't be happenstance.” illustrated the lack of importance the current education places on the requirement of the third tenet.

*Not providing students the knowledge to develop strategies for realigning societal power structures in order to have more just societies.* Participating educators indicated that as the current education accepts and possibly reinforces the status quo; realigning societal power structures is not specifically emphasized; and correction of this program deficiency would require changes in the curricula. For example, Educator 1 noted, “Peace studies and conflict
resolution come up kind of short.”; Educator 3 indicated, “Very few of them are targeting the social structure.”; Educator 4 suggested, “I think societal power structures do need to be realigned.”; and Educator 5 asserted, “Accepting the status quo and not questioning the status quo is the message of our program.” Therefore, the participating educators (except for Educator 2) indicated that peace and conflict studies need to place more emphasis on teaching students about developing strategies for realigning power structures to have more just societies.

This discussion suggests that the participating educators believed that the current social order is contributing to perpetuation of a system in which dominant groups benefit from their socially constructed identities (The second tenet) and non-whites continue to be marginalized (The third tenet). Therefore, the findings of the study suggested that there is a critical need for educators to help students to learn about how to consider the influence of the social order and societal power structures on the perpetuation of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Subordinate theme 1.5: Inadequacies in helping students to question their own world views.** The participating educators recognized that the current education is not encouraging students to question their own world views and therefore, is not enhancing their abilities for developing new ideas to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. For example, in response to the question, “How is the education helping the student develop abilities to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions for exploring new ideas and for exploring new relationships and actions to develop more just societies?”, participating educators offered the following responses: Educator 5: “Our program, absolutely not.”; Educator 1: “I don't think the field overall does a good enough job.”; and Educator 3: “My perception is that a lot of them aren't open to that”. This subtheme suggested that to overcome the acceptance of institutionalized oppression as a socially accepted reality (The first tenet), educators would need
to help students to develop an understanding of how the socially constructed identities benefit the dominant groups (The second tenet) and would need to use different methods to assist students in developing an understanding of the experiences of oppressed groups (The fifth tenet).

Subordinate theme 5.2: Lack of underserved communities in faculty and leadership.

This subordinate theme discovered that the participating educators acknowledged the need to have individuals from underserved communities in faculty and leadership positions. For example, Educator 2 stated, “There are not that many.” … “I was reading the other day that only 6% of all African Americans have PhDs.”; and Educator 5 added, “We need to make the field relevant to them.” This researcher suggests that it is possible that lack of individuals from underserved communities in faculty and leadership could be a result of the social order that has provided disproportionately fewer educational opportunities to individuals from underserved communities; a reflection of the perpetuation of institutionalized oppression. This Subtheme confirmed that the education in peace and conflict studies considers institutionalized oppression as a socially accepted reality (The first tenet) and has difficulties in deploying new methods to understand the experiences of the oppressed groups (The fifth tenet).

Summation of the relationship of the study’s findings to CRT. The findings of the study indicated that the current education in peace and conflict studies is ineffective in using the intersection of race and property as an analytical tool to understand social inequality and is inadequate in using CRT-based approaches to help students learn about how to work with communities to address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized marginalization.

Discussion of the Study’s Findings in Relation to Transformative Learning Theory

An overview of the relationship between the study’s findings and Transformative Learning is provided first. This overview is followed by the relevance of the study’s findings to
Mezirow’s theory of Transformative Learning (1989; 1991; 1996; 2000) which is followed by the discussion of the relevance of the findings of the study to Daloz’s (2000) four key conditions for transformative learning for the common good.

**Overview of the relationship between the study’s findings and transformative learning.** The study’s findings suggested that critically reflective and transformative learning is a program deficiency. The findings of the study acknowledged that as most students appear to be interested only in getting a job and not interested in issues of social injustice, the ability of educational institutions to provide students critically reflective and transformative learning is rather limited. The following excerpts indicate that the current education has not placed enough emphasis on providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences for guiding their actions regarding social injustice, Educator 1 - “That's [transformative learning] a big hole.”; Educator 2 - “I don't know.”; and Educator 3 - “That is a challenge.”.

**Relationship of the study’s findings to Mezirow’s theory of Transformative Learning.** The study’s findings indicated that the current education is not benefitting from any of the ten tenets of Mizerow’s Transformative Learning Theory (2000, p. 22). Particularly *Superordinate Theme 1: Inadequacies of the current education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression* (especially Subordinate Theme 1.5: Inadequacies in helping students to question their own world views) and *Superordinate Theme 2: Lack of community engagement-based experiential and transformative education* (especially, Subordinate Theme-2.2: Deficiency in providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences for understanding social injustice and institutionalized oppression) demonstrated that the current education is deficient in providing students experiential and transformative learning. The findings of the study indicated that the current education is not providing students opportunities
for transformative learning through what Mizerow (2000, p. 23) refers to as “subjective reframing involving critical reflection on the assumptions of others” or “objective reframing involving critical self-reflection on one’s own assumptions.” Particularly, the current education does not require students to experience emotional struggles associated with the transformation of their existing perspectives into new enlightened and inclusive perspectives (Mizerow, 2000).

The findings of the study revealed that the current education almost ignores any mention of a change of students’ frame of reference that consists of structures and assumptions of how we understand, interpret, and make meaning from our experiences. The findings of this study discovered that according to the participating educators, students in peace and conflict studies do not experience what Mezirow (1991; 2000; 2003) described as a “disorienting dilemma” that facilitates a transformation in how they view themselves, their role in the world, and their connection with others.

**Relationship of the study’s findings to the four conditions of Daloz’s Transformative Learning for the Common Good (2000).**

*The presence of the other.* Daloz’s (2000) first condition emphasized the importance of encounters with others who are very different through experiencing critical incidents or defining moments for breaking down the ‘us-versus-them’ mentality and moving towards a sense of trust and community. Unfortunately, the findings of the study suggested that the current education is inadequate in facilitating critical incidents and defining moments via constructive encounters with others who are very different. Superordinate Theme 3: *Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships* and Superordinate Theme 4: *Inadequacy of Institutional Support* along with the associated subordinate themes, indicated that the current education is deficient in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning. Therefore, learning
from the presence of the others, a critical element of transformative learning, is missing in the current education in peace and conflict studies. The study’s findings indicated that as the current education is inadequate in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression, it is delinquent in emphasizing the development of social responsibility.

**Reflective discourse.** The second condition highlighted the importance of reflective discourse. Daloz (2000) suggested that as part of the transformative process, students need to consciously and critically reflect on their assumptions and integrate cognitive, emotional, and social components into active dialogue with others. He indicated that successful discourse includes empowerment, self-determination, a participant-based agenda, and validation of emotions. The findings of the study suggested that the current education insufficiently emphasizes the use of reflective discourse. The study’s findings indicated that the current education is not helping students to question their own world views for incorporating new ideas and the current education is most likely not requiring students to engage in reflective discourse.

The following excerpts from *Subordinate theme 1.5: Not helping students to question their own world views for incorporating new ideas* suggested that the current education is not helping students to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions for incorporating new ideas that may help communities to become more just societies: Educator 5: “Our program, absolutely not.” and Educator 1: “I don't think the field overall does a good enough job.” Similarly, the following excerpts from *Subordinate theme 2.2: Not providing students critically reflective and transformative learning experiences for understanding social injustice and institutionalized oppression* portrayed the ineffectiveness of the current education studies for helping students to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions in order to incorporate new ideas that may help communities to become more just societies:
Educator 1: “That's a big hole.”; Educator 2: “I don't know.”; Educator 3: “That is a challenge.”; and Educator 5: “The program is not. If anything, the program is the opposite.”

**A mentoring community.** Daloz’s (2000) third condition stressed the importance of a mentoring community through which relationships with significant others are developed. He suggested that mentors habitually demonstrate the ideal and model ways of dealing with problems and issues and offering key insights and analysis. The consensus among participating educators was that as their institutions seem to stress teaching and undervalue mentoring of students, they just did not have the time to mentor students. The following responses of the participating educators to the interview question: “How would you describe educational institutions’ support to ensure that educators have adequate time to mentor students for experiential and transformational learning about how to preemptively address communal conflicts arising out of social injustice?” clearly indicated that the current education is not providing students a mentoring community: Educator 1: “There is no time for mentoring students.”; Educator 2: “We have office hours.”; Educator 3: “It's very difficult time-wise to develop that intimate relationship between student and professor.”; Educator 4: “No. I don't think that most faculty would say that they do.”; and Educator 5: “They keep us so busy, we don't even have time, hardly, to teach, let alone mentor.”

**Opportunities for committed action that contribute to the common good.** Daloz’s (2000) fourth condition underscored the importance of opportunities for experiential learning and committed action for the common good. He asserted that extended experiential learning opportunities “are powerful formative factors shaping a mature commitment to the common good” (Daloz, 2000, p. 117). Superordinate Theme 3 *Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships* and the associated subordinate themes as well as Superordinate Theme
Finding 4 *Institutional Support is Inadequate* and associated subordinate themes indicated that the educational institutions are at best giving lip service to experiential learning and commitment to the common good. The following illustrative quotations from *Superordinate Theme 3: Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships* and associated subordinate themes highlighted the reality that the current education is not committed to creating opportunities for committed actions that promote the common good.

*Subordinate theme 3.1 Lack of community engagement for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression*: Educator 1: “Looking across the field, I don’t think it's extremely effective.”; Educator 4: “I don't think it's as effective as it could be.”; Educator 5: “No, we're not doing it; we're not doing it in any significant way.”; Educator 1: “We are not doing as good of a job in engaging the community for preemptively addressing pre-conflict issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.”

*Subordinate theme 3.3: Lack of pre-conflict long-term community partnerships*: Educator 1: “We don't have it…It's rare.”; Educator 3: “It's not really institutional in a sense, its faculty driven.”; Educator 4: “I think there are huge challenges.”; and Educator 5 - “I don't see it happening at my university.”

The following quotations from *Superordinate Theme 4 Inadequacy of Institutional Support* associated subordinate themes underscored the fact that the current education is not committed to provide students opportunities for contributing to the common good.

*Subordinate theme 4.1: Inadequacy of institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression*: Educator 2: “I wish I knew.”; Educator 3: “It might not be a priority.”; Educator 4: “Not sure whether most institutions emphasize it enough.”; and
Educator 5: “It’s not generally supported.”; Educator 4: “I am not sure whether most institutions emphasize it”.

**Subordinate theme 4.2: Inadequacy of institutional support for providing students community engagement-based experiential learning:** Educator 1: “We receive support in a sense that they're not going to stop it.”; Educator 2: “I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment.”; Educator 3: “It's really up to the faculty members to provide community engagement-based experiential learning.”; and Educator 5: “But it's lip service.”

**Subordinate theme 4.3: Inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships:** Educator 1: They don't want that main goal competing with doing this community stuff…” and “I can tell you …that it would have to be funded.”; Educator 2: “I think one must realize that it's going to take an investment.”; Educator 3: “But it's sort of haphazard.”; and Educator 5: “Since it is up to the individual professor.”

**Summation of the relationship of the study’s findings to the transformative learning theory.** The findings of the study indicated that the current education in peace and conflict studies is grossly inadequate in providing students transformative learning for promoting the common good.

**Summation of the Relationship of Findings of the Study to the Theoretical Framework**

The findings of the study indicated that the current education in peace and conflict studies is inadequate in using critical pedagogy and CRT to help students learn about how to question the current social order and societal power structures and learn approaches to work with communities for proactively addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized marginalization. Similarly, the findings of the study suggested that the current education in peace and conflict studies is inadequate in providing students learning opportunities that are

**Relationship of the Study’s Findings to the Literature**

This research sought to address the specific context of how education in peace and conflict studies is using sustained community partnerships for providing students service learning-based critically reflective and transformative experiential learning. Therefore, in conducting the literature review this researcher was most interested in gaining insights into the educators’ challenges associated with educating students in using sustained community engagement-based service-learning for addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. However, through his literature search, this researcher was unable to find any research that was at aimed at discovering the meaning of the peace and conflict studies educators’ experiences in preparing students to use community engagement-based service-learning for preemptively addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Additionally, there was a dearth of literature regarding service-learning-based experiential and transformative learning as it relates to the education in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, the following discussion of the findings of the study may contribute to new knowledge. The discussion first provides the findings of each superordinate theme and then describes their relationships with the literature.

**Superordinate Theme 1: Inadequacies of the Current Education for Addressing Social Injustice and Institutionalized Oppression**

This superordinate theme together with the associated six subordinate themes presented an integrated view of the effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.
Findings of superordinate theme 1. The participating educators agreed to the following regarding the current education in peace and conflict studies: 1) Is inadequate for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Its post-conflict orientation mostly ignores the need to train students to preemptively address communal social injustice and institutional oppression; 3) Fails to consider the influence of the socially situated nature of students' experiences and their socio-economic status; 4) Is not training the students about how to help communities in becoming more just societies by questioning the influence of the current social orders and societal power structures; 5) Is not helping students to learn about how to be open to incorporating new ideas by questioning their world views; 6) By not teaching students to be change agents and focusing mainly on helping them find employment, the current education may be perpetuating the existing social order and societal power structures. Consequently, the educators raised great concerns about the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current education in peace and conflict studies.

Relationship of literature with the findings of superordinate theme 1. The findings of this theme confirmed that the current education in peace and conflict studies lacks universally accepted definitions and agreement on the core competencies (Anderson, 2004; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Brock-Utne, 2009; Gervais, 2004; Gill & Niens, 2014; Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Köylü, 2014; Salomon & Nevo, 2001; Windmueller et al., 2009). This lack of universally accepted definitions and agreement on the core competencies have created the inadequacies of the current education. These findings also indicated that as the current education does not include opportunities for engaged learning through involvement as members of a community, they do not address the influence of social and economic inequality (e.g., Woods, Willis, Wright, & Knapp, 2013). The findings confirmed that addressing social injustice and institutionalized
oppression are almost ignored by the current education (McElwee, Hall, Liechty, & Garber, 2008).

The findings of this superordinate theme indicated that the current education is mainly focused on conflict resolution and lacks the critical requirements of education for peace. Salomon and Nevo (2001) viewed “peace education as affecting one’s way of treating the 'other’s' collective narrative as legitimate (p.66)” and asserted that peace education programs must deal with long histories of ethnic hostilities and inequalities. The finding of this superordinate theme indicated that the current education fails to consider the “others” collective narratives. These findings also suggested that the current education is primarily focusing on conflict management and lacks the critical requirements for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Harris, 2004). Therefore, it is not accomplishing the following fundamental purpose of education as advocated by Burn and Aspeslagh (1996, p.7).

Our central thesis is that education and the generation and transmission of knowledge which challenges dominant thinking and puts forward alternatives, can contribute to the realization of a peaceful, just and equitable future.

Similarly, the current education seems to have failed to consider Fetherston and Kelly’s (2007) assertion that transformative education in peace studies needs to be less about the application of techniques for managing conflicts and needs to emphasize “a search for processes that can make possible myriad transformations of self, self-in-relationships, self-in-society, as well as transformation in the structural realm” (p. 264) and needs to embrace critical theory and transformative learning. Unfortunately, the findings of this superordinate theme indicated that the current education is mainly emphasizing conflict management techniques and ignoring the
search for processes of transformation. The finding of this superordinate theme confirmed that the post-conflict orientation of the current education primarily centers on addressing negative peace and finding temporary solutions to communal conflicts caused by deeply embedded social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Burns & Aspelagh, 1996; Gervais, 2004; Stewart, Brown & Langer, 2008). The findings of this superordinate theme confirmed that there is a need for further research to better understand the challenges associated with developing a sustained community partnership for assisting a community in its efforts to find sustainable peace by addressing the issues of social injustice (e.g., Bettez, 2011; Johnson & Johnson, 2005).

**Superordinate Theme 2: Lack of Community Engagement-based Experiential and Transformative Education**

This superordinate theme and the associated four subordinate themes portrayed the challenges of the current education in peace and conflict studies for providing students critically reflective and transformative learning that is founded in experiential learning.

**Findings of superordinate theme 2.** The participating educators acknowledged the criticality of experiential and transformative education and recognized the institutional challenges associated with providing students experiential and transformative education. They indicated that the current education, which primarily relies on superficially practiced practicums (Check the box approach) for providing students experiential and transformative education, is inadequate. Participating educators suggested that critically reflective and transformative learning, which is dependent on the interest of the student, is a critical program deficiency. All participating educators indicated that the demographics of students and their employment focus-based view of education pose challenges to providing experiential learning,
The following two comments, first by Educator 5, “Our institution doesn't even use the term scholar-practitioners.” and the second by Educator 3, “I can't think of any school off the top of my head that would prioritize practice.”; defined the challenges associated with the use of a scholar-practitioner model in the education of peace and conflict studies. Although all participating educators seemed to indicate that a scholar-practitioner model would be valuable, they appeared to be struggling with the question, “what does it mean to be a scholar-practitioner?” and indicated that is not an institutional priority. Therefore, it seems that education in peace and conflict studies has not yet embraced the scholar-practitioner model. As such, because of the lack of the use of a scholar-practitioner model, the field may continue to deprive students of the benefits of practice-based knowledge.

Based on the views of the participating educators regarding the inadequacy of the current education in providing students experiential and transformative education and critically reflective and transformative learning, it is not surprising that all participating educators unanimously endorsed the idea of having professional doctorate programs in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, this researcher was unable to comprehend the reasons for these institutions not initiating professional doctorate programs, an initiative that was endorsed by all participating educators.

**Relationship of literature with the findings of superordinate theme 2.** The findings of this superordinate theme confirmed Carstarphen, Zelizer, Harris, & Smith’s (2010) assertion that students are not given enough opportunities to learn from field experience and most courses emphasize theoretical knowledge more than practical skills and applications. Participating educators’ doubts about scholar-practitioners are supported by literature regarding the challenges associated with what it means to be a scholar-practitioner (Adams, 2008; Banks, 2007; Herbert,
The employment focus of students and educational institutions has resulted in what Altbach et al. (2010, p. 107) referred to as the massification of higher education that stresses the transmission of “functional knowledge.” This has turned higher education into what Collins (1971) calls “Education as Status Culture” (p. 1010) and “Education as a Mechanism of Occupational Placement (p.1011). Therefore, the current education has constrained the abilities of the educators as they relate to the fundamental purpose of education as expressed by Dewey (1916) and Freire (1970). The finding regarding the professional doctorate is supported by literature. For example, Fenge (2009, p. 170) succinctly stated, “professional doctorates reinforce the practice of “professional researcher” (PhD) versus “researching professional” (Prof.Doc). Wergin’s (2011) assertion that the Prof. Doc should prepare professionals for pedagogical practice that will advance constructive social change is directly applicable to findings of this superordinate theme.

The findings of this theme indicated that the current education is not providing students experiential learning that is founded in real life experiences within the context of community engagement (Kolb, 1984, Sanders, 2013). The findings also demonstrated that the current education does not provide students any opportunities (except for the superficial practicums) for engaging in developing peaceful solutions to communal conflicts (Bing, 1989). The findings of this theme demonstrated that the four key conditions of transformative learning are not met by the current education (Daloz, 2000). Similarly, as students are not required to engage in constructivist knowing, experience deep shifts in their mental models or frames of reference, and become authors of their own knowledge; the findings of this superordinate theme demonstrated that the current education is not providing transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991, 1996, 2000) and Daloz’s (2000) “Transformative Learning for the Common Good”.
Superordinate Theme 3: Lack of Pre-conflict Long-term Community Partnerships

This superordinate theme and the associated three subordinates presented a holistic picture of how institutions in peace and conflict studies have overlooked the crucial need of having a sustained relationship with communities.

Findings of superordinate theme 3. All participating educators recognized the need for working with communities to preemptively address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. For example, regarding the lack of community engagement for preemptively addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression, Educator 1 stated, “Looking across the field, I don't think it's, extremely effective.” and Educator 5 observed, “No, we're not doing it; we're not doing it in any significant way.”

The following illustrative comments of participating educators indicated that community engagement-based service learning is not emphasized or included in the current education: Educator 1 - “And the fact of the matter is that even in peace studies programs, it's not.”; and Educator 5 - “We give it a lot of lip service.”. Additionally, in response to the question of whether any course requires service-learning, Educator 3 stated, “As far as I know, it does not.”

Furthermore, the following illustrative comments of participating educators portray challenges of educators in establishing pre-conflict long-term community partnerships: Educator 1 - “It's very much an exception to the rule.”; Educator 3 - “It's not really institutional in a sense, its faculty driven.”; Educator 4 - “I think there are huge challenges.”; and Educator 5: “I don't see it happening at my university.”

This superordinate theme suggested that the current education may only be focused on teaching students to address post-conflict situations without addressing the root causes of conflicts. Participating educators acknowledged that pre-conflict long-term community
partnerships present huge institutional challenges that have the following characteristics: 1) Not an essential requirement of the current education; 2) Not supported or valued by educational institutions; 3) Very few presidents are community-engagement oriented; 4) Sustained commitment of institutional resources is a challenge; 3) Lasting commitment is not sufficiently emphasized by programs; 5) Long-term community engagement is faculty driven and dependent; 6) There are difficulties associated with the institutional and community changes; 7) The community’s perception of higher education is problematic; 8) There are institutional legal constraints; 9) There are challenges associated with student demographics and interests; and 10) It is constrained by faculty employment contracts.

Relationship of literature with the findings of superordinate theme 3. “Service-learning can be conceptualized within a social-cultural framework and can be described as people learning as part of developing a practice” (Carrington and Selva, 2010, p. 47). The literature has indicated that service-learning is entrenched in community and in classroom and it offers students an opportunity for transformative change, acquired engaged learning and critical inquiry through reflection and praxis; in communities and in the political and ideological spheres of university-community relationships (Levesque-Bristol et al., 2010; Levkoe, Brail et al., 2014; Savick, & Eckert, 2014). Service-learning provides students opportunities to be involved in powerful and meaningful change that is rooted in experience, critical inquiry and reflective discourse (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010).

By making the connection between service-learning and social justice intentional and unambiguous as well as encouraging students to view themselves as agents of social change, critical service-learning positions service-learning to emphasize social justice outcomes (Mitchell, 2007). Because critical service learning focuses on social change and questions the
societal distribution of power, critical service learning emphasizes the establishment of genuine and trustworthy relationships between higher education institutions and the communities they serve (Cipolle, 2010; Furco, 2010; Mitchell, 2007; Warren, 1998). However, the findings of this superordinate theme indicated that the educational institutions have been unable to establish such trusting relationships with communities.

The findings of this superordinate theme indicated that the current education is not providing students the benefits of either social justice service learning that specifically focuses on shaping the student’s sense of civic responsibility or critical service-learning that stresses longer-term social change through service activity (Chupp & Joseph, 2010). As the current education is not using social justice learning and critical service learning, students are not benefiting from (1) engaging in continuous critical self-reflection, (2) understanding how power, privilege and oppression operate, (3) using critical thinking skills for linking social justice theory (or peace theories) and practice, (4) acquiring a sense of agency and inspiration for working toward social change, or (5) participating in ongoing dialogue with others (Bettez & Hytten, 2013). Therefore, students in peace and conflict studies have limited opportunities for situating themselves in communities to foster their knowledge of how the current social orders create inequality and social injustice and in turn for being helped to develop strategies in assisting communities to develop new social structures that advance social justice and equality (Bajaj, 2015; Cipolle, 2010; Warren, 1998). Therefore, the education in peace and conflict studies needs to find ways to anchor service-learning in the larger contexts of communities and use a transformational learning process to expose students to the realities of social injustice and systemic oppression (Bajaj, 2015).
Superordinate Theme 4: Inadequacy of Institutional Support

This superordinate theme and the associated three subordinate themes portrayed the inadequacy of institutional support for developing and sustaining community partnerships.

Findings of superordinate theme 4. The participating educators suggested that the inadequacy for sustaining community partnerships directly reflects in: 1) The inadequacy of institutional support for providing students community-engagement-based experiential learning which in turn limits the adequacy of institutional support for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression; 2) Providing students community-engagement-based experiential learning that is essential for preemptively addressing the communities’ challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Additionally, this superordinate theme suggested that the institutions need to reexamine their governance models for making sustained community partnerships as one of the most important educational priorities. This superordinate theme also suggested that sustained community partnerships are at the core of the institution’s ability to provide students opportunities for using service-learning and experiential learning to develop capacity for addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. However, all three subordinate themes are driven by institutional unwillingness and inabilities to make sustained commitment of financial and other resources for using community partnerships.

Relationship of literature with the findings of superordinate theme 4. The findings of this superordinate theme reflected the tensions of service-learning in higher education: 1) A “learning question” regarding the debates over learning outcome; 2) A “locational question” regarding the connection between service-learning and the formal curriculum; 3) An “organization-of-work question” about how service-learning fits within the expectations of the work of the faculty; and 4) An “implementation question” regarding the desired key features of
service-learning experience (Kezar & Rhoads, 2001; p. 149). The findings of this superordinate theme illustrated that the current education has not embraced service-learning, a pedagogical process, in which students participate in course-relevant community service to enrich their learning experience (Petkus, 2000). Literature suggested that education in peace studies and peacebuilding needs to require service-learning that is focused on “civic engagement as collective action” and “civic engagement as social change” (Adler & Goggin, 2005, pp. 238-239). However, although the literature suggested that service-learning should be an essential requirement, the findings of this superordinate theme indicated that community engagement-based service learning is missing from the current education in peace and conflict studies. Because of the lack of community-engagement-based service-learning, the current education is not requiring students to engage in constructivist knowing or experience deep shifts in their mental models and frames of reference. Therefore, the findings of this superordinate theme indicated that the current education is not providing students experiential learning (Mezirow, 1991, 1996, 2000; Daloz, 2000).

Superordinate Theme 5: Influence of Institutional Constraints and Governance

This superordinate theme presented the participating educators’ views about how the three subordinate themes are influencing the education in peace and conflict studies.

Findings of superordinate theme 5. All participating educators recognized the following: 1) Students’ demographics and interests are a significant challenge; 2) The lack of underserved communities in faculty and especially in leadership positions is problematic; and 3) The existing institutional business model and governance have impacted the abilities of educators for providing students community engagement-based training about how to help communities to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.
This superordinate theme illustrated the influence of the interrelated institutional challenges described in the three subordinate themes. Accommodation of the challenges of students’ demographics seems to have resulted in an institutional objective of giving students diplomas so they can find better employment. However, this accommodation may have limited the abilities of educators for providing students experiential learning for addressing challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This superordinate theme highlighted the lack of underserved communities in faculty and leadership as a critical deficiency. Additionally, this superordinate theme suggested that for providing students education that gives them the ability to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, institutions in peace and conflict would need to undertake a major reform of the existing business model and institutional governance. This reform would need to include: 1) A process for selecting students who are interested in having more just societies; 2) A supportive and empowering environment for the faculty; and 3) A plan for having individuals from underserved communities in faculty and leadership positions.

**Relationship of literature with the findings of superordinate theme 5.** The impact of the business and the governance model of higher education, as reflected in the findings of this superordinate theme, are supported by the literature. Cassuto (2015) suggested that as the selection of graduate students is controlled by economics, therefore, the admission process has marginalized graduate education to the point that it has lost a clear purpose and identity. Additionally, Philip Altbach (2016) asserted that as higher education is facing unprecedented challenges, the fundamental goal of education is negated in preference for income and prestige. Therefore, the cost of graduate education has turned into a system that perpetuates inequality rather than a way to promote the common good (Cassuto, 2015). The literature has indicated that because of the challenges faced by higher education institutions and bureaucratization of the
profession; educational institutions are in for a struggle for the soul of higher education (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2010). Altbach et al. (2010, p.107) asserted that the massification of higher education has changed higher education to “functional knowledge.” The lack of underserved communities in faculty and in leaderships is also supported by literature. Graduate schools have remained mostly as white enterprise and there is an unacceptable level of underrepresentation of individuals from underserved communities (Cassuto, 2015). Similarly, as students from low-income families are less likely to overcome financial barriers or assume large debt, creative solutions would be required to increase participation of underserved communities in faculty or leadership in higher education (Altbach et al. 2010).

**Summation of the Relationships between the Findings of Study and Literature**

Based on the literature, the findings of this study suggested that the current education is not using sustained community engagement-based service-learning to provide students experiential and transformative learning. It is not using CRT to help students to change their frame of reference regarding the use of the social order and societal power structures for perpetuating of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The findings confirmed that the post-conflict orientation of the current education in peace and conflict studies will continue to focus on temporary resolution of conflicts within the current social order and societal power structures that perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The findings also indicated that as the current education is training students to work within the current social order, it will not be adequate for addressing the perpetuation of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The findings demonstrated that the current education has constrained the abilities of the educators to achieve the fundamental purpose of education as expressed by Dewey (1916).
and Freire (1970). Therefore, the current education would have to undergo a paradigm shift to become relevant to social injustice and institutionalized challenges of the 21st century.

**Implications and Recommendations for Future Education in Peace and Conflict Studies**

The findings of the study suggested that the educational institutions, especially in peace and conflict studies, may need to examine whether their programs are helping students in their search for the larger purpose of their lives and fostering our full humanity. The findings of the study provided the foundation for the implications of this research to the education, practice-education integration, and future research regarding how to make the education more effective in using community engagement for providing students experiential and transformative learning to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Significance of Implications of the Study**

Based on the literature search, it appeared that this research maybe the only study whose findings result from the experience of the educators in peace and conflict studies. The literature search also revealed that there is a dearth of literature regarding using community engagement for providing students in peace and conflict studies experiential and transformative learning that is based on Critical Race theory. Therefore, the findings of this study have significant implications for the education in peace and conflict studies. The implications of the findings of the study and recommendations may be also applicable to education in other fields, such as human resources, law, social work and criminal justice. The implications for education, practice-education integration, and research are provided first and then recommendations for education and research are described.

**Implications for education, education-practice integration, and research.** The following implications of the findings of this study should make educators and the leadership of
institutions more aware of the inadequacies of the current education in peace and conflict studies in providing students educations that addresses the challenges of resolving social injustice and institutionalized oppression in 21st century.

- The current education is neither integrating service-learning nor including critical theories to provide students experiential learning and transformational learning to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Daloz, 2000; Harris, 2004; Mezirow, 1991).

- The current education is not based on either the definition of peace or essential core competencies and has not emphasized community engagement to address issues of social injustice, and institutionalized oppression (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Bettez, 2011; Brock-Utne, 2009; Gervais, 2004; Gill & Niens, 2014; Kester, 2010; Köylü, 2014; Salomon & Nevo, 2001).

- As the current education is not sufficiently exposing students to the real-world issues of the systemic perpetuation of social injustice, there is a gap between what the educational programs are providing to the students and the societal need for having future practitioners with a holistic understanding of peace and specialized knowledge and skills (Carstarphen et al., 2010).

- The current education needs to shift its post-conflict orientation to pre-conflict community engagement-based experiential-transformative learning orientation (Gervais, 2004; Stewart, Brown & Langer, 2008).

- The cost of higher education and the financial and time constraints experienced by students as well as the financial and resource constraints of educational institutions are major drives that contribute to the inadequacies of the current higher education (Cassuto, 2015).

- The institutional view of students as customers has resulted in educational institutions becoming diploma factories, and in educators being the dispensers of employability skills to
provide students what Collins (1971) referred to as “Education as Status Culture” (p. 1010) and “Education as a Mechanism of Occupational Placement (p.1011).

- As distance-learning has become a money-making operation, educational institutions have found a way to hand out diplomas to fulfill Philip Altbach’s (2016) suggestion that higher education is focusing on providing students income and prestige.

- The current educational practices have created a system in which educators have lost their voice and the ability to teach and practice questioning of the social order and societal power structure that perpetuate social injustice. Therefore, it seems that the educational system has implemented a system that institutionalizes oppression of the educators and students.

Therefore, the findings of the study have implications for the entire spectrum of education in peace and conflict studies and also for specific institutions and programs in these fields; the practice-education integration; and the research for bringing new insights to make the education in peace and conflict studies more relevant to the 21st century challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Implication for practice-education integration.** The findings of the study indicated that the current education focuses mainly on teaching theories and includes very little integration of practice aspects related to addressing real issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression in communities. Therefore, for providing students practice-oriented education, educational institutions may need to consider establishing practitioners/institution partnership, community organizations/institution partnerships, and providing financial support for sustaining community/institution partnership.

**Implications for research.** The implications of the study could serve as a springboard for future research as described later. Given the scarce amount of literature related to the lived
experience-based research regarding the integration of community engagement with education in peace and conflict studies, it may be obvious that more research needs to be undertaken.

**Recommendations for Education**

**Recommendations for education.** Education in peace and conflict studies may benefit from the following initiatives: 1) Initiating a professional doctorate program; 2) Adding community engagement and service-learning-based concentration; 3) Starting co-op programs; 4) Establishing an accreditation process; 5) Establishing inter-institutional collaboration programs. These recommendations will allow the educational institutions to augment their current programs with specifically tailored educational programs that would focus on using community engagement-based service-learning for providing students experiential and transformative education that emphasizes addressing issues of social injustice. Educational institutions would need to insure that only the students who are interested in addressing social injustice are selected and would probably need to limit the number of students enrolled into the program to insure that students would be provided time and mentoring to learn about how to use community engagement for addressing the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. These programs would also need to be based on a very different institutional business and governance model that provides students financial assistance at least for doing the field work. These programs would require faculty that is committed to service-learning education and is passionate about addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Professional doctorate program.** As all participating educators agreed that a professional doctorate program would be beneficial and as the educational institutions of three participating educators had already considered the feasibility of initiating a professional doctorate program, the findings of the study suggest that there is no reason to wait. A
professional doctorate would need to include three six-month periods of service-learning in the same community. Professional doctorate programs could provide students financial support during their field work.

**Starting co-op program.** Co-op programs have been used by universities in a multitude of educational fields (Granger & Moore, 1976; Maharg, 1982; Meade, 1992). A carefully planned co-op program could integrate community engagement-based service-learning for providing students experiential and transformative education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. An institution could initiate a two-year co-op master program with two six-month periods field work-based service-learning and two six months coursework. It could also initiate a co-op doctoral program with four six-month periods of field work-based service-learning and four six-month periods of course work. Students could receive some payments for their field work.

**Doctorate program with two-years-residency.** This program would follow the model of the medical or nursing professions where students are provided hands-on exposure to practice and professionally observed and paid residency of two years.

**Adding community engagement and service-learning-based concentration.** Educational institutions could initiate a new concentration under their current peace and conflict studies programs. This concentration would have mandatory requirements for field work and students should receive similar financial support for their field work.

**Planning for Forward Movement: Initial Thoughts for Operationalization of the Findings**

This dissertation is a call to action for educators and institutions of higher learning in peace and conflict studies, as well as business and political leaders, to proactively address issues of social injustice and institutional oppression. Hopefully, these stakeholders would be
committed to becoming the agents of the change in peace and conflict studies education that is advocated by this dissertation. Desirably, this call to action will result in collaborative proactive actions of stakeholders for enabling education in peace and conflict studies to go beyond its predominant post-conflict orientation to much greater emphasis on pre-conflict community engagement.

As such, this researcher is including some thoughts about how to transform education in peace and conflict studies and some ideas about what and how educators, educational institutions and other stakeholders should go about mitigating the inadequacies identified in the findings of the study (that were revealed from experiences of the five participating educators) and put in place a plan of action so that community engagement will no longer be a critical missing link in peace and conflict studies education. However, as for the last thirty years numerous scholars have been identifying similar inadequacies; educators, educational institutions, and other stakeholders need to understand and accept that mitigating the inadequacies identified in this dissertation would be a daunting challenge that can only be addressed by a sustained collaborative and committed effort by the collective actions of all stakeholders. Therefore, this discussion includes some ideas regarding steps that may help stakeholders in developing a collaborative understanding and acceptance of the need for change and in developing a collective definition of a vision and an implementation plan to the make the paradigm shift advocated by this dissertation a reality. The ideas described below apply to all recommendations for education described earlier.

This researcher also recognizes that the ideas and recommendations discussed in the dissertation are more likely to take root if all stakeholders are enlisted in developing and implanting an operationalization plan to effectively engage the community in peace and conflict
studies. Additionally, a collaborative effort of all stakeholders is likely to result in reforms of peace and conflict studies education that is informed by the wisdom of multiple perspectives. Therefore, although this researcher believes that even developing the initial ideas for operationalization of the findings of this research should be a collaborative effort (he is apprehensive that stakeholders may just focus on the validity of the initial ideas presented by this researcher), this researcher has taken a risk to put forth some ideas to initiate a dialogue among all stakeholders to make community engagement and service-learning-based experiential learning a critical transformative element of education in peace and conflict studies. This researcher’s perceived risk is associated with his perception that educators, educational institutions, societal power brokers and policy makers will focus only on the ideas presented by him and may use their assessment of the ideas presented in this dissertation as a reason for not accepting their responsibility for collectively agreeing on the need to change the current education in peace and conflict studies. The real need is for them to collaboratively develop a plan to implement the needed changes.

This researcher suggests that the stakeholders and constituents that are identified here would need to be brought to the table, both in terms of political engagement and in terms of power of status and influence, expertise, ability to provide intellectual and financial resources, and human capital that would be required to put into action a plan so that peace and conflict studies educators will have resources and be empowered to help students develop the necessary skills and tools and more effective means to help communities address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression to create social, political and economic change. The collaborative participation of the stakeholders would surface different perspectives which would help educators and educational institutions in developing fully informed reforms of the education
in peace and conflict studies that can be sustained and continually refined. To further the effort of implementing the needed paradigm shift in education in peace and conflict studies, the following discussion first provides critical questions that need to be addressed. Then it identifies critical stakeholders and constituents, their relationships, strengths and limitations, and illustrative responsibilities; then it is followed by ideas regarding an approach to collaboration for using community engagement to implement the paradigm shift. This discussion is followed by this researcher’s thoughts about “Do No Harm” and initial ideas regarding priorities and steps for implementing the paradigm shift.

**Critical Questions**

The implications of the findings of the study suggest that the educational programs in peace and conflict studies have not adequately answered the following illustrative questions. Collaboratively answering these questions is essential to reforming the current education in peace and conflict studies.

1) How can educational institutions develop universally agreed definitions of key terms and concepts e.g., peace, social justice, experiential learning, community and community-engagement. (Chapter Two demonstrated the lack of universal agreement on the definitions of key terms and concepts.) 2) How can the gap between peace and conflict studies be bridged? (Chapter Two described the gap between peace and conflict studies) 3) What core competencies are needed for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression? 4) How can educators make the curriculum most effective in using service-learning to provide students greater experiential and transformative education? 5) Do the curricula include an appropriate balance between classroom education and hands-on experience? 6) Are classroom education and experiential learning appropriately aligned so that students are prepared to use the classroom
education to benefit from experiential learning in the field? 7) Are there processes for measuring the effectiveness of classroom education and relevant and effective experiential learning? 8) How does the program train students to apply knowledge and theory and develop the skills and tools for tackling the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression? 9) Can pilot projects be used to test the reforms and how they would be used in developing new educational practices? 10) How can educational institutions support faculty in mentoring students and helping them to change their frame of reference regarding how the current social orders and societal power structures perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression? 11) How are educational institutions’ views of students as customers impacting the education in peace and conflict studies? 12) Are there safeguards that ensure doing no harm is incorporated into service-learning and student engagement in the community? 13) What are the impacts of the lack of educators and leadership from underserved communities? 14) How can educational institutions develop long-term community partnerships? 15) How can educational institutions convince societal power brokers (business and influential leaders) and policymakers (political leaders) for supporting community-educational institution partnerships for promoting the common good? 16) What steps need to be taken to ensure that community engagement benefits the marginalized in addition to providing students opportunity for experiential learning?

These illustrative questions demonstrate a need for the following reforms to study and adopt across the entire spectrum of education in peace and conflict studies including, but not limited to, the following: 1) Restructuring of educational programs across the entire field; 2) Inter and intra-university as well as inter-program collaboration for defining core competencies and integrating service-learning that emphasizes experiential and transformative learning; 3) Redefining roles, responsibilities and expectations of educators and management for changing
the existing hierarchical management to adaptive management structure and transformative leadership; 4) Improved communication and collaboration among the faculty and with leadership; 5) Reestablishing the number of students enrolled and criteria for selection of students to allow educators adequate time for mentoring students and to ensure that students have the interest, abilities, and commitment for investing extended period in the field for benefitting from service-learning and experiential learning. This criteria for selection of students would hopefully emphasize enrolling students from underserved communities and economically depressed families.; 6) Restructuring practicums and internship programs; 7) Improving education-theory-practice integration by integrating scholar-practitioners; 8) Establishing an appropriately resourced community-partnership program; 9) Educational institutions developing new partnerships or enhancing their current partnerships with theological schools and developing new partnerships or increasing the existing partnerships with economically depressed and socially marginalized communities; 10) Restructuring the on-line education for providing students community engagement-based service-learning in peace and conflict studies.

Therefore, the findings of the study have implications for the entire spectrum of education in peace and conflict studies and also for specific institutions and programs in these fields; the practice-education integration; and the research for bringing new insights to make the education in peace and conflict studies more relevant to the 21st century challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

To implement this needed paradigm shift, the stakeholders would need to collaboratively address questions such as: 1) What are the challenges to achieving consensus on how to address social injustice and promote the common good and how can these challenges be addressed when establishing service learning and community engagement programs? 2) As individual
circumstances and organizations continuously change, how would the collaboration be sustained? 3) What are the challenges and consequences as well as the ultimate goals of this paradigm shift?

**Key Stakeholders and Constituencies**

For implementing the dissertation advocated paradigm shift in education, educators and educational institutions would need to identify all stakeholders and bring them to the table in planning and implementing the desired paradigm shift. The strengths, abilities, and constraints of each stakeholder/constituent need to be carefully aligned with the responsibilities of that stakeholder for having a just society for everyone. Figure 5-1 visually presents the relationships between each stakeholder and desired community engagement-based experiential learning. The red arrows in Figure 5-1 reflect the ability of societal power brokers (business and influential leaders) and policymakers (elected political leaders) to control the abilities of the community as well as the abilities of educational institutions for addressing issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. This researcher suggests that societal power brokers and policymakers have a significant ability to control and limit the success of communities’ efforts for having equitable distribution of resources. These societal power brokers and policymakers also have the power to enact reforms of the current laws and regulations for promoting equitable treatment of all citizens regardless of their socioeconomic status, gender, race, color of their skin, religion, sexual orientation, etc. This power is vested in the abilities of power brokers and policymakers to control allocation of the required funding and resource sources. Therefore, it is essential that educational institutions find a way to have a long-term buy-in of the plan for community partnership by the societal power brokers and policymakers. Implementation of a plan, for community engagement and reform of the education in peace and conflict studies,
would require alignment of responsibilities of stakeholders and constituents and their strengths and limitations (Table 5-1 and 5.2).

Figure 5-1. Stakeholders and Illustrative Responsibilities
Table 5-1. Relationships of Key Stakeholders and Constituencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Illustrative Responsibilities and Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| **Power brokers (Business & Influential leaders)**| ● Accept responsibility for actions to benefit the community and the Common Good  
● Commit to engage in cross-sectoral collaboration (Siegel, 2010)  
● Commit to financially support educational institution-community partnerships                                                                                                                                |
| **Policymakers (Political Leaders)**             | ● Commitment for engaging in cross-sectoral collaboration (Siegel, 2010)  
● Enact legislation to ensure financial assistance to support community and educational institutions partnerships and advocating social justice and the common good                                                                 |
| **Institutional Management**                      | ● Establish and implement program vision to emphasize addressing social injustice  
● Outreach with societal power brokers/policy makers to advance the common good  
● Sponsor and engage in cross-sectoral collaboration (Siegel, 2010)  
● Change the hierarchical management to adaptive (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009; Northhouse, 2016), and transformative leadership (Northhouse, 2016)  
● Value moral leadership, power of intellectual leadership (Burns, 2010)  
● Mitigate impacts of political leaderships (Burns, 2010)  
● Establish and support community outreach and engagement office for building and sustaining long-term community partnership: Define the context, scope, requirements and processes for community engagement and partnership  
● Establish office for implementing experiential and service-learning that is led by educators: Define the context, scope, requirements and processes for experiential learning requirements and processes for experiential learning program  
● Implement a plan for inter and intra institutions collaboration for accreditation  
● Restructure business and governance model  
  ■ Evaluation of student selection and enrollment numbers  
  ■ Reform educator’s contracts and reward system  
    ▶ Integrating community engagement as an employment requirement  
    ▶ Rewarding community engagement and mentoring of students  
  ■ Put in place plans for having underserved communities in faculty & leadership  
  ■ Financial support to students especially during experiential learning phase  
  ■ Educators’ group to reform curriculum and for integrating the best of practices  
| **Educators**                                     | ● Engage in cross-sectoral collaboration for community engagement (Siegel, 2010)  
● Engage in inter and intra institutions Collaboration for:  
  ■ Bridging the divide between peace and conflict studies  
  ■ Establish an agreement on the required core competencies  
  ■ Reforming Curriculum to emphasize service-learning and social justice  
  ■ Define key terms: e.g., Peace, social justice, experiential & service learning  
  ■ Establish curriculum requirements, e.g. Critical Race Theories, experiential and transformative learning, positionality public policy (Helping legislators to enact laws and regulations to address social injustice), grant proposals (For acquiring funds to engage community for addressing social injustice) & facilitation  
  ■ Purposeful integration of experiential learning with classroom training program and service-learning internships as an essential program requirement  
  Integrate other theories, e.g., constructive development (Drago-Severson, 2009)  
  Support accreditation  
  ■ Dedication to sustained mentoring of students and community engagement  
  ■ Commitment to teach questioning of social orders for addressing social injustice  
  ■ Community-student workshops for addressing community issues, hearing stories of the marginalized and students’ experiences with social injustice  
| **Students**                                      | ● Use community engagement for service-learning as a program requirement  
● Interest in addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression  
● Self-reflection regarding the influence of his/her positionality                                                                                                                                        |
| **Community**                                     | ● Develop and maintain an open and trusting relationship with educators and students  
● Work with educators to develop projects to address social injustice                                                                                                                                   |
As shown in Figure 5-1 and Table 5-1, the ability of educators in providing students community engagement-based service-learning and experiential learning is dependent on the commitment of institutional management and governance.

The commitments and actions of educational institutions and educators would directly influence willingness of communities to become involved in community engagement-based education in peace and conflict studies and opportunities for students to benefit from experiential learning about how to help communities to address challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Strengths and limitations of Stakeholders and Constituents**

Table 5.2 includes illustrative strengths and weaknesses of the stakeholder identified in this research.

Table 5-2. *Strengths and limitations of Stakeholders and Constituents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Power brokers (Business & Influential leaders)** | ● Ability to influence the paradigm shift: Changing the societal power structure & social order  
● Ability to provide funding and resources | ● Short-term focus  
● Belief that anyone can succeed with hard work |
| **Policymakers (Political Leaders)**            | ● Ability to enact public policy  
● Ability to act on societal injustice | ● Interest in staying in the elected office  
● Dependency on power brokers for campaign funds |
| **Institutional Management**            | ● Ability to restructure educators’ contracts  
● Ability to conduct inter and intra-institutional collaboration  
● Ability to initiate accreditation process | ● Financial constraints  
● May not be supported by the Board  
● Ability to implement educators’ initiatives  
● Lack of exposure to students  
● Not a member of the oppressed Community |
| **Educators**                     | ● Expert knowledge  
● Mentoring capacity/opportunities,  
● Bridging theory and practice | ● Not a member of the oppressed Community  
● Lack of mentoring time  
● Uncertainty of employment |
| **Students**                     | ● Willingness and commitment to learn about how to address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression | ● Financial debt  
● Real life constraints  
● Lack of experience  
● Degree seen as a source of better pay |
| **Community**                     | ● Real life knowledge of the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression | ● Loss of hope in future  
● Loss of voice  
● Loss of trust in the system |
The dependency of policymakers on societal power brokers is a critical influencing factor in the perpetuation of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The strengths and limitations of societal power brokers limit the abilities of policymakers to advocate for actions that mitigate the perpetuation of social injustice and institutionalized oppression and that in turn influences the degree of real support policymakers can provide to educational institutions and development and sustaining of community-educational institution partnerships. Similarly, the boards of directors of educational institutions are probably most driven by rankings, number of student enrollment, and financial conditions of the institution and therefore, the presidents, provost and deans probably have limited ability to focus on issues of social injustice that are experienced by communities. This interest of students probably results in viewing educators as dispensers of knowledge and in institutions becoming diploma factories. As such, both educators and communities experience a sense of powerlessness and a loss of for the future. Students are left in an environment that is conducive for students viewing the sole purpose of their education to be a source for better paying employment and the prestige of having a degree as quickly as possible.

One can understand that because of financial debt incurred by the cost of education, students are anxious to have extended time in communities to benefit from service-learning and experiential learning. The literature has indicated that during the phase of service learning-based experiential learning, students are not financially supported by educational institutions and in many institutions, the experiential learning phase is also subjected to tuition. Additionally, during the experiential phase, many students do not have access to any other financial resources to support themselves. Therefore, experiential-learning possibly increases students’ financial debt for pursuing education. As such, one can understand that because of the significant
financial debt incurred by the cost of education, students may be reluctant to invest an extended amount of time in communities to benefit from service-learning and experiential learning. Resolving students’ financial challenges in pursuing service-learning and transformative education would require educational institutions to find different sources of funding for moving away from the current tuition-based financial model.

**Collaboration for Using Community Engagement to Implement the Paradigm Shift**

It seems that cross-sector and inter and intra-organizational collaboration for organizing for social partnership and pushing forward the role of higher education in society as advocated by David Siegel (2010) would be beneficial for stakeholders in their effort to develop and implement the paradigm shift that is recommended by this dissertation. As this paradigm shift in the education of peace and conflict would require the support of both the leadership of educational institutions and educators, this researcher suggests that educational institutions need to explore the idea of having facilitated retreats. This researcher hopes that provosts, and presidents of the educational institutions and deans and chairs of their programs would participate in these retreats. Similarly, this researcher hopes that facilitated retreats that are attended by educators will be held. It is also desired that facilitated retreats for seeking insights of community, business and political leaders, and the funders would be used to get a holistic understanding of the challenges associated with this paradigm shift.

This researcher also hopes that experience-based insights of the current students and alumni of peace and conflict studies programs would be obtained through open and collaborative dialogue about what should be done to better prepare students for helping communities to proactively address the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression. In these facilitated retreats and dialogues, this researcher hopes that educators and educational institutions
would gain insights into how to put the findings of the study into reality. This researcher hopes that educational institutions will use the findings of the study to work with societal power brokers and policymakers to develop an ongoing cross-sectoral collaboration. Additionally, this researcher hopes to disseminate the findings of the study to a wider audience that may be interested in addressing the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression and promoting the common good. This researcher will share with all stakeholders any insights gained from the dissemination of the findings to a wider audience.

**Establishing inter-and intra-institutional collaboration.** The education in peace and conflict studies would benefit from an inter-and intra-institution collaboration program. This collaboration could be used for developing a collective understanding of the need to change as well as a vision and an implementation plan for realizing the needed paradigm shift advocated by this dissertation. This collaboration may also be beneficial for bridging the gap between peace and conflict studies; defining key concepts and terms; establishing the required core competencies the students are expected to have as the programs in other fields such as engineering, social work, medicine and law have done; reforming curriculum to integrate community-engagement-based service-learning and experiential learning; education in intergroup dialogue and facilitation (versus interpersonal dialogue and facilitation), and organizing peace and conflict studies towards a pre-conflict community engagement-based orientation.

**Establishing an inter and intra-institutional accreditation process.** As the accreditation of peace and conflict studies programs currently does not exist (this is program specific accreditation that is in addition to the accreditation of the educational institution), the current programs and the recommended programs educational institutions would need to find a way to
establish an accreditation body and process similar to accreditation processes used for education in fields such as medicine and social work. Therefore, for the current programs and for the recommended programs, educational institutions would need to find a way to establish an accreditation body to define the core competencies; promoting integration of peace and conflict studies and teaching standards that each program must meet.

**Thoughts About “Do No Harm and Approach to Mitigating Risks**

Although “Do No Harm” (Anderson, 1999) primarily applies to aid in wars, educators and educational institutions need to recognize that how community engagement and partnership is carried out in some ways may harm the communities that are experiencing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. For example, even the perception of breach of trust by educators or educational institutions or students may result in the community experiencing a sense of being harmed. If community members come to believe that because educators are elites who work in ivory towers and have no idea of what it means to experience social injustice, they may be reluctant to truly engage in honest and open partnership. Similarly, if a community senses that educators willingly accept the constraints imposed by societal power brokers (business and influential leaders) or policymakers (political leaders), it may sense that working with educators is a useless endeavor. Additionally, if educators are not supported by their institutions, communities may view educators as individuals with no meaningful power to help them. Additionally, if students’ interactions and involvements with the community are not effectively managed (can be avoided by adopting the model of education in medicine), students may mislead the community and create a sense for communities that working with educational institutions is not worth the time and effort. This in turn could have negative consequences for students, educational institutions, and the community.
Additionally, without appropriate guidance and mentoring, students may not know about how to take into consideration the specific context of the community situation and the associated community dynamics, and they may unintentionally facilitate dialogues or take actions that may create additional challenges and unwittingly reinforce the community’s sense of marginalization. Finally, if the community engagement is not founded in the commitment to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression, educational institutions may in fact promote the perpetuation of institutionalized oppression.

**Initial Ideas Regarding the Priorities and Steps for Implementing the Paradigm Shift**

The first critical step is to build a consensus around the acceptance of the need for the paradigm shift that is advocated by this dissertation. Because of all the actions that are necessary for implementing the needed paradigm shift in peace and conflict studies education, it seems that educators would first need to define and establish definitions of key terms and concepts, agree on bridging the gap between peace and conflict studies, and also establish a consensus that peace and conflict studies need to shift from the current post-conflict orientation to a pre-conflict community-engagement-based orientation. This approach is analogous to a preventative approach to medical and dental health (dietary and exercise approach to healthcare or dental hygiene approach to dental care).

Similarly, institutional management needs to commit to provide students community-engagement-based service-leaning and experiential learning, and to support the development of long-term community partnerships. Additionally, educational institutions would need to recognize that without changing the existing hierarchical management structure to more of an adaptive (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009; Northhouse, 2016) and transformative management (Northhouse, 2016) structure and restructuring educators’ employment contracts, the
implementation of a paradigm shift will be extremely challenging. In reality, the most critical step is to convince the societal power brokers and policymakers that they need to commit to supporting the implementation of the paradigm shift advocated by this dissertation because it is in the best interest of their grandchildren and future generations; an approach President Carter used to convince Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel in entering into Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty.

**Consequences and Challenges of Implementing the Dissertations’ Recommendations**

The implementation of the paradigm shift advocated by this research will take unprecedented collaboration among all stakeholders and constituents and this collaboration would have to meet the willingness and commitments of all parties to engage in educational reform to facilitate a transformative social change for developing more just societies.

Unfortunately, implementing the dissertation’s recommendations would have to overcome the illustrative significant challenges such as: 1) Required long-term commitment of financial resources; 2) Restricting of the business and governance models of the educational institutions; 3) The need to change existing hierarchical management structure to adaptive and transformative management structures; 4) Restructuring of educators’ employment contracts; 5) Realigning the student selection and number of students enrollment; 6) Recruiting and retaining faculty from underserved communities; 7) Convincing communities to take institutional interest in having sustained partnerships; 8) Finding and recruiting faculty with interest and experience in providing community engagement-based service learning and experiential learning; 9) Developing and implementing inter and intra-institutional as well as cross-sectoral collaboration, and 10) Convincing societal power brokers and policymakers that it is in their long-term interest
to commit their support to the financial sustainability of their support for promoting the common good; .

If institutions succeed in developing and implementing a consensus-based developed plan for reforming the education in peace and conflict studies, institutions would probably succeed in educating students about how to advocate for and achieve the purpose of promoting the common good, the real purpose of education. However, if educational institutions fail to achieve consensus-based planning and/or if they poorly execute the educational reforms, students may have negative learning experiences; institutions may have difficulties in earning the trust of communities; and lose the support of societal power brokers and policymakers. The sustainability of peace and conflict studies programs, that are founded in service-learning and experiential learning for helping communities in addressing issues will be mainly dependent on the interest, willingness and the commitment of societal power brokers and policymakers in having just and equitable communities.

This researcher suggests that to achieve the implementation of the paradigm shift advocated by this research, educational institutions would need to provide students community engagement that is based on the concepts similar to the one used by institutions in social work education that have the capacity to house many clinical/analytical faculty and field coordinators. The paradigm shift advocated by this dissertation would face resistance by the current education that is based on the use of traditional models that use traditional teaching methods in a manner that is rather detached from the communities they need to serve. Additionally, to achieve this paradigm shift, education in peace and conflict studies would need to increase collaboration with peacebuilding organizations and constituents across a diverse societal spectrum to include local, state, national and international actors.
In closing, the most critical and challenging element in implementing this research advocated paradigm shift (for reorienting the current education to help communities in preemptively addressing issues of social injustice and institutional oppression) will be the abilities of peace and conflict studies educators and educational institutions to convince societal power brokers and policy makers that investing in the sustainable community-educational partnership-based experiential learning will be the best investment they could make to safeguard their own interest and the interests of their grandchildren as well as the members of their communities and the future generations that will inherit this world.

**Limitations of the Study**

Although the study’s findings possibly generated new knowledge, this study’s limitations may provide fertile ground for further research to advance the understanding of what needs to be done to promote new ways for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression through communities-educational institutions partnerships.

**Limitations Caused by the Study’s Research Methodology**

A possible limitation of this study may be attributed to the reality that qualitative research studies are exposed to a risk of misrepresentation of some aspects of reality because of possible variances between participants’ and researchers’ views between the narrated lived-experiences, and between reality and representations of reality (De Gange & Walters, 2010; Giorgi, 2008). It is possible that the participants’ lived experience narratives may have been influenced by their apprehensions about potential retaliation by the leadership of their institutions. As the findings of the study are derived from the lived experiences of the participating educators within the context of the research problem, the results of this study can be judged from the perspective of analytical generalization which involves "making a reasoned judgment about the extent to which
the findings of one study can be used as a guide for what might occur in another situation" (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008, p. 329). Therefore, readers would need to consider the context of the study for determining the relevance of the study’s findings to the context of their situation.

**Limitations Caused by the Limited Diversity of the Study’s Research Sample**

With the only exception of Educator 2 who is an African American, all participating educators were white individuals who seemed to have come from middle income families. Therefore, it is possible that the findings of the study may not reflect the experiences of a large segment of society. As all participating educators seemed to have come from families who were not economically depressed, the findings of the study may not reflect views of educators who have experienced social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

**Limitations Caused by the Study’s Inclusion Criteria**

This study’s purposive inclusion criteria have possibly created built-in limitations. For example, the inclusion criteria limited the study only to the views of educators in American education in peace and conflict studies. Therefore, a study that included educators in other countries, especially non-Western countries, may provide a different understanding as it relates to using community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Similarly, the purposive sample did not include provosts, presidents, or deans of educational institutions. Therefore, the findings of the study do not include the experiences associated with the challenges experienced by the management in developing and sustaining community partnerships for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Additionally, the research sample did not include current or past students in peace and conflict studies. It is possible that such a study may provide different insights into how the education can be improved
to better consider their interest and socio-economic status-based views of community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

A study that includes practitioners in peacebuilding and conflict resolution may develop an experience-based understanding of what could be done to make the current education more experiential and to integrate practice and theory for developing a continuous cycle of improving education through practice and practice through education. Similarly, a study that includes leaders or members of the underserved community would potentially provide a meaningful understanding of what it means to be a member of a community that is subjected to social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The next section presents ideas for future research.

**Ideas for Future Research**

The findings of this study’s limitations and implications provide a fertile ground for several topics, which if researched, may provide insights into how education in peace and conflict studies could use community engagement providing students experiential and transformative education for addressing social and institutionalized challenges of the 21st century.

**Future Research Based on the Implication and Limitations of This Study**

The limitations and the implications of the study provide insights into areas of future research to advance the knowledge for integrating community into the education of peace and conflict studies to better address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. For example, further research could be conducted using educators, practitioners, community leaders, and students, from different segments of communities. Similarly, a future research study that includes educators in other countries could be conducted to discover an understanding of the
views of non-American educators in the education in pace and conflict studies as it relates to using community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

It is possible that a study that compares the views of students in the U.S. and other countries, especially developing and non-Christian majority countries, may produce insights into the influence of different social order, societal structures, and value systems on the education of peace and conflict studies as it relates to community engagement for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression. Additionally, a research study of the relationship between the faculty and the management at educational institutes in other countries may produce new knowledge regarding the difference in the abilities of educators to provide students experiential and transformative education for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

The following are additional illustrative areas for future research: 1) Understanding the influence of institutional vision and mission: Private for profit versus state institutions, Theological versus non-theological institutions; and 2) Understanding the influence of the context of higher education: Roles & influence of leaderships, students, community, policy makers, funders; 3) Influence of an institutional business model- Economics, rankings and student enrollment; 4) Influence of distance-education; 5) Influence of institutional governance - Provosts, presidents, deans, chairs; 6) Influence of leadership model; and 7) Applicability of work-based higher education to education in peace and conflict studies (Wallin, Nokelainen, Mikkonen, 2008)

**Future Research Based on the Findings of This Study**

The findings of the study include areas which, through further research, may add new knowledge that may enhance the abilities of educators in providing students experiential and transformative education that uses community engagement-based service learning. For example,
future research regarding business and governance models of educational institutions may shed light on the challenges faced by educational institutions. It seems that the time may be ripe for conducting a research study for evaluating the desirability of accreditation of education in peace and conflict studies. Similarly, a study of the leaders and members of underserved communities may surface ideas for increasing the participation of underserved communities in faculty and leadership. Additionally, a study that includes business and industry leaders and political decision makers may provide understanding for overcoming challenges of funding community engagement-based service learning in the higher education. The chapter ends with the closing reflections and remarks.

**Closing Reflections and Remarks**

This researcher sincerely believes that his journey through this doctoral program had a transforming effect on his understanding of the challenges of educators in achieving the real purpose of education which is to strive for a more just society and to promote the common good. Unfortunately, this researcher believes that this research study has validated his perception that the current education system has failed to fulfill its real purpose of creating informed citizenry that cherishes and works for just societies and the common good. Fortunately, this researcher’s experiences with the participating educators have given him meaningful opportunity to witness individuals who have found their work as a vocation that has its roots more in who they are than what they do and have a sense of the purpose they have on earth (Lederach, 2005).

Through this study, this researcher has come to realize that to address the challenges of social injustice and institutional oppression, educational institutions in peace and conflict studies would need to find ways for providing students experiential and transformative learning by immersing students in community engagement-based service-learning. However, for addressing
social injustice and institutionalized oppression, educators in peace and conflict studies would need to regain their voice and demand that their institutions fulfill their obligations for promoting the common good and developing more just societies. Educators would have to acknowledge that because through them students receive the gifts of witnessing and connecting with wisdom, honesty, compassion, empathy, self-awareness, humility, and a commitment for the common good, they have a potential for transforming students’ commitment to addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Palmer, 2007). As such, educators in peace and conflict studies may need to pause and self-question whether their commitment to addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression reflects the old Quaker saying, "Let your life speak" (Palmer, 2000).

Without educators taking a stand for addressing social injustice and institutionalized oppression, this researcher believes that the educational institutions would continue to be diploma factories that provide students “Education as Status Culture” and “Education as a Mechanism of Occupational Placement” within the current educational system that possibly reinforces the social order and societal power structures that perpetuate social injustice and institutionalized oppression (Collins, 1971, pp.1010-1011). Additionally, this study confirms that the educational leaders have not listened to experts who have been, for the last fifty years or more, saying that education needs to promote just society and the common good. Therefore, this researcher is hoping that this study is arriving at a time when educational institutions would find courage to undertake the paradigm shift for restructuring education to provide students with skills to tackle the challenges of social injustice and institutionalized oppression in the 21st century. However, this researcher sadly concludes that without a paradigm shift for including community engagement-based service-learning used for facilitating experiential and
transformative learning, peace and conflict studies education will continue to validate the following assertion of Harry Lewis, the former dean of Harvard College:

Beyond academic and research excellence, universities have forgotten their main purpose, which is to help students learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings...The students are not soulless, but their university is...Reforms, where they do take place, do not go nearly deep enough to re-ensoul the university and reestablish the purpose of higher education, which is the fostering of our full humanity (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 3).
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Appendix A: Letter of Invitation
Appendix A: Letter of Invitation

Greetings! My name is Dilip Kulkarni. I am a student in the Doctorate in Education (EdD) program at Northeastern University, Boston, MA. As part of my dissertation I am currently conducting a phenomenological study of educators in peace studies. The purpose of my Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research study is to gain insights into peace studies educators’ challenges in providing students transformational learning opportunities for community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression.

Based on my knowledge and beliefs that you are an educator in peace studies who meets the study participation criteria, I am extending you an invitation to be a participant in this study.

If you agree to be a participant in this study, you will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview about your experience as a peace studies educator. The face-to-face interview would take place at a time that is most convenient for you and will take place at a location selected by you as long as the location would provide privacy for conducting the interview. In the interview, you will be asked open-ended questions about your experience as an educator in using community engagement for providing students transformational learning to address social injustice, inequality, and institutionalized oppression. I will be conducting the interview which will be recorded.

I have obtained the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Northeastern University. I will conduct my research in keeping with the guidelines and standards approved by the IRB, taking precautions to protect your confidentiality and privacy. Any report of the study’s findings will make use of pseudonyms and will not include any information through which you could be identified.
If you are interested in participating in this study, or if you have any questions about the study, please contact me at dilip.kulkarni@smshq.com or at 301-651-0062.

Sincerely,

Dilip Kulkarni

Doctoral Student

The School of Education

College of Professional Studies

Northeastern University

Boston, Massachusetts
Appendix B: Confirmation of Interest
Appendix B: Confirmation of Interest

I sincerely appreciate your response. Thank you for expressing your interest in participating in the study entitled “Community Engagement: Missing Link in Peace Studies” an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) study. With this email, I would like to confirm your interest in participating in this research study. I am attaching a copy of the Informed Consent Form that you will be required to sign. Please review the form and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. If, after reviewing the informed consent form, you do not have any questions, please contact me at dillip.kulkarni@smshq.com or at 301-651-0062 so that we can schedule your interview. If possible, please confirm the receipt of this email and contact me within one week.

Thank you again for your interest.

Sincerely,

Dilip Kulkarni

Doctoral Student

The School of Education

College of Professional Studies

Northeastern University

Boston, Massachusetts
Appendix C: Informed Consent Form
Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

The School of Education
College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University
Boston, Massachusetts

Informed Consent for Participation in the Research Study Entitled

Community Engagement: Missing Link in Peace Studies

A Phenomenological Study”

Doctoral Student, Principal Researcher: Dilip Kulkarni
3304 Grayling Drive, Mount Airy, MD 21771
301-651-0062; Email: Dilip.kulkarni@smshq.com

Principal Investigator & Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jenifer Qian
Email: je.qian@northeastern.edu

Site: Systematic Management Services, Inc.
20201 Century Blvd., Germantown, MD 20874
301-353-0772

Informed Consent to Participate in This Research Study

We are inviting you to voluntarily participate in this study. This form provides you the information necessary to make a decision regarding your participation in this study. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you elect to voluntarily participate in this research study, you will need to sign this informed consent statement. You will be given a copy of the executed statement.

Why am I being asked to participate?

You meet the study’s inclusion criteria for participants to have a doctorate degree in peace studies, conflict management and also be an educator in graduate programs in peace studies.

What is the study about?

The purpose of the study is to conduct a phenomenological research study of mediators’ experiences regarding the influence of culture on the mediation of international conflicts for exploring their lived experience as international conflict mediators and what this experience means to these international conflict mediators.
What will I be doing if I agree to be a participant in the study?
If you agree to participate in the study, the Principal Researcher will conduct an in person, face-to-face individual interview with you. The interview will be recorded by means of a digital voice recorder. In the course of the interview, you will be asked to respond to open-ended questions related to your experience as an educator in peace studies regarding your challenges in providing students transformational learning opportunities for community engagement to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression. The Principal Researcher may ask you follow-up questions based upon the research objectives of the study. Following the interview, the Principal Researcher will transcribe the interview and conduct analysis of the data. You will be provided an opportunity to review the written findings resulting from data analysis and to provide verbal feedback. This review is completely optional, and you are free to decline. You will not be asked to do anything other than participate in the review and review the study findings if you wish.

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?
As long it is suitable for having a private and confidential conversation, interviews will be conducted at facility of your choosing and at a time that works for you. For this study, you will participate in a 30-minute introductory interview and a 60 to 90-minute in-depth interview conducted by the Principle Researcher. You may need to take the time to review the transcript of the interview and the research findings.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?
Although all studies are considered to have some risk, there are no known risks associated with this research study. In this study, there is a minimal risk to privacy and confidentiality. The Principle Researcher will make every effort to protect your privacy and to preserve your confidentiality through securing the information you provide and through the use of pseudonyms in the transcripts and any excerpts used in the research reports generated from the study. There is also a risk to you of loss of time and earnings, but because you will be able to choose the time and place for the interview, the Principle Researcher believes that this risk is minimal. The original digital recording and all documents (both electronic and paper) will be kept securely in a locked cabinet in the Principle Researcher’s office. If you have any questions about the research, your research rights, or have a research-related injury, please contact Mr. Dilip Kulkarni. You may also contact Dr. Jenifer Qian as to your research rights.
Will I benefit from taking part in this research study?
There are no direct benefits. However, your participation in this research may benefit the education in peace studies which may indirectly benefit you and may help you in improving your understanding of what needs to be done for providing transformational learning which may help the students to address the challenges of social injustice, inequality and institutionalized oppression.

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?
There are no costs to you and no payments will be made to you for participating in this study.

Who will see the information about me? How will you keep my information private?
In order to keep your information private, the recording of your interview and any written or printed document that could identify you will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Principal Researcher’s office. Electronic files will be stored in the Principal Researcher’s password protected laptop computer. The Principal Researcher will use pseudonyms in the transcripts and any research reports. The data in this study will be stored for three years after the end of the study, after which it will be destroyed. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by the law. The IRB and the Principal Investigator may review the research records.

What if I do not want to participate or if I want to leave the study?
Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. Therefore, you have the right to leave the study at any time or refuse to participate in the study. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected from you before the date of your leaving the study will be kept in the research records for three years from the conclusion of the study, but you may request that it not be used.

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?
If you have any questions about your rights in this research study, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston MA02115, Tel: 617-373-4588, Email: irb@neu.edu about questions about your rights as they relate to participating in this study. You may call anonymously, if you wish.
**Voluntary Consent by the Participant**

By signing below, you indicate that

- This study has been explained to you,
- You have read this document, or it has been read to you,
- Your questions about this research study have been answered to your satisfaction,
- You have been informed that you may ask the Principal Researcher any study related questions in the future or contact him in the event of a research-related injury,
- You have been told that you may ask the Principal Investigator and/or Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston MA02115, Tel: 617-373-4588, Email: irb@neu.edu about questions about your rights as they relate to participating in this study,
- You are entitled to a copy of this form after you have read and signed it, and
- You voluntarily agree to participate in the study entitled “Community Engagement: Missing Link in Peace Studies”.

**Informed Agreement for Participating in this Research Study**

I voluntarily agree to take part in this research study.

Participant’s Signature __________________________ Date:___________

Participant’s Name __________________________ Date:___________

Principal Researcher Obtaining Consent _________________ Date:___________
Appendix D: Interview Protocol
Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Because I have identified you as someone who has a great deal of experience-based insights to share about the criticality of sustained community engagement in Peace Studies, I have selected you to be a participant in this research study.

My research study focuses on the experiences of peace studies educators to uncover the challenges they encounter in engaging a community for addressing the issues of social justice and social and income inequality. Through this study, I hope to gain insights into how the effectiveness of the education in peace studies and the practice of peacebuilding can be improved for better helping communities to proactively address issues of social justice and marginalization of large segments of the community.

Because your responses are important, and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Please know that I will also be taking written notes. However, I assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. To meet the human subject’s research requirements at the university, you would need to sign the Informed Consent Form I have with me. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) I do not intend to inflict any harm. Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

Before, I ask questions, I would like to state that with this interview, I want to understand the life world of a peace studies educator from your viewpoint and from the perspective of your lived experience as a peace studies educator. I want you to help me understand what it means to be a peace studies educator. I hope to use my interview questions to facilitate my learning from your teaching as my teacher.

One of the things I am interested in learning from you is about the challenges associated with developing a sustained partnership for helping a community to address the issues of social justice and equity. I would also like to hear in your own words your perspectives about whether the current education in peace studies is appropriate for the peacebuilding challenges of the 21st century and what kind of improvements would be needed for developing sustained communal peace effectively. To do this, I would like to ask you some questions about your experiences and
the challenges you may have encountered. If in describing your experience, you need to refer to other practitioners or educators please do not mention names and use pseudonyms.

First, because I would like to know a little more about you, I would first ask the few introductory questions about you and your life as an educator in peace studies. Then I will ask in-depth questions that are structured to support the research question and research sub-questions. Introductory questions (Attachment 1) may take 30 minutes and in-depth questions (Attachment 2) may take about 90 minutes. During this time, I would like to ask several questions that I hope would cover different aspects of my research question. Do you have any questions? If not, should we begin?

**Closing Statement (After the In-Depth Interview)**

I believe that I have asked all the questions. Do you have anything you want to add, change or clarify? Do you have any questions for me? As I expressed before, you will be given an opportunity to review the transcript of this interview. You will be also given an opportunity to review my findings. I want to thank you and want you to know that I benefited from the insights you have shared. Also, please accept my grateful appreciation of your interest and time.
Attachment 1: Research Question and Research Sub-questions

**Overarching research question.**

How do peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage their experience in educating students to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts?

**Research Sub-questions**

1. How do the peace and conflict studies educators think about the appropriateness of the current curricula in preparing students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

2. How do the educators in peace and conflict studies make sense of their personal experience in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning to help the communities preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

3. How do the peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage the effectiveness of their institution’s support for using community engagement to prepare students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

4. How are the educators in peace and conflict working with practitioners to improve education for effectively engaging a community to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?
Attachment 2: Introductory Questions

1. Would you please briefly share your significant life experiences that contributed to you becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies?

2. Would you please share your perceptions about the adequacy of your education, training and life experiences for you to become an educator in peace or conflict studies?

3. Looking back, would you please describe how your education, especially your graduate education and doctorate degree, adequately prepared you for preemptively addressing the challenges of communal injustice?
   Would you please share your thoughts about what do you think the programs could have done differently to better prepare you?

4. Would you please share your motivations in becoming an educator in peace or conflict studies?
   Would you please describe the meaning of that experience?

5. Would you please describe your experience in being marginalized and working with the marginalized?

6. Would you please share your experience in dealing with social injustice and institutionalized oppression?
   Would please share your thoughts about whether and how you think your education prepared you for your experience with social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

7. Would you please share your thoughts about whether the current social order is contributing to perpetuation of social injustice – is it creating more communal conflicts?
   Would you please share your thoughts about whether peace and conflict studies educators or practitioners are effectively addressing communal conflicts arising out of social injustice?

8. Would you please describe your experience in involving and helping community stakeholders (individuals, community and business leaders and policy makers) in preemptively addressing social injustice issues in their communities?
   Would you please share your perceptions about the support you have received from other faculty or your institution for community engagement?

9. Would you please share your experiences with service-learning, either as a student or as an educator?
Overall Perspective Questions

10. How would you describe your experience regarding the importance your institution or other peace or conflict studies institutions place on providing students transformative learning vs. factors such as ranking, student enrollment numbers or financial considerations?

11. What are your perceptions about whether your institutional requirements (number of courses, dissertation committees) constrain your role a peace or conflict studies educator?

Would you please share your thoughts about whether requirements for publications and grants emphasize your role as a scholar versus your role as a practitioner doing work in the field?

What are your thoughts about whether the institutional demands give you the required time for sufficiently self-reflecting to be a transformative peace or conflict studies educator?

12. Would you please describe your vision of an ideal education in peace or conflict studies?

13. Is there anything you would like to add for me to holistically understand you, and your thoughts and experience?
Attachment 3: In-Depth Interview Questions

1. Would you please describe your views regarding the effectiveness of the current peace or conflict studies education for training students about how to address the challenges of social injustice?
   a) What do you perceive needs to be done to improve it?

2. Would you please describe your perceptions about how your institution or other institutions in peace or conflict studies have either supported or resisted the efforts of educators and students in addressing issues of social injustice or institutionalized oppression?

3. What constraints do you think that you may have experienced because the President and the trustees of your institution did not want to experience pressures (that are caused by your efforts to address social injustice issues) from political or societal powerbrokers or major supporters?

4. Would you please share your views about the effectiveness of the current peace or conflict studies curricula for including experiential learning for students to have real life experience in addressing issues of social injustice?

5. Would you please share your thoughts about how your institution or other institutions you know have either supported or resisted the efforts of peace or conflict studies educators to provide experiential learning that is founded in community engagement for addressing social injustice?

6. Would you please share your views regarding the effectiveness of the current peace and conflict studies education in engaging community for preemptively addressing pre-conflict issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?

7. Would you please describe the ways in which educators and practitioners can support each other for including community engagement in peace and conflict studies education?
   a) How would you describe your role, as a peace or conflict studies educator, in teaching students how to engage a community in addressing social injustice in pre-conflict or post-conflict environments?
b) Would you please share your thoughts about how peace or conflict studies educational institutions have successfully established long term community partnerships?

c) How would you describe the challenges that are faced by peace or conflict studies educators, institutions and communities in making long term partnerships for addressing social injustice?

8. Would you please share your experience regarding the commitment of your institution or other institutions in peace or conflict studies (resources, funding, support to faculty, etc.) to support pre-conflict community engagement for addressing social injustice?

9. Would you please elaborate on how you think the current education in peace and conflict studies is helping students to consider the socially situated nature of their experience as it relates to the socially constructed identities of the marginalized?

10. Would you please share your thoughts about how peace and conflict studies education is helping students to understand how the hegemonic power of whiteness as property; dominant ideologies and societal power structures perpetuate social injustice?

11. What are your thoughts about how peace or conflict studies educators are providing students the knowledge to develop strategies for realigning societal power structures in order to have more just societies?

12. What are your views about how educators are effectively accommodating the influence of socio-economic status of students in providing them education in peace and conflict studies that addresses social injustice they may have experienced or may think that they are experiencing?

13. Would you please describe your perceptions about the commitment of your institution or other institutions to support peace or conflict studies educators in training students to question the current social order, dominant ideologies and societal power structures for creating a more just society?

14. Please share your thoughts about how peace studies and conflict studies educators are providing their students critically reflexive and transformative learning experiences to help students change their frame of reference for guiding their actions regarding social injustice?
15. What are your views about how the current peace or conflict studies education is helping students in developing abilities to question their own values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions for incorporating new ideas and for exploring new relationships and actions to develop more just societies?

16. Would you please share your views regarding the use of service-learning for providing to peace or conflict studies students transformational learning opportunities?
   a) What are your perceptions about how peace or conflict studies institutions are effectively using community partnership to provide students service-learning that is founded in the sustained relationship between the institution and the community for addressing social injustice?
   b) Would you please share your views about what you think educational institutions need to do to integrate effective community-engagement-based service-learning in peace or conflict studies?

17. How would you describe the roles of peace or conflict studies scholar-practitioners in advancing communal peace?
   a) Would you please share your views regarding the appropriateness of a scholar-practitioner model for education in peace and conflict studies?
   b) Would you please share your thoughts regarding the challenges of peace or conflict studies educators face in providing students meaningful experiential learning opportunities for becoming scholar-practitioners?
   c) Would you please describe your thoughts about the usefulness of peace and conflict studies awarding a Professional Doctorate degree instead of or in addition to a PhD?

18. Would you please describe your experience regarding the commitment of your institution or other peace or conflict studies institutions to support peace or conflict studies faculty to be scholar-practitioners?

19. How would you describe educational institutions’ support to ensure that peace and conflict studies educators have adequate time to mentor students for experiential and transformational learning about how to preemptively address communal conflicts arising out of social injustice?
20. Would you please share your thoughts about how peace and conflict studies are adequately focusing on preemptive actions or whether you think that they are focused mainly on actions after conflicts erupt?

21. Based on your experience, what are your perceptions about whether management of institutions in peace and conflict studies is still dominated by men, especially white American men? And, if it is managed by white American men, how do you think it influences the education in peace and conflict studies for addressing issues of social injustice?

22. How do you perceive that factors that are important to the President and the trustees of the institution (e.g., ranking, financial considerations), influence the quality of education peace and conflict studies students receive for effectively addressing the challenges of the 21st century’s communal conflicts?

23. Would you please share your views about why there are only a few minority educators and scholar-practitioners, especially African American, in the field of peace and conflict studies?
   a) What do you think could be and should be done to improve the participation of minorities and African Americans?
   b) What are your views regarding the interest of peace and conflict studies educators and students in experiential learning, community engagement, service-learning, experiential and transformative learning for developing skills to address the challenges of social injustice?
   c) What are your thoughts about how peace and conflict studies education is teaching students to be change agents as envisioned by Freire or is it teaching them to find employment in the field that may be focused on maintaining the status quo?
   d) Based on your views of the ideal peace or conflict studied education, would you please summarize your view of challenges, frustrations, and hopes as they relate to making peace studies education more relevant to the 21st century’s challenges of communal conflicts possibly caused by social injustice and institutionalized oppression?
   e) Would you like to add anything else and do you have any questions?
Appendix E: Alignment of the Research Questions
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theoretical Framework</th>
<th>Relevant In-Depth Interview Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage their experience in educating students to address social injustice and institutionalized oppression through community engagement for mitigating communal conflicts?</td>
<td>Critical Theories, especially CRT and Transformative Learning Theory</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Sub-questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. How do the peace and conflict studies educators think about the appropriateness of the current curricula in preparing students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?</td>
<td>Critical Theories, especially CRT and Transformative Learning Theory</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do the educators in peace and conflict studies make sense of their personal experience in providing students community engagement-based transformative learning to help the communities preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?</td>
<td>Critical Theories, especially CRT and Transformative Learning Theory</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do the peace and conflict studies educators perceive and manage the effectiveness of their institution’s support for using community engagement to prepare students capable of helping communities to preemptively address the issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?</td>
<td>Critical Theories, especially CRT and Transformative Learning Theory</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
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<td>4. How are the educators in peace and conflict working with practitioners to improve education for effectively engaging a community to preemptively address issues of social injustice and institutionalized oppression?</td>
<td>Critical Theories, especially CRT and Transformative Learning Theory</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
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