INVESTIGATING TEACHER'S EXPERIENCES AND EFFICACY BELIEFS REGARDING THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CIVICS COURSE:

A STUDY OF THREE SCHOOL BOARDS WITHIN ONTARIO

by

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Abstract

The purposes of this study were a) to identify if the introduction of the tenth grade civics course had effected the teacher efficacy beliefs held by those teachers, within three school boards in Ontario, who were to implement the course and b) to determine the implications of the effected efficacy beliefs on the implementation and continuation of the secondary school civics course. The subjects were chosen from three randomly selected school boards from Ontario.

There were two methods used to gather the data for this study. These two methods were open-ended questionnaires, as well as semi-structured interview sessions. The findings from both research methods were compared and contrasted with one another. The similarities and the differences between the two research methods were identified and recorded. Each of these two methods were used to elicit the lived experiences of the participants, in the attempt of developing a well-rounded and in-depth conclusion to the research questions. The responses given by the participants in both the interview sessions and the open-ended questionnaires were summarized.

The key points raised by the respondents were identified as (a) Influence on changes to curriculum, (b) Ownership, (c) Those teachers who are being asked to teach the course, (d) Training provided to teachers, (e) Support structures availability, (f) Resources usefulness, (g) Course Expectations, (h) Course Practicality, (i) Time Constraints.

In conclusion, it was determined that there was an effect on the teachers' sense of efficacy beliefs. It was further concluded that while the participants were pleased to see a course address civic awareness, the majority of respondents made it clear that there needs to be a wide variety of changes made to the course to improve its implementation and ultimately it chances for long-term continuation within the school setting.

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Table of Contents

Index of Figures and Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the fall of the 2000 academic school year, the Ontario government introduced a new mandatory civics course to create informed, responsible, and active citizens. The civics curriculum in both Canada and other countries has been the focus of several research studies. Hodgetts (1968) examined the civics courses within the Canadian context, Torney, Oppenheim, Farnen (1975), Thomas (1992), and Gumbert (1987) each studied civics in a comparative manner, reviewing civics courses and citizenship education in multiple countries. All of these studies shared a common characteristic, specifically each of these studies examined civics courses from a localized perspective, which dealt primarily with the course content rather than with the people who administered and/or taught the courses. This study will investigate the perceptions held by the teachers of the secondary civics course, employed by three randomly selected school boards, in the province of Ontario, with an aim to determine the effects of teacher efficacy on course delivery.

The decision by the Ontario government to introduce the secondary school civics course into the Ontario curriculum was neither a revolutionary, nor a unique method to combat a perceived lack of a shared national unity. Researchers such as Hodgetts, Torney et al., Thomas, and Gumbert have examined the results of using civics education in Canadian schools to create such an identity. Specifically, the study conducted by Hodgetts had an underlying goal, which was as he mentioned, "...to generate interest and concern, to encourage further exploration, to urge the provinces to work together in the mutual cause of national awareness and understanding" (p. iii). It can be said that the implementation of civics courses within curriculum has a long tradition in the Canadian

education system. Specifically, the roots of civics education can be traced as far back as Egerton Ryerson, the chief superintendent of schools and creator of the Common Schools Act (1853), through his curriculum initiatives.

> Ideas on the subject [citizenship education], however, were never completely lacking in this country. From the time of Egerton Ryerson in the mid-nineteenth century, there was some limited recognition that government in a democracy had a responsibility for the education of the people... who ought to be capable of enlightened decision-making. In 1848, he observed, "public education and public liberty stand or fall together." Some of the school superintendents in Canada West at that time viewed state education as a means of encouraging a sense of national unity (McKenzie, 1993, p. 2).

It is also noted that the introduction of civics courses to combat citizenship apathy is not solely a Canadian phenomenon. The creation of civics courses, to combat citizenship apathy, is an international phenomenon as illustrated by studies conducted by Gumbert (1987) and Torney et al. (1975). As McKenzie (1993) observed, "In today's rapidly changing world...this traditional approach to citizenship preparation is being questioned and there is evidence of renewed interest in the topic both in Canada and abroad" (p. 1).

As illustrated by Gumbert (1987), the issue of civics education is of concern to many nations, even those whose national identity has been ingrained for more than a millennium. When a specific society perceives that a lack of unity exists within that society, the desire for change within the education system becomes the focus of the societies' impetus for change. A belief held by many within society is that through

changes to the education system, the problem of a decreased national identity will be remedied for the next generation. "In recent years, both in Canada and abroad, the increased attention given to citizenship education has revealed the wide variety of views that exist on this subject" (McKenzie, 1993, p. 3). The consistent societal push for changes within the educational system can be deemed an external influence which acts on the educational system.

Accordingly, Levin (1976) has described three main influences that produce change within a system. These influences, are natural disasters, external forces, and internal contradictions. Each influence stimulates the system to react. Additionally, each of these influences for change has its own methodologies and responses to accommodate them. Moreover, the solution to an apparent influence for change, within the education system is not necessarily change for the sake of change or the quick fix. It is in a government's best interest to review past successes and failures within similar contexts and then determine the best course of action based on the needs of that particular change initiator.

Similarly, within the concept of change to a system, there is a need for review and analysis of those newly created and implemented changes. This process of review and analysis, of the changes, is in place to allow for an increase in the transition from one phase of the new change to the next. Specifically, a review, of the changes, allows an incorporation of those changes made during initialization and implementation phase to the continuation phase, as outlined by Fullan (2001).

Furthermore, while trying to adapt to the pressures and influences (i.e. time restraints, needs for new curricula, lack of support structures, parents and societal

requests) felt in the education system, the ultimate goal of any initiated change is to achieve acceptance and continuation. To this end, this study will examine teacher perceptions of the policy-making process described by Fullan to determine whether they perceive that the provincial government has initiated and implemented a course that has followed the recommendations and concerns that have been identified in pre-existing studies in civics. Based on this analysis of teachers' experiences through an examination of a change in teacher efficacy, this current study will determine whether the secondary school civics course has the ability to make the transition from implementation to long-term continuation. This method of efficacy or "interest and support" as outlined by Fullan (1991) can have great significance in the third and final phase of the change process.

> The reasons for the lack of continuation were [as outlined previously] the same ones that influenced implementation, except that their roles became more sharply defined. Lack of interest or inability to fund...Lack of money for staff development and staff support...signalled the end of many implemented programs. Lack of interest and support at the central district office...was another reason for noncontinuation. Similarly at the school level... (p.88).

Research Questions

1) Has the introduction of the Ontario secondary school civics course affected teacher efficacy within three boards in Ontario secondary schools?

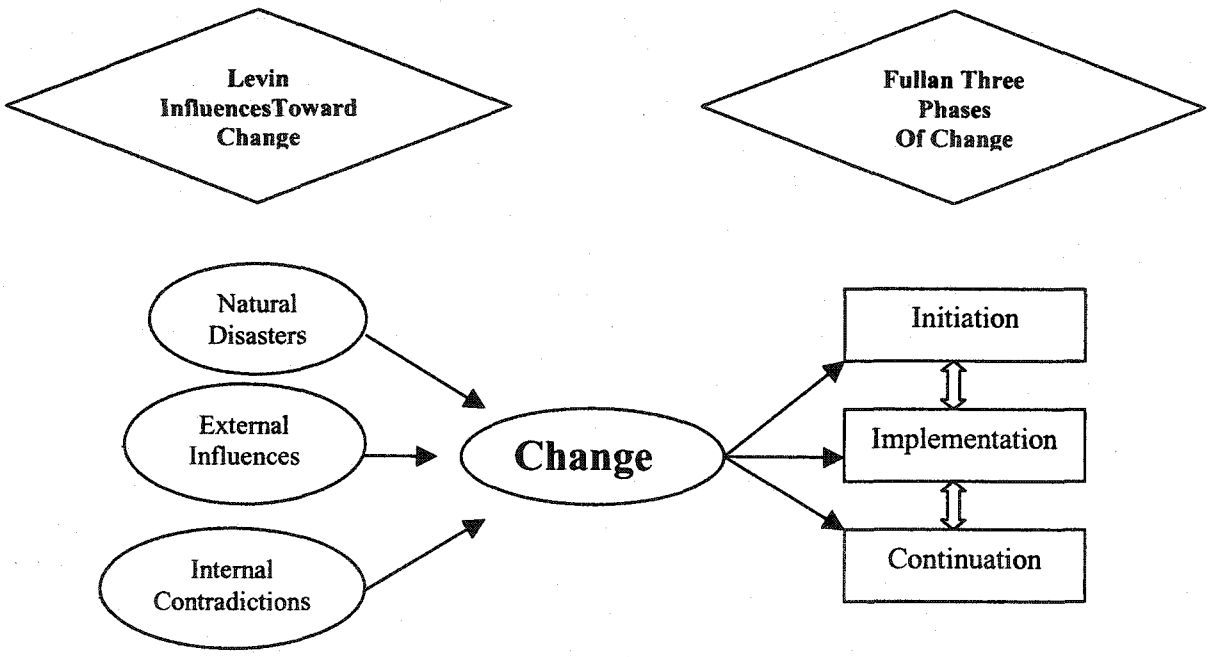
If there is an effect to teacher efficacy,

2) What are the implications of this phenomenon for the implementation, and continuation of the secondary school civics course?

Theoretical Framework

As mentioned earlier, the framework of this study rests on two theorems: Levin's (1976) model of the forces that act to create change, and Fullan's (1991) three phases of the change process.

Processes of Change



(Levin, 1976, p. 39) (Fullan, 2001, p. 50)

Figure i

Initiating Change: Factors Influencing Educational Change

It can be stated that Canada is a multicultural society and because of this diversification, there exists a variety of perceptions and influences within the educational system. Each of these groups, and individuals within Canadian society naturally want all graduates to share, maintain, and become informed about their specific ideologies. Moreover, because of the size of the population and the diversity found within our current societal make-up, many of these ideologies are conflicting. It has been observed

by Puk and Haines (1998) that within Ontario this conflict of ideologies has an overwhelming presence:

> In Ontario, the effects of these "variable lengths of positional tenure" might instead be applied to governments rather that administrative positions solely. Since 1985, Ontario has seen all three of the major political parties in power with majority governments. With that kind of power and authority, each government has attempted to change the educational system in a fundamental way according to its policies and ideologies (pp. 199-200).

These types of influences on the educational system can be categorized as 'External Forces,' because they are influences that come from outside of the educational system. This type of influence, as identified by Levin (1976), is one of three factors that act upon an organization. Collectively, as outlined in Figure i, they are: (a) *Natural disasters* such as earthquakes, floods, famines, and the like, (b) *External forces* such as imported technology and values, and immigration, and, (c) *Internal contradictions*, such as when indigenous changes in technology lead to new social patterns and needs, or when one or more groups in a society perceive a discrepancy between educational values and outcomes affecting themselves or others with whom they have an interest (p. 39).

Phases of Change

When reviewing new changes within a system, it is important to understand all three phases that a change goes through. Fullan's (1991) theoretical model, as illustrated in Figure i, presents an outline of the three phases. These are: (a) Phase I- variously labelled initiation, mobilization, or adoption; (b) Phase II- Implementation or initial use; and (c) Phase III- Continuation, incorporation, routinization, or institutionalization (p. 50).

The model illustrates how a new change is constructed, then implemented, and finally accepted by the organization. Fullan's model is not a linear process, but it should instead act as a process of checks and balances, allowing feedback to occur between phases to take place.

The Policy Initiators and Creators

Policy or curricular developers can range from independent policy writers, school board trustees, superintendents, to governmental leaders. There are many people involved in the initiation and creation aspect of policy development. Nevertheless, Levin (1976) illustrates how the overall determining factor of the continuation of newly initiated policies lies within the desired scope of the new changes, referring to the breadth of the policy initiative, and not solely within the decisions of the policy writer.

Specifically, the creation of policy and changes within the educational system stems from the influences presented by Levin (1976) and further outlined by Fullan (1991), "We can take it as a given that there will always be pressures for educational change in pluralistic societies. These pressures increase as a society becomes more complex" (p. 17).

The issue of a pluralistic society comes into play when we begin to observe the conditions in place when the creation of a provincial-wide course is initiated. There is a need to include representatives from various lifestyles and to include those groups who may have conflicting motives. It becomes problematic for the implementation of the new change when there is a perceived lack of input into the creation process. Specifically, the lack of teacher input into the creation of courses, textbooks, and curriculum may have a negative impact on the longevity and duration of a specific course. Puk and Haines (1999) have illustrated such a problem area in the initiation and implementation process that pertains to the Ontario school milieu. Particularly, Puk and Haines have identified the method by which changes within the

Ontario schools must occur, namely through the adoption by the successful election of political mandates that support or oppose existing educational policies.

> The changing of school norms involves multiple factors...to begin our inquiry into the problems of re-conceptualizing instruction by examining the central government's mandated policies towards curriculum implementation... in the jurisdiction we are referring to, that is Ontario, Canada, educational policy is developed by a provincial government composed of members who are elected by the people. Democracy is the basis that provides elected officials with the mandate to organize and manage public schools (p. 542).

Implementing Educational Change: Teachers Role in Change

As noted above, when change occurs within an educational system, there is an implementation phase through which the change must endure. Ultimately, as Bruno (1997) has indicated,

> The numerous waves of school reforms in public education, all requiring-but not explicitly considering- the need for more of a teacher's time... and a corresponding of lowering in teacher satisfaction, have created a situation where any attempt at future school reforms will be discredited or compared to those reforms that failed in the past...To increase teacher participation rates and time investment in school reform efforts, the school organization will have to align itself, in time, to the world of the classroom teacher (p. 132).

Importance of the Study

The Canadian populace is an eclectic group of citizens, and all new citizens have the opportunity to maintain and practise their imported cultures. Notwithstanding, Canada's policy of multiculturalism has left citizens within the country seeking a unifying bond:

> Citizenship education has come to be interpreted differently among diverse groups within society, and to be presented from various perspectives in school curricula across Canada. Some efforts are being made in academic circles in this country to develop a new consensus on the subject of citizenship, and an improved approach to citizenship education (McKenzie, 1993, p. 3).

The provincial government of Ontario has recently implemented a mandatory civics course to help in the development of citizens through the exploration of citizenship roles, which the government hopes will ultimately aid in the citizenship building and awareness process. The Ontario government curriculum document for the civics course cites as its rationale the following:

> As we move into the twenty-first century, Canada is undergoing significant change. We are struggling with a range of demanding questions, such as these: ...As our population becomes more diverse, how do we ensure that all voices are heard? ...What role will Canada play within an increasingly interconnected global community? Our responses to these questions will affect not only our personal lives but also the future of our communities, our provinces and territories, and our country. In civics, students explore what it means to be a "responsible citizen" in the local, national, and global arenas. ...This course explores what it means to be an informed, participating citizen in a democratic society. ...In addition, students will learn about social change, examine

> decision-making processes in Canada, explore their own and others' beliefs and perspectives on civics questions (Ontario Ministry of Education, [OMET], 1999, pp. 46-47).

The idea of introducing civics curriculum has been presented before, but previous attempts have had to be altered or have been removed from the overall curriculum:

> Canadian studies in general have been a neglected field in this country. The Commission on Canadian Studies...examined the state of teaching about Canada in our schools...nearly two decades ago, and found cause for concern. The Commission's 1975 Report recommended that all students in the educational system were required to attain certain levels of understanding about Canadian political institutions and background before graduation from high school...In 1992, [the same commission] again warned that the teaching...of Canadian subject matter...remains inadequate (McKenzie, 1993, p. 6).

In other parts of the country and throughout the industrialized world, civics courses have been offered to help link the citizens of a specific population through the common telling of a shared history, namely the development of citizenship values and the concepts of being a good citizen. Previous studies have tried to establish the necessary concepts that must be addressed to meet the needs put forth within the curriculum. Some studies pertaining to civics education were conducted by Thomas (1992), Gumbert (1987), Torney, et al. (1975), and Hodgetts (1968). Each of these studies examined the strengths and weaknesses of the civics courses in different contexts. Gumbert, Thomas, and Torney et al. investigated the ways in which contemporary civics courses are taught in different countries. Hoggetts centred his research solely within the context of the Canadian landscape to identify ways to improve the civics course curriculum.

This current study has examined the manner in which the civics course was initiated and implemented into secondary school curriculum of three boards of education in Ontario. Specifically, the study has examined the experiences and efficacy beliefs held by civics teachers within these three boards' secondary schools. The rationale for this approach of gathering teachers' lived experiences is to attain a better understanding of the initiation and implementation phases of the civics course. It is through accessing these insider perceptions of the methods used in the initiation and implementation phases of the civics course, the support structures available to the teachers, the specific training available and provided, and background competencies, that the research question can be ascertained.

Limitations

The following constitute the limitations of the study:

1) The validity of the information about teachers' experiences and efficacy beliefs concerning the initialization and implementation of the civics course is dependent upon her/his willingness to respond honestly to the open-ended survey and/or the interview session.
2) The validity of the information about teachers' experiences of the presence of support structures in place within her/his schools is dependent on her/his willingness to respond honestly to the open-ended survey and/or the interview session.
3) Data will be collected from only three school boards within the province of Ontario.
4) The number of respondents to both the open-ended questionnaires and the interview sessions is dependent on the teachers' willingness to participate in this study.

Delimitation

The following items delimit the study:

1) The sites used to conduct the open-ended surveys and the interview sessions will come from three randomly selected school boards from geographically and diverse population spheres within the province of Ontario.
2) The study is interpretive/descriptive in nature.
3) The subjects who complete the open-ended surveys and participate in the interview sessions will be only those teachers who have taught or are currently teaching the secondary school civics course.
4) The interview samples will be limited to three teachers from each of the three randomly selected school boards.
5) All teachers within these three boards who have taught the civics course or who are currently teaching the civics course will be asked to complete one open-ended survey.
6) All teachers who participate in the interview sessions will only be present during one interview session.
7) Interview selection will be on a voluntary basis, based on matching criteria of teaching the course at least once since it has been implemented in the curriculum.

Definition of Terms

Because the study is focused on the initialization, implementation, and continuation of the civics course, it is important that the reader understand the course expectations of the curriculum documents that have given life to the course. These expectations are found within the *Canadian and World Studies: Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 and 10* (OMET, 1999), where there is a full description of the civics course as well as crucial definitions that are important to the full understanding of this study.

Academic courses: These are courses that develop students' knowledge and skills through the study of theory and abstract problems. These courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject and explore related concepts as well. They also incorporate practical applications when deemed appropriate (OMET, Retrieved October, 2002 from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/canadian/canaful.htmlcivics).

Applied courses: Courses which focus on the essential concepts of a subject and develop students' knowledge and skills through practical applications and concrete examples. Familiar situations are used to illustrate ideas, and students are given more opportunities to experience hands-on applications of the concepts and theories they study (OMET, Retrieved October, 2002 from, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/canadian/canaful.html#civics).

Change: Extensive research supports the concept of change as the transformation of reality; a process of continuous development used for the sake of creating, sustaining, and substantiating a dynamic educational climate; a dynamic process of interacting variables over time (Fullan, 1982, as cited in Fullan, 1991).

Continuation: The final phase of the three phases of change continuation is achieved by gaining acceptance from all parties involved with the initiation and implementation phases of change. Continuation is typically viewed as the product of successful initiation and implementation of change. The factors of implementation and continuation reinforce or undercut each other as an interrelated system (Fullan, 2001, p. 92).

Citizenship: The conditions vested with the rights, duties, and responsibilities as a member of a state or nation (OMET, Retrieved October, 2002 from, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/canadian/canaful.htmlcivics).

Civics: The study of the rights and duties of citizenship (OMET, Retrieved October, 2002 from, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/canadian/canaful.html#civics).

Descriptive Research: Research that attempts to describe existing conditions without analyzing relationships among variables (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993, p. 549).

Implementation: The process of putting into practice an idea, program, or set of activities and structures new to people attempting or expected to change (Fullan, 1991, p. 69).

Initiation: The process leading up to and including the decision to proceed with implementation (Fullan, 1991, p. 53).

Open courses: Open courses comprise a set of expectations that are appropriate for all students. They are designed to prepare students for further study in a subject and to enrich their education generally. The open course is the only type of courses offered in most subject areas. (OMET, Retrieved October, 2002 from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/ canadian/canaful.html#civics).

Teacher Efficacy: The measure by which a teacher believes in her/his abilities as a teacher to either, instil knowledge and skills into a student or a teacher's beliefs regarding their ability to execute the curriculum in the manner it is intended (Wheatley, 2002, p. 6).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study focuses on the effects the initiation and implementation of the Ontario, secondary school civics course has had on both the teachers' efficacy beliefs, through their lived experiences, and the implications those phenomena have for the long-term continuation of the secondary school civics course. Therefore, a review of the Ontario civics course and its importance is necessary. Moreover, because the study is examining a course that is a new addition to the Ontario secondary school curriculum, it is necessary to review the factors that caused the changes to take place. There is a need to identify those people who created and initiated change in the system, and to review the phases and problems in the implementation and continuation of these changes. Finally, when significant curricular changes are made, it becomes imperative that a review of teacher efficacy and its importance to the change process be conducted.

It is through a review of the specific aspects involved in the civics course portion of the study, as well as those facets involved in maintaining change in a system, that a final determination of whether a change in the teachers' efficacy beliefs has occurred. Further, it is this studies goal to attempt to determine the implications of those affected teacher efficacy beliefs for the long-term continuation of the course.

Goals of the Ontario Secondary School Civics Course

By using the working definitions of civics and citizenship outlined in the curriculum documents, a review of the descriptions and expectations is necessary to better understand the government's ideals and goals for the civics course. The overview of the civics course established the ideology behind it and helped to inform teachers as to the rationale for the course.

An examination of the Ministry of Education and Training documents (OMET, 1999) reveals the ideals that are to be instilled:

> In civics, students explore what it means to be a "responsible citizen" in the local, national, and global arenas... They are encouraged to identify and clarify their own beliefs and values, and to develop an appreciation of others' beliefs and values about questions of civic importance (p. 46).

When creating and designing the expectations of a new course, it becomes important that these expectations are clear and concise. Thomas (1992) has stated that the more specific an expectation is, the greater the ability for the implementers to carry out the desired course. Additionally, Thomas has also illustrated that the expectations of a newly crafted plan should be attainable and realistic:

> Policy statements are less likely to be implemented when they are cast in only general terms, rather than in a form specifying conditions for putting statements into practice. The remedy for the vague educational policy statement...is to make them concrete and feasible. ...Targets frequently are set too high. ...There are various reasons for programs falling short of their goals. One is a lack of experience...People who formulate development schemes may not recognize all of the important variables that will affect the implementation of their schemes (pp. 266-268).

Outline of the Ontario Secondary School Civics Course

The civics course is divided into three specific strands. The first strand is Informed Citizenship, which helps students to understand contrasting views of citizenship. The second, Purposeful Citizenship, is the sharing and understanding of perspectives and responsibilities. The third, Active Citizenship, involves implementing students' own civic literacy skills. Included

within this strand are the concepts of charity and the roles of charities and students within society.

Expectations of the Ontario Secondary School Civics Course

By reviewing both the curriculum documents for the civics course and the expectations within these documents, an understanding of the provincial government's ideologies as to how a citizen is evaluated within a school setting and how a citizen would be expected to perform within society can be attained. The course, like all other courses within the new curriculum implemented by the provincial government, has been divided into overall and specific expectations. As described within the OMET (1999) documents, students are expected but not limited to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for democratic decision-making,
- Describe the main features of local, provincial, and federal governments in Canada and explain how these features work,
- Demonstrate a knowledge of different types of citizenship participation and Involvement,
- Articulate clearly their personal sense and purpose and understand the diversity of beliefs and values of other individuals and groups in Canadian society (pp. 48-53).

By reviewing the overall expectations within the Ontario curriculum guides, it could be observed that there is a wide array of ideals that students are expected to attain. Within specific expectations, these ideals and outcomes range from democratic decision-making (voting) to citizen participation and community involvement, and conflict resolution and decision-making. This review of the specific course outlines as proposed within the ministry documents demonstrates clear motives and direction being implemented. The course deals mainly with the ability of students to increase their local, national, and global awareness through such means as

comparative analysis and to gain local insight through self-directed means, primarily charity and volunteer work.

Importance of Civics Education: A Philosophical Perspective

Bacchus (1981) explained:

> Both Aristotle and Plato saw that stable governments depended very strongly on civic education and put forward the revolutionary proposal that state-supported education should be provided for citizens...Aristotle saw too, that citizenship education was one of the prime functions of the state (p. 10).

Additionally, Bacchus had also provided a more recent view of citizenship education in his comment that, "Johanne Fichte, an influential German scholar, in his address to the German nation in 1808, argued that more support be given to education on the grounds that it tended to produce more loyal and conforming citizens"(p. 10). Furthermore, while Bacchus' comments provide illustration on how citizenship education is used to help unify the peoples of the land, Osborne (1997) stated that, "Historically, citizenship has been used to justify attempts to eradicate minority cultural traditions that were seen by dominant groups as inconsistent with their own vision of citizenship" (p. 41).

Bacchus' comments allow us to understand how scholars and philosophers viewed the importance of people who are educated in civic matters, while Osborne's comments illustrate how powerful the educating of citizens can be. The tendencies to honour one's country with loyalty and to support the actions of the federal/central government are powerful reasons for governments to implement civics courses.

Importance of Civics Education: A Societal Perspective

Citizenship, and all it entails, is a complex assortment of views. Osborne (1997) attempts to define it in the following manner:

> In anything beyond narrow legal sense, citizenship is obviously an intense value-laden concept. It entails not just knowledge and skills, but behaviour and action based on values. Thus, for example, good citizens are supposed to be law-abiding, loyal, involved in their communities respectful of others, and so on. Such values will differ according to regime, but whatever the regime, there will be some set of accepted values (p. 58).

Further, it can be understood that the potential benefits of a well-taught and well-constructed civics course are not only expressed by educators, politicians, and great thinkers, but parents too understand the values and share the optimism held by Newmann (1977) who suggested:

> For many adults the goal of civic education is to produce youth who, male or female, embody such virtues as those listed in the [American] Boy Scout Law: 'A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent'...much of the public at large probably equates good citizenship with these qualities, suggesting a general conformity to prevailing social norms, rather than assertiveness to question or depart from them (pp. 8-9).

To truly appreciate the importance of including civics education in the Ontario curriculum, it is best to review what Hodgetts (1968) stated about the issue:

> Our young people cannot build a better world or a better Canada until the quality of their civic education is vastly improved. They are heading into a future over which hangs the constant threat of a third and thermonuclear world war; into a future in which poverty,

> ignorance, and disease are rampant and the need to understand and share is urgent; into a future that is fraught with violence and the abuse of human dignity…An educational system that aims primarily at vocational training, or social adjustment, or technical and scientific skills, cannot lead to the kind of maturity a modern world demands (p. iv).

The fact that this statement was made some 36 years ago does not detract from its validity. Hodgetts views, still poignant, truly illustrate the necessity and value of a civics course in the provincial curriculum.

Ontario's Implementation Method

The act of initiation and implementation allows for the potential for great change. In Ontario, it is noted by Puk and Haines (1998) that the recent government has compromised this act of initiation and implementation:

> [In the past] the Ontario Ministry of Education was… directly involved in curriculum implementation and employed Education Officers who went into the classrooms…to provide direct instructional assistance…During the 1980's, with financial cut-backs, this service was pared back. By the mid 1990's, …direct implementation assistance became a thing of the past…the responsibility for implementing Ministry policy and curriculum guidelines is left almost entirely to each board of education, each school and each teacher with minimal support (p. 190).

Notwithstanding, it can still be observed that within the context of the initiation and implementation of the civics course in Ontario, many considerations had to be made to facilitate its successful implementation. These considerations were to be addressed in the following manner, as described by the Ontario Ministry of Education (2002),

> Principles for Successful Implementation

- The Ministry of Education, trustees, supervisory officers, principals, teachers, parents, school councils, special education advisory committees, students and education organizations share implementation. In consultation with its partners, the Ministry establishes expectations for consistent province-wide policy implementation.
- Support, resources and training are important for effective implementation. This includes helping schools, principals and teachers meet the needs of exceptional students.
- Teachers and principals are key implementers, as they use professional expertise to align teaching, assessment and reporting practices with the new curriculum and policies.
- Implementation is an ongoing process. Curriculum development, monitoring and renewal take time (OMET, November 2002, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/update/winter00/winter00.html).

Moreover, when dealing specifically with the initiation and implementation of the new civics course, there was a need to upgrade and offer training to teachers in the province. These teachers were the first-line of implementation of the new course. They were the ones who teach and implement it and, therefore, must be aware of the intentions of the course and the manner in which the course was to be presented to the students. In-service education and training occurred in a specific manner through subject-specific course workshops:

> Subject-specific training courses, which are two-day workshops that are organized by subject, were set up for teachers to discuss the new curriculum. "These workshops provide a forum for teachers to share best practices and resources, and talk about areas of concern," explained Nancy Polack, a Curriculum Coordinator with Rainbow District School Board. "Upon completion, participating teachers (usually two from each school, in each department) return to their school to 'teach the teachers'" (OMET, November

2002, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/update/fall2002/index.html#early).

Ideal Course Focus: Building Citizens

According to Marsh (1999), the majority of civics courses worldwide have focused on historical and global politics. The inability of these courses to instil citizenship values and national identity, within the students, has been seen as an obstacle for the civics courses. Students cannot identify with the concepts of 'global citizenship,' a problem that Marsh has clearly identified:

> As preparation for the new millennium, or at least its first century schools must create civic education programs that appropriately prepare young people for the work of citizenship in their neighbourhoods, communities, and states. Developing citizenship at those levels is both the most neglected and most important task in terms of the health of our democracy (p.70).

Simply put, Marsh (1999) illustrated that the importance of local citizenship should be the focus of the civics curricula, which opposed to the standard practices of a global and/or historical focus. Marsh stated that this method would more directly affect the citizenship of the students taking part in any civics course.

Furthermore, as Osborne (1997) illustrated in the case of the Italian citizenship course, created after World War II. There was a potential strength and power that a government had over the educational system that must be acknowledged when any new changes are initiated and implemented. Specifically,

> Schools were assigned an important role…They were one of the vehicles by which national identity…could be created… Curricula were officially approved, teachers were

> officially licenced,...to ensure that children learned the lessons of citizenship...They used the schools to establish their cultural and ideological hegemony (p. 43).

Contemporary Citizenship

When dealing with the establishment of the study of current laws and policies, the course must not emphasize the precedents of law but should instead deal primarily with the law in action. Hodgetts (1968) stated:

> The courses of study in Canadian history are based on the interests and concerns that preoccupied academic historians of the 1920s. These courses lack any contemporary meaning. They continue to be narrowly confined to constitutional and political history...What young Canadians learn about the structure and functioning of their government is equally outmoded. Civics classes continue to concentrate on an old-fashioned, purely descriptive account of the three levels of government, with very little analysis or realism...The cynicism of many of our young people toward politics is caused partly by unrealistic, oversimplified courses of study in civics (pp. 115-116).

Hodgetts (1968) identified the need for contemporary issues to be placed at the forefront of civics courses, and that such courses should not consist of just the facts. Hodgetts further explained that courses needed to study issues that are current and relevant, drawing history in to explain the current events and then allowing the students to fully understand how to interpret them. By removing current events from the headlines without context is no better than focusing on historical events and not explaining the ramifications of those events in present day.

Barber (1992), Hodgetts (1968), and Marsh (1999) described issues dealing with the ideals in civics courses. All of them have discussed the common problems that occur with poorly developed courses and poorly implemented courses. Each of these researchers, Barber, Hodgetts,

and Marsh had referred to the need for fully trained civics teachers. The integration of volunteerism and course work must be established to allow students to put into practice the concepts taught throughout the course. Integrating the concepts taught within the classroom, and implementing the lessons learned in a contemporary and practical application will, according to Barber (1992), Hodgetts (1968), and Marsh (1999), vastly increase the sense of understanding, activism, political motivations, and charity, and achieve the ultimate goal of any civics course, a greater sense of citizenship. Furthermore, when the civics courses adequately convey the goals and ideals of both the curriculum and of society, it will only be then that the newly crafted changes will have a greater ability of attaining its mandate and in turn, increase the necessity and continuation of the newly implemented course.

Self-Efficacy

As Bandura (1994) has stated, self-efficacy beliefs are at the very core of societal, cognitive theory, affecting all thoughts of human functioning and standing. Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment. As further described by Bandura, perceived self-efficacy is concerned with the individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to exercise control over their own functioning and over events that affect their lives. Beliefs in personal efficacy affect life choices, levels of motivation, quality of functioning, resilience to adversity, and vulnerability to stress and depression. There are four main sources by which a person's efficacy is developed. These include: mastery experiences; seeing people similar to oneself manage task demands successfully; social persuasion that one has the capabilities to succeed in given activities; and inferences from somatic and emotional states indicative of personal strengths and vulnerabilities. Everyday life has many obstacles, setbacks, and frustrations which people need to have a great sense of efficacy to sustain a

positive attitude, and effort needed to succeed. The nature and scope of perceived self-efficacy undergo changes throughout the course of the lifespan.

Teacher Efficacy

Moreover, Bruno (1997) referred to teacher satisfaction which has also been identified as "Teacher Efficacy." Teacher efficacy is a field-specific application of self-efficacy which was described by Roberts, Henson, Tharp, and Moreno (2000), in the following terms,

> An efficacy belief is one's perceived ability to carry out actions that will lead successfully toward a specific goal. Bandura proposed that efficacy beliefs were powerful predictors of behaviour since they were ultimately self-referent in nature and directed toward specific tasks. The predictive power of efficacy beliefs has been borne out in the research (p. 4).

Furthermore, Wheatley (2002) stated that teacher efficacy refers to

> Teachers' beliefs about their ability to influence student outcomes. ... More consistent with Bandura's theory of self-efficacy expectancies, teacher efficacy is also often divided into outcome expectancies and efficacy expectancies. Outcome expectancies are teachers' beliefs about the effects that specific teaching actions have on students, and efficacy expectancies are teachers' beliefs about their own ability to execute specific teaching actions (p. 6).

For the purpose of this study, the definition of teacher efficacy that will be utilized is efficacy expectancies, or the teachers' ability to execute specific teaching actions.

Importance of Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy has been described in terms of two separate measures of expectations held by teachers. Specifically, Wheatley (2002) identified teacher efficacy as the measures by

which a teacher believes in their abilities as a teacher to either instil knowledge and skills into a student's, or a teacher's beliefs regarding their ability to execute the curriculum in the manner it is intended. Creating and maintaining a positive or high level of teacher efficacy has been identified as a key component in the implementation of new reforms in education.

Moreover, Ross, McKeiver, and Hogboam-Gray (1997) illustrate the importance of a teachers' sense of efficacy in the following manner, "The effects of reform on teachers' expectations about their professional effectiveness are important because teacher expectancies influence decisions about daily practice" (p. 283). This sentiment is echoed by Ross, Cousins, Gadalla, and Hannay, (1999) when they stated that, "Teacher efficacy matters to secondary school reformers because it predicts which teachers and sites are likely to support instructional reform" (p. 2).

Change and Teacher Efficacy

As outlined, teacher efficacy is based on the expectations of what will happen in the future based on the perceptions of the present situation at hand. Ross et al. (1997) state: "Teachers' expectations about their ability to teach a given class fluctuate in response to the characteristics of teaching assignments... and instructional tasks. ... Although the teacher efficacy of experienced teachers is relatively stable...reform can disturb it" (p. 284). Furthermore, Ross et al. (1999) illustrate that, "Teacher efficacy declines when reform challenges teachers' professional values and reduce their control of classroom decision making" (p. 2).

Affects of Changed Teacher Efficacy on Curricular Changes

As previously illustrated, a change to a teacher's efficacy can result from newly implemented changes/reforms, but how does this change in teacher efficacy affect the

implemented change? It becomes clear that teacher efficacy can be altered in a negative manner with the implementation of new changes/reforms within a school. Even experienced teachers may have lowered teacher efficacy with the implementation of changes/reforms. Wheatley (2002) stated, "Some scholars have even concluded that reforms that do not address teacher efficacy may be doomed. ... In all such discussions of the role of teacher efficacy in educational improvement, positive teacher efficacy...has been viewed as the appropriate goal" (p. 5). Wheatley further added, "Beyond the research reported earlier, it is clear that a positive sense of teacher efficacy will often support educational reform efforts"(p. 7).

Clearly, it has been demonstrated that the teachers' sense of efficacy within the school environment is a delicate balance between consistency and reform, and when there is a dissonance between the two, for example, within the implementation phase of change, the continuation phase of change can be compromised. As noted by Chase, Germundsen, Brownstein and Distad (2001), teachers with a high sense of efficacy communicate high expectations for performance to students, put greater emphasis on instruction and implementation, are less likely to give up problematic curriculum, and are more likely to work harder to meet all expectations laid upon them. Additionally, teachers with high efficacy are more open to implementing and experimenting with new teaching strategies because they do not view change as an affront to their own abilities as teachers. In contrast, teachers with low efficacy tend to doubt that any amount of effort by teachers, or schools in general, will affect continuation of problematic curriculum.

It can then be summarized that the processes of change will have a direct effect on a teacher's sense of efficacy. These process of change as outlined by Levin (1976) and Fullan (1991) will have a positive, negative or null effect on those teachers responsible for

implementation and continuation. The affected teachers' efficacy beliefs could have direct influence over the successful implementation and long term continuation of the Ontario secondary school civics course.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Methodology

The data for this study was gathered and interpreted through the use of qualitative research methods. Qualitative research has been described by Crossley and Vulliamy (1997) as providing,

> ...descriptions and accounts of the processes and social interactions in "natural" settings, usually based upon a combination of observation and interviewing of participants in order to understand their perspectives. Culture, meanings and processes are emphasized, rather than variables, outcomes and products. Instead of testing pre-conceived hypotheses, qualitative research aims to generate theories and hypotheses from the data that emerge, in an attempt to avoid the imposition of a previous, and possibly inappropriate, frame of reference on the subjects of the research (p. 6).

This study examines the question of changes in teacher efficacy from a case study approach. Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg (1991) defined a case study as "an in-depth, multi-faceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon" (p. 2). Merriam (1988) defined a "case" as a "single bounded system or an instance of a class of phenomena" (p. 153). Furthermore, a case is an instance, not a representative, of a class—that is, in the statistical-experimental paradigm, one is interested in selecting a sample that is representative of a certain population, whereas a case is selected because it is an example of some phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 1988, p. 153). Furthermore, it has been stated that case study research is in fact neutral between qualitative and quantitative methods, and can be appropriately conducted within any paradigm capable of studying an exemplary instance. As

Stake puts it, "The case study is not a specific technique [but] a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied" (Stake 1988).

It is a method that explores in rich details the hows and whys of a problem (Feagin et al., 1991). One of the primary aims of the case study is to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the group under investigation. Snow and Anderson (1991) justify the use of a case study research approach because it gives insight into specific instances, events, or situations.

Characteristically, case studies tend to have an open-ended, emergent quality that facilitates the discovery of unanticipated findings and data sources. Merriam (1988) stated that "case study investigators immerse themselves in the totality of the case...the researcher looks for underlying patterns—conceptual categories that make sense out of the phenomenon" (p. 60).

The case study method was chosen to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, experiences, and possible changes to the teacher efficacy beliefs held by high school civics teachers regarding the initiation and implementation phases of change. The participants were asked to complete open-ended questionnaires.

Open-ended questions allow the respondent to answer questions in an unstructured format; there are no pre-coded response options. Open-ended questions are typically structured as a question followed by blank space for the respondent to write out an answer. Similarly, in a spoken interview, the interviewer asks a question, the respondent answers, and the interviewer records the response. According to Sudman and Bradburn (1982), open-ended questionnaires allow the evaluator to collect information that can be used to locate and discover categories and themes. Open-ended questionnaires have the advantage of allowing the respondent to use his/her own words to answer the question, without being confined to narrow options provided within a survey. They also give the evaluator an idea of exactly how the respondent feels, thinks, or

perceives/understands the situations. Open-ended questionnaires also provide specific information to be used to illustrate overall themes among many respondents.

Participants for this study were also, on a volunteer basis, asked to take part in an interview session. Patton (1990) stated, "Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (p. 278). The primary advantage of the interview is its flexibility, which permits the investigator to pursue leads that appear fruitful, to encourage elaboration of points that a respondent has not made clear or has possibly avoided, and to clarify questions the respondent has misunderstood. The unstructured interview allows the researcher to follow-up on what may turn out to be very significant ideas.

The sets of data were collected through a multi-faceted qualitative framework. The multi-faceted framework involved the use of multiple method data collection techniques, specifically the use of open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interview. Due to the nature of the information that this study had gathered, it was decided that an interpretive or descriptive research method would be employed. By using a Descriptive/Interpretive studies method, a researcher is capable of uncovering many attitudes and behaviours of their participants. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) described such examples as, "Describing the behaviours of teachers, administrators, or counsellors; describing the attitudes of parents; and describing the physical capabilities of schools. The description of phenomena is the starting point for all research endeavours" (p. 12). As further elaborated by Denzin (1989), "Interpretive interactionism asserts that meaningful interpretations of human experience can only come from those persons who have thoroughly immersed themselves in the phenomenon they wish to interpret and understand" (p. 25).

The conceptual orientation of this case study is through the use of Denzin's (1989) model of interpretive interactionism. This model is a naturalistic framework used to understand either problems or life-altering experiences (termed "epiphanies") that occur within the daily lives of people. Denzin's model is a post-positivist research method that includes (among other approaches) open-ended interviewing, participant observation, ethnographic research, case study research, and hermeneutic interpretation. Interpretive interactionism provides a descriptive, qualitative theoretical framework for both organizational and interpretative purposes. As such, interpretive interactionism serves as a theoretical foundation for understanding the experience of the teachers sampled.

Instrumentation

Due to the type of research methodology employed in this study, the data collection methods had to have the ability of eliciting rich, thick, and informative descriptions from the participants. Therefore, the instruments used to gather data for this study were open-ended questionnaires (see Appendix A) and interview sessions. These two methods of data collection are found by Anderson and Burns (1989) to be "the major source of evidence used in studies of teachers" (p. 270).

Open-Ended Questionnaires

The open-ended questionnaire, as constructed by the researcher, was created to address the research question(s):

1) Has the introduction of the Ontario secondary school civics course affected teacher efficacy within three boards in Ontario secondary schools?

If there is an effect on teacher efficacy,

2) What are the implications of this phenomenon for the implementation, and continuation of the secondary school civics course?

Each of the 18 questions found within the questionnaire allowed the participants to provide experiences they might have had with the civics course. All 18 questions were derived from sources found within the literature review. Accordingly, the survey questions allowed for response variations relating: to teaching experience; civics background; their ability to meet course expectations (specifically what factors either enhanced or limited their abilities to achieve course expectations); modifications that they would make if they had the ability, and finally their overall impressions and feelings about the course.

Through the questionnaire, participants would articulate changes to their teacher efficacy beliefs. Their individual responses to this questionnaire would be a starting point for the follow-up interview sessions.

Interview Sessions

The second data collection method that was used to gather teacher experiences and efficacy beliefs regarding the civics course were three 25-35 minute, semi-structured interview sessions. The questions for the semi-structured interviews were derived from the responses given by each of the three participating teachers in their open-ended questionnaires. The questions asked during the interview sessions were created to probe further into the teachers' experiences to obtain a rich text of dialogue that could be used to establish a better sense of the participants' efficacy beliefs towards the civics course. These interviews were performed on a voluntary basis. Each of the three participants in the interview sessions had completed a questionnaire prior to their scheduled interviews.

Participants

Three Ontario school boards were randomly selected, based on geographical location. The selection method employed by this study decreases the geographical biases that may be present within individual participants. This study included teachers who are currently teaching the civics course, as well as those teachers who have taught the civics course since its introduction in the 2000-2001 academic year. All past and present civics teachers, within the three randomly selected school boards, were given the opportunity to complete the questionnaires that were distributed to their school. Only those teachers who completed a questionnaire were eligible to volunteer to take part in the interview sessions.

Administration of Instruments

This study and the methods used to collect data were reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Senate Research and Ethics Committee. An outline of the study (See Appendices A, B, C, D, and E), which included separate questionnaires packets, was mailed to the principals of the high schools within the three selected school boards. The copy of the outline that was given to the principals was identical to the summary approved by the Senate Research and Ethics Committee. An additional informative letter was included with the outline. This letter requested permission to distribute the questionnaires within the individual principal's high school. Further, the letter also asked the principal to distribute the separate participant questionnaire packets to those teachers who had taught the civics course. Each of the separate packets distributed to the civics teachers contained an introductory letter that outlined the focus of the research, an informed consent form, and the open-ended questionnaire. The packets also included self-addressed stamped envelopes, this was to allow the teachers the freedom of returning the questionnaires without having to shoulder any expenses.

Further, the participants for the interview sessions had to have first completed the open-ended questionnaires and, second, they had to have indicated their intention to volunteer for the interview sessions on the bottom of the final page of the questionnaire. Those participants who had indicated an interest in being interviewed were contacted, and interview sessions were then arranged at their convenience.

Data Analysis

The data gathered through these two qualitative collecting methods were analyzed through interpretive/descriptive methodology. Denzin (2001) outlines the importance of interpretive research in the following manner,

> Interpretation creates the condition of understanding. ... Cognitive interpretations and understandings lay bare the essential meanings of a phenomenon, but they do not infuse those meanings with emotion. ... Thick description is the cornerstone of interpretation studies. Without it authentic understanding is not possible (p. 54).

The questionnaires were analyzed using Denzin's (1989) interpretive process for data analysis. This process began with dissecting all the completed questionnaires by question number, grouping all responses for question 1, all responses from question 2, etc. This was done to isolate and inspect key elements and structures of the phenomenon (first-level coding). The responses from each question were reviewed multiple times for key words, phrases, or statements. These elements were isolated (highlighted) and labelled. As data was examined line-by-line, important phrases were tentatively labelled according to emerging, recurring themes. Denzin described the process of assembling recurring themes back into a coherent whole as "construction," which includes reviewing the labelled textual phrases, ordering the components as they occur within the experience, and forming a concise statement as to how the components

form a totality. This method of construction and ordering the responses allows for answers to the study question to emerge from the data.

The data gathered from the interview sessions was also analysed via the interpretive process method, as outlined by Denzin (1989). Each of the interview sessions was transcribed verbatim, using a word processing program. Again, this process of interpretation began by dissecting the text, and isolating and inspecting key elements of the experiences of the participants. The text was examined multiple times for reoccurring phrases, statements, or key words. These reoccurring features were highlighted and labelled. As the text was re-examined line-by-line, reoccurring phrases and ideas were labelled according to their emerging, reoccurring themes.

Internal Validity

Internal validity deals with how research findings match reality. It addresses the concern of whether investigators are observing and measuring what they think they are measuring. Merriam (1998) stated that an assumption underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic and changing and thus, determining how research findings match reality is an inappropriate measure of validity. Rather, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) have stated, reality is a construction of multiple mental interpretations, and each of these reconstructed interpretations will be unique to each person who is witness to this reality. What is being studied here is how people understand and perceive their world. Therefore, judging the validity or truth of a study involves the investigator showing that they have represented the realities of their participants adequately, and have interpreted these realities sufficiently. Merriam (1998) explains that it is the researcher's task to present an honest account of how informants view themselves and their experiences. When reality is viewed in this manner, internal validity is a strength of qualitative research.

Merriam (1998) stated six strategies for ensuring internal validity. The researcher used two of these strategies. The first strategy involved triangulation. The researcher used multiple collection methods to access rich and thick descriptive accounts of participant perceptions and their teacher efficacy beliefs. The second strategy was member checks. The researcher took data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asked them if the results were plausible.

Reliability

Reliability, as stated by Goetz and LeCompte (1982), refers to the extent to which one's findings can be replicated. Reliability addresses the question: if the study is repeated, will it yield the same results? Merriam (1998) stated that reliability in research designs is "based on the assumption that there is a single reality which if studied repeatedly will give the same results" (p. 205). However, it is also noted by Merriam that since qualitative research seeks to explain the world as those in the world see it, there are many interpretations of what is occurring and thus, no "benchmark by which one can take repeated measures and establish reliability in the traditional sense" (p. 205). Since reliability in the traditional sense cannot be applied to qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest thinking about the dependability or consistency of the results obtained from qualitative data.

The idea is that given the data collected, the results make sense — they are consistent and dependable. Merriam (1998) described three techniques, the latter two techniques were used by the researcher, to ensure that results were dependable:

1) *The investigator's position*, the investigator should explain the assumptions and theory behind the study... the basis for selecting informants and a description of them, and the social context from which data were collected.

2) *Triangulation*...strengthens reliability as well as internal validity.

3) *Audit Trail* which means that the investigator describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived and how decisions were made so that other researchers can "authenticate the findings of a study by following the trail of the researcher" (pp. 206-207).

External Validity

External validity is concerned with how generalizable the results of a study are (Merriam, 1998). External validity deals with the question: To what extent can the findings of one study be applied to other situations? Traditionally, the ability to generalize to other settings or people is ensured through using standard sampling procedures. This is not possible in qualitative research that deals with the study of a particular case or setting. Since external validity in the traditional sense cannot be applied to qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested thinking about the transferability of the results obtained from qualitative data.

Merriam (1998) stated that reader or user generalizibility involves leaving the extent to which a study's findings apply to other situations up to the people in those situations. Merriam suggested three ways a researcher can improve the generalizibility or transferability of findings which were employed by the researcher:

1) Rich, Thick description, providing enough descriptions so that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence whether findings can be transferred.

2) Typicality or Modal category, describing how typical the program, event, perceptions and experiences are to others in the same class so that readers can make comparisons with their own situations.

3) Multi-site design, using several sites...will allow the results to be applied by readers to a greater range of other situations (pp. 211-212).

Triangulation

Denzin (1970) extended the idea of triangulation beyond its conventional association with research methods and designs. He distinguished four forms of triangulation: triangulation of data sources, of researchers, of theories, and of methods. The type employed by this study was the fourth form of triangulation, methodological triangulation which refers to the use of more than one method for gathering data. Denzin drew a distinction between *within-method* and *between-method* triangulation. This study used the between-method triangulation, which involved contrasting research methods, specifically open-ended questionnaires and interview sessions.

Examining, comparing, and contrasting all responses gathered via the two research methods used this method of triangulation. As stated previously, all data was coded and grouped according to reoccurring keywords and themes. The data themes present within the interviews, as well as those themes found within the questionnaire responses, were combined with one another to find the similarities and differences that were present.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation

Data for this study was gathered via two qualitative methods, open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interview sessions. The focus of the research questions was to identify possible changes to the teachers' sense of efficacy and efficacy beliefs, as defined by Wheatley (2002), through their experiences teaching and implementing the civics course. The questionnaire was comprised of 18 questions, and each of the questions allowed the participants to answer as fully as they desired (See Appendix A). The information that the questionnaires attempted to ellicit from the participants ranged from, but was not limited to, their educational backgrounds, the presence of internal/external influences on the course as well as the types of support structures available to them. Moreover, the questionnaires also inquired about their perceived ability to meet course expectations (specifically what factors either enhanced or limited their perceived abilities to achieve course expectations) and their overall impressions and feelings about the course. For this study more then 200 open-ended questionnaire were distributed to the three school boards with 50 of them being returned. The following is a presentation of the information gathered.

Firstly, the data from the questionnaires is presented, followed by the data gathered using the interviews.

Questionnaires

1) Briefly, what is your educational background?

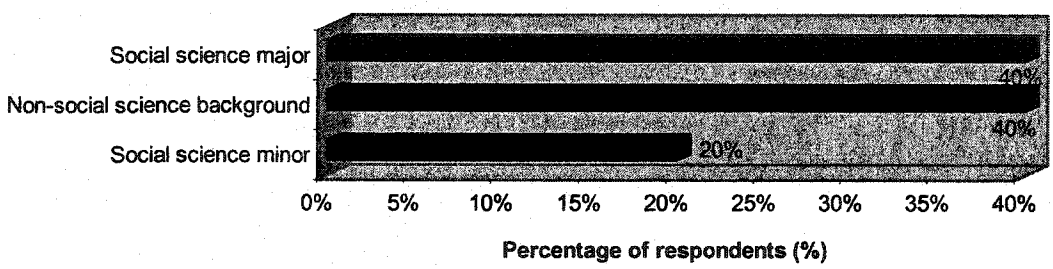


Figure ii

This question was used to gain insight into the types of teachers teaching the course. When asked about their educational background, as seen previously Figure ii, the civics teachers reported that 40% of them did not hold a social science degree. The social science department is the OMET's designated department that administers the course within the secondary schools. Degrees held by these civics teachers included, but were not limited to, Business Administration, Computer Science, Music, Mathematics, amongst others. To this end, it was stated by one of the participants that, "Civics is a course that is given to any teacher [not just those in the social sciences] and, more often than not, those teachers only teach the course once or twice" (Questionnaire 21). Of the teachers teaching the course, 20% had a minor in the social sciences, but felt they were teaching outside their educational background. An additional 40% of the teachers held a degree in the social sciences.

2) What is your background with the civics course?

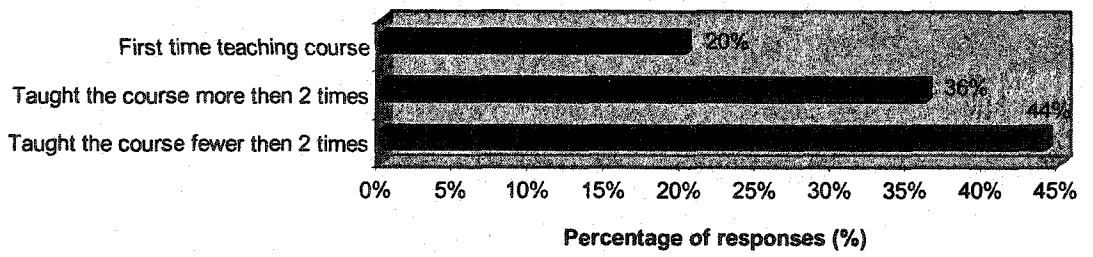


Figure iii

The question allowed the respondents to express in their own words their level of teacher efficacy with the subject matter. As seen in Figure iii, 20% of the teachers were teaching the course for the first time and 44% of them had taught the course fewer than two times. Finally, 36% of the civics teachers had taught the course more than two times.

3) What do you believe to be the influences, either externally or internally, that have initiated or shaped the course within the secondary curriculum?

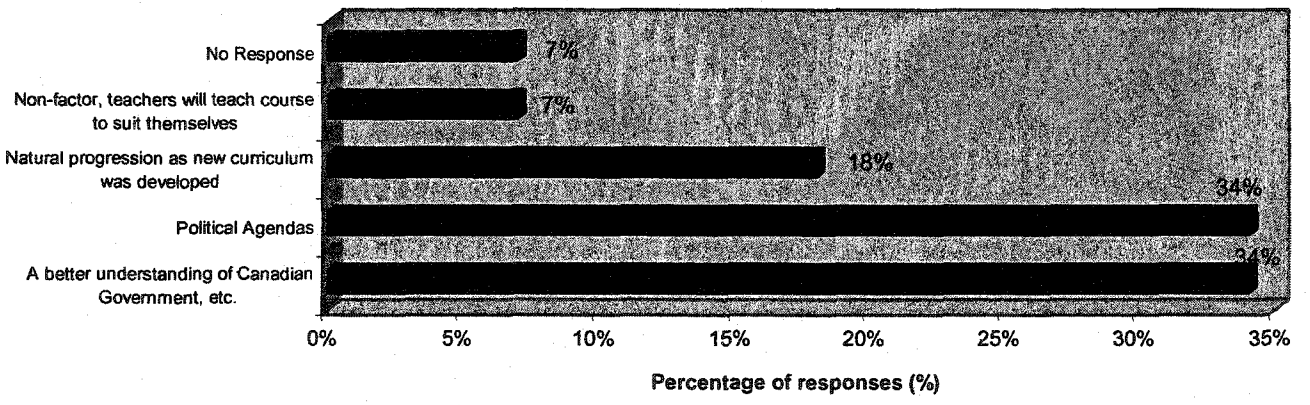


Figure iv

The question of influences acting on the secondary curriculum was asked to help unearth the teachers' beliefs about the rationale for creating this course. By examining teacher perceptions of initiation and influences that they feel act on the course, we can better understand their views of control regarding the initiation and implementation of the course. It can be

observed in Figure iv that 34% of the teachers believed that the course was designed to focus specifically on achieving a greater understanding of the Canadian government. As identified from the responses, there is "A need for individuals to have a better understanding of Canadian government, policies and procedures" (Questionnaire 23). It was further explained that there was "A need for students to understand what is going on in the world around them from locally to globally" (Questionnaire 11). It was also stated that "Students need to know this material if they are to make informed decisions. Perhaps teaching them this material will encourage them to be active in politics as the number of people who participate is declining" (Questionnaire 18). Conversely, 34% of the respondents believed the course was initiated as a tool for moulding students into a specific political agenda. "I believe the implementation/introduction of this course was politically motivated and was part of Tories political agenda" (Questionnaire 6). One respondent explained that they felt that,

> The government wants students to gain an appreciation of the government system that we enjoy, democracy. Voter turnouts are so low in provinces and at the federal level, [this course] gives students background on the system and how it works, and gives them knowledge on how to participate in the community as citizens (Questionnaire 20).

Further, there were 18% who felt that this course synthesized naturally as the entire secondary curriculum was created and implemented. Stating that there were "many connections with CHC2x [Canadian History in the Twentieth Century, Grade 10], and with CLU3x [Understanding Canadian Law, Grade 11]... also with the geography world issues course" (Questionnaire 14). There were 7% that stated that the influences on the curriculum are negligible because each teacher interpreted the course material and presented it from their perspective. Finally, 7% of the teachers did not respond to the question.

4) Was there training available/given by the ministry, school board, or your own individual school to help integrate the new course into the curriculum?

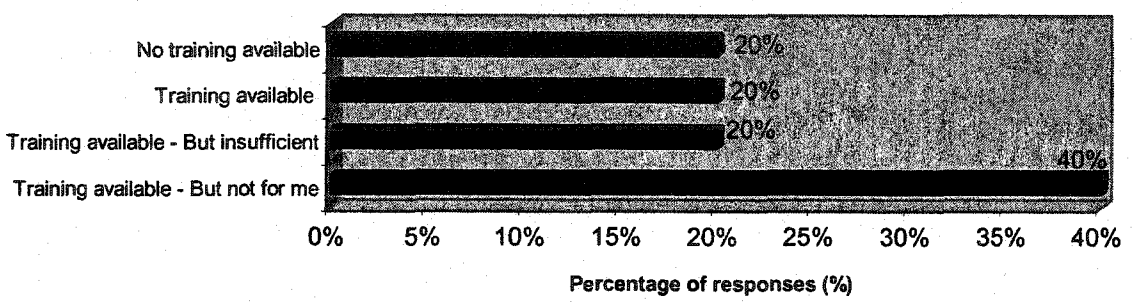


Figure v

Training descriptions and experiences illustrate that a teacher's sense of support structures available as well as their views on their own comfort could influence a change in their efficacy beliefs. As depicted in Figure v, the responses to this question were categorized as follows; there were 40% of the participants who indicated that there was training provided at some level, but not for them, that is, someone within the school had been given the training but they were not currently teaching the civics course. "Not for me! There was training when the course was first introduced. The ministry provided [training] to all teachers in the board who were teaching civics at the time" (Questionnaire 21). Further, "Only for the choice of text to use, not for me because I am not the first teacher to deliver course at our school" (Questionnaire 13). A further 20% said that some training was available, "Yes, people were given time off to work on all the new curriculum for the high schools" (Questionnaire 23), and 20% stated that training was provided but it was insufficient for the needs of the course; "I attended a seminar on civics exemplars but nothing for the teaching side of the course was discussed" (Questionnaire 4). Finally, 20% stated that, as far as they knew, no training was available.

5) What support structures are in place if concerns or questions arise pertaining to the civics course?

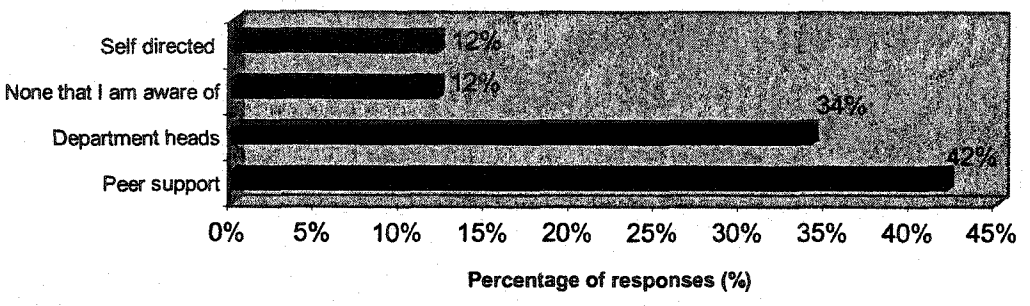


Figure vi

Teachers' sense of support structures available to them can ease the unsure teacher through difficult times. The respondents offered three different methods of supports available to them within the schools. These supports (or lack of supports) were identified as: their department heads 34%; their peers 42%. One participant summarized the experience with the available support structures this way,

> I could contact a civics teacher elsewhere in the board, whether or not s/he is available or would help is debatable. The resource person from this board is retiring at the end of June, she would have been helpful, but I doubt if the board can or will replace her (Questionnaire 18).

Furthermore, 12% stated they would plug along and find the answers on their own, "I deal with everything on my own, not just with civics but any course that I teach. In passing, I may chat with other teachers but I do not seek support etc. Everyone is too busy to bother" (Questionnaire 22). An additional 12% stated that they were unaware of any supports available to them, which is summarized in one questionnaire in the following manner, "Not a whole lot!!" (Questionnaire 17).

6) What resources/materials are available to teach the class?

The next two questions inquired as to the availability of resources as well as the usefulness of those resources. Resources are important to the teacher because their ability to convey course expectations is aided by effective resource tools. Ineffective resources may lead to students becoming disinterested in the course which, in turn, can lead to a decrease in a teacher's sense of efficacy. The participants made it clear that there were four main resources available for their use. Textbooks and resource manuals were mentioned along with Ministry of Education pamphlets and documents (exemplars), media resources (which unfortunately are mostly outdated and "dry" in presentation style), and finally other teacher hand-me-downs.

7) Are the resources/materials that are available, sufficient to use to teach the course?

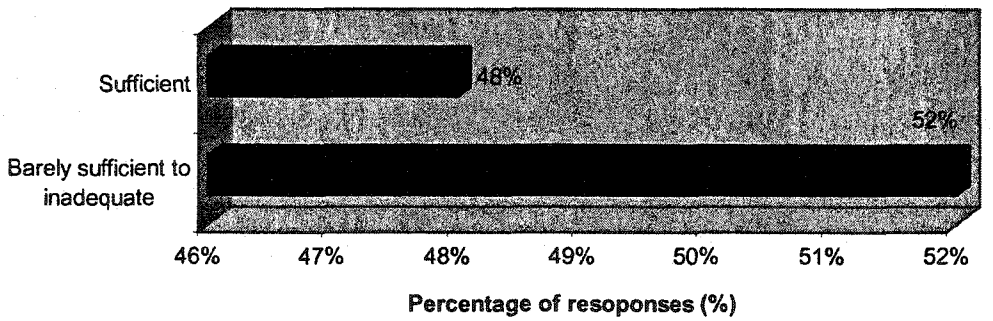


Figure vii

More than half, 52%, of the participants reported that the resources that were available to them and their students ranged from barely sufficient to inadequate. Examples of comments included, "No, very dry and boring videos. The teacher needs to really dig to make it interesting" (Questionnaire 21). Another participant stated that "the profiles don't give all information needed, some lessons are vague. They [the profiles] are sufficient, but could be improved upon.

They [the profiles] should be relevant and fun for the kids" (Questionnaire 20). The views of the participants regarding the nature of the resources can be summarized with this statement,

> They are barely sufficient for the classroom and they could be definitely improved upon, i.e. textbooks could have more factual information with activities, profiles could give more background information for the lessons, and videos could be more up to date (Questionnaire 19).

While 48% of the teachers felt that the resources were sufficient to be used for the course with some modifications, "They are sufficient for a short course like this one. I would like to see more visual and supportive materials available for this course in the future" (Questionnaire 17). One participant stated that, "In my opinion, yes, but I am always changing them" (Questionnaire 1).

8) Is the course offered at the correct level?

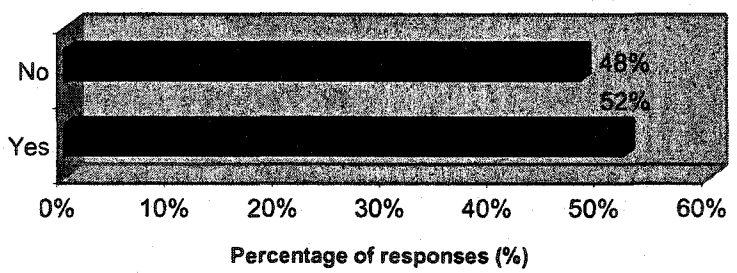


Figure viii

This question pertained to student involvement and satisfaction with the course. As explained by Wheatley (2002), Roberts et al. (2000), Ross et al. (1997), Ross et al. (1999), a teacher's sense of efficacy can be affected by the inability to teach the course as outlined in curricular documents, and with a decrease in efficacy, the ability to effectively implement new curriculum can also be affected. The question of correct level was proposed in a way that allowed the teachers to address any concerns they might have had for their students academically

or otherwise. Some 48% of the participants reported that the course was not offered at the correct level, and described the areas that they felt needed to be re-evaluated, "No, how about grade 12, so that the students who are learning about this information could go out and put into practise what they are learning. Then maybe they would be more interested in learning this stuff" (Questionnaire 22).

Of the responses given, 52% of the participants agreed that on some level but not all (i.e. grade, age, maturity, etc.) the course was offered at the appropriate level within the school curriculum or their students' academic abilities. Their views are expressed in the following manner,

> With regards to the grade and the age, I think the course is offered appropriately. Academic background, definitely not. This is an open course and the applied level students as well as those below the applied level find it very difficult to grasp many of the concepts and ideas presented within the expectations (Questionnaire 12).

9a) If not, what changes? Response Vs No response

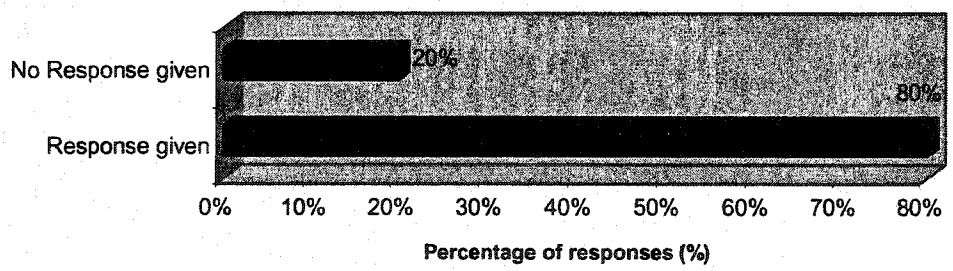


Figure ix

By asking teachers' for their ideas and recommendations, we get a view of their ideal course components. This in turn allows us to better understand the aspects of the curriculum that the teachers perceived as ineffective or troublesome for implementation. These views could

indicate poor initialization of the course or even poor implementation methods that were utilized from the inception of the course into the current curriculum.

9b) Of those who responded; what changes would you make?

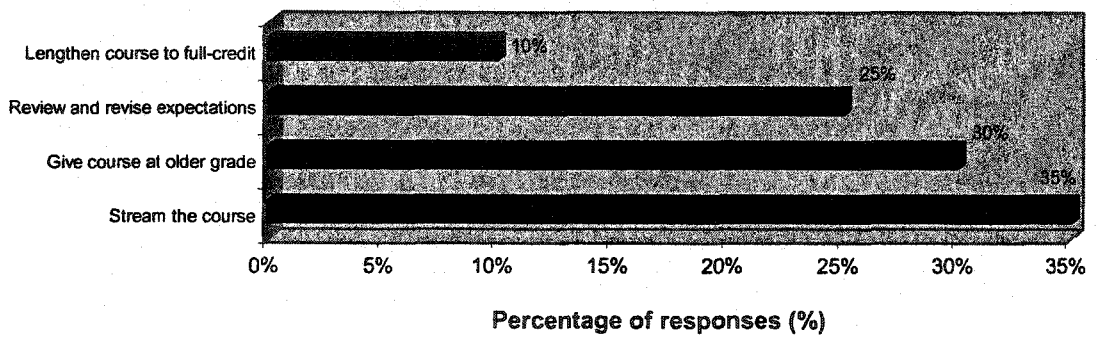


Figure x

The follow-up question addressed only those teachers who felt that the course was not appropriate for the students who were currently enrolled in the course. Of these, 35% felt that the course needed to be streamed, "An essential course is needed, there is a lot of information to give for a half course. There is just too much for the lower level students" (Questionnaire 5). The participants felt that the course needed a "more hands-on approach for students. The course is too theoretical for basic/technical/vocational students, it should be streamed" (Questionnaire 7). An additional 30% indicated that the students were too young, " I would teach it to the grade 11's. I would also have it taught streamed, both an academic and an applied course" (Questionnaire 12). Another stated that the course,

> Should be offered later in high school when student maturity levels are higher and more of the content could relate to their future choices i.e. voting. Also, the course should not be an open course but have the option of applied or academic (Questionnaire 14).

A further 25% responded that the expectations of the course were unrealistic for all of the students required to take the course, "This course is tough to teach at the open level, unless the

expectations to succeed are compromised, i.e. easier tests given, skimming information not going in-depth" (Questionnaire 4). Finally, 10% suggested making the course a full credit course within the curriculum.

10) Does the course allow students to put newly learned course information into practice?

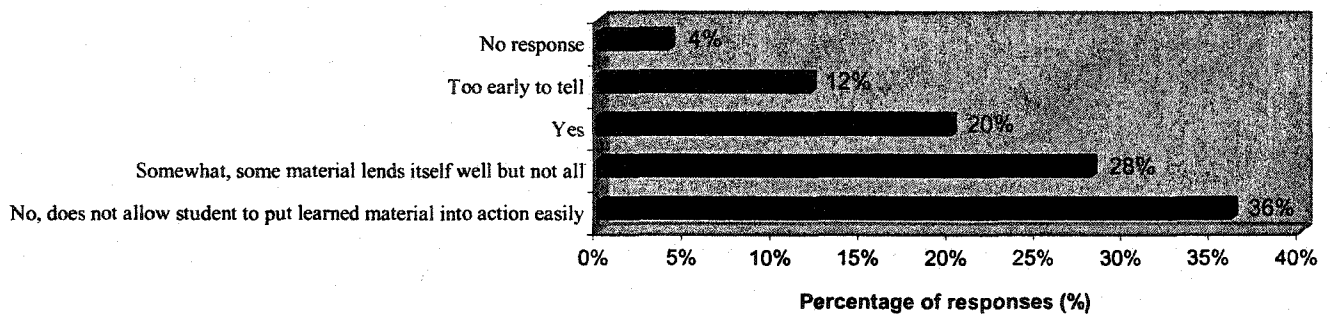


Figure xi

The question had a dual purpose; firstly, it asked participants to analyze their students' learning of the material. It is through making this initial analysis, the teachers could then examine the expectations that they have covered and their own ability to adequately teach them. Secondly, the question also addresses possible student satisfaction with the course. A number of participants, 36% of them, felt that this course does not allow for quick practical application of learned expectations. "No!! It [the civics course and course expectations] is too theoretical, not practical, due to time constraints students cannot make any application due to the amount of information that must be covered in such a brief time frame" (Questionnaire 14). An additional 28% felt that, in some situations, students could use the information in a practical manner, but they also mentioned that not all the information they learned was easily transferred to the practical world,

> In a practical setting, no this course does not work well, in a setting that is made by teachers for evaluation of course it works. Basically, this course does give the students some rudimentary knowledge of laws and the political systems in Canada, which can be applied eventually and this information is good for the students to learn and know, but of course right now at their age and maturity it is difficult to put into practice NOW! (Questionnaire 21).

There were 20% who felt the course lends itself well for immediate use, stating that,

> I believe that it can be an eye opener and provide a foundation for new information. If you don't understand something, you tend to ignore what you hear related to it. With some background and understanding, I think the students will be more open to absorbing related material and consequently continue a progression toward good citizenship (Questionnaire 16).

Additionally another 12% stated that it is too early to tell what effect the course will have on the students, and 4% gave no response to the question.

11) How would you assess your ability to meet the course expectations as outlined in the civics curricular documents?

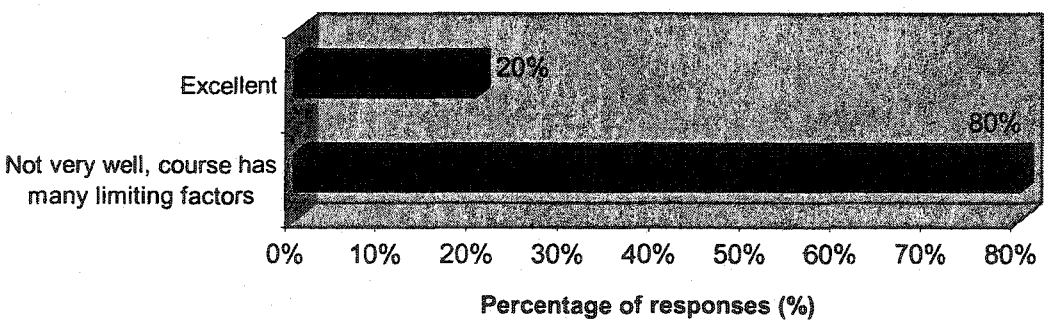


Figure xii

This question was used to elicit both a response that would give insight into the participants' efficacy with the course expectations as well as a response that might indentify possible obstacles that might prevent a smooth implementation of the course. There were 80% of the participants felt that they did not do a very good job meeting all of the expectations, stating that they met most of the expectations but they did not feel that the lessons were very inspiring. These concerns are illustrated as, "Too many expectations, I learn them [sic] about government and citizenship, I do not worry about the unreasonable expectations. Many of the expectations are too ambitious with regards to time frame and student levels" (Questionnaire 14). Some participants felt that it was "Impossible you can not meet them all" (Questionnaire 15).

Conversely, there were 20% who felt that they did an excellent job of meeting all course expectations, "I am confident I have done a very good job, but, 45 days is too short which results in me and my colleagues rushing the course" (Questionnaire 13). While other participants felt differently about their performance, "I met expectations in a very dry and boring way" (Questionnaire 21).

12) What has limited your ability to meet those expectations?

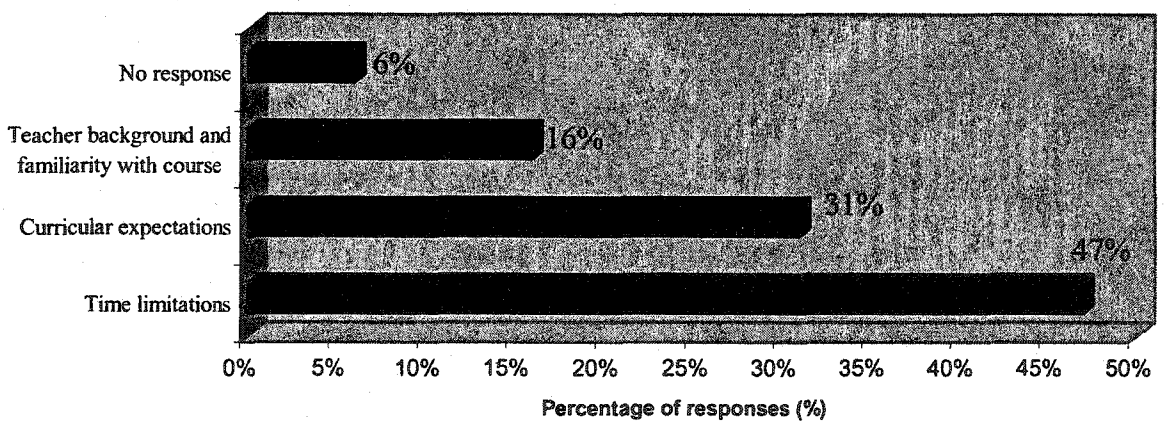


Figure xiii

This question was asked to allow the teachers to vocalize those issues that they felt might have reduced their confidence, level of comfort, and/or their teacher-efficacy beliefs. Almost half, 47% of the participants indicated that the largest limiting factor working against them to meet expectations was time,

> "TIME!!! It is hard to develop the ideas in a half course in a semestered school. The half course format would work in a linear system, but there is just not enough time for the students to absorb the ideas, concepts and material that is being covered" (Questionnaire 14).

The issue of time has more than one implication. As one teacher stated time also existed outside of the classroom "I also teach other/different courses that requires preparation too. I have extra-curricular activities, working on yearbook, working on courses for Master's degree" (Questionnaire, 18). While some participants highlighted time, as a major limiting factor, nearly a third, 31% of the participants felt that the number of, and the extent of the expectations, within the curriculum, limited the teachers, stating that their "Students had troubles adjusting to the curricular expectations" (Questionnaire 15). Further, it was expressed that there were,

> Three main limiting factors, 1) Background knowledge needed by the students to understand expectations, 2) Lack of teacher training to better understand the importance of the expectations, do all expectations get weighted the same? Etc. 3) Time limitations to meet all expectations (Questionnaire 12).

Some 16% of the participants responded that their own lack of familiarity with the course materials/expectations was a limiting factor, "Limited experience and no time to prepare. The course was assigned to me the day before the school year started" (Questionnaire 21). A further 6% did not answer the question.

13) What has enhanced your ability to meet those expectations?

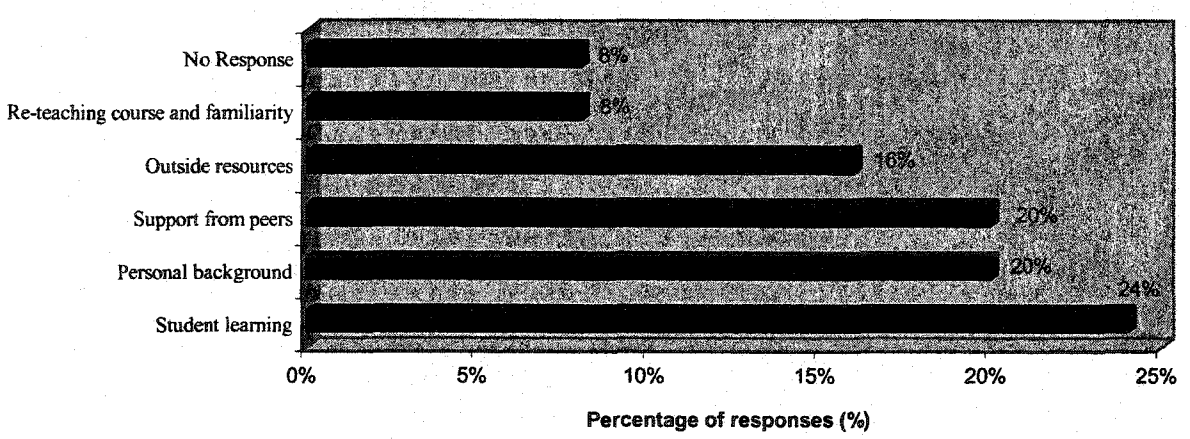


Figure xiv

Conversely, this question was asked to allow the teachers to vocalize those issues that they felt might have increased their confidence, level of comfort, and/or their self-efficacy beliefs. There were 24% of the participants who explained that it is the students learning the material that motivates the teacher to continue, "When the students gain knowledge about their roles and rights within society. I do many different activities relating to enhancing those events" (Questionnaire 1). Additionally, 20% responded that their own personal background was a beneficial characteristic which helped them complete the course, "My educational background, previous teaching experience, colleagues support" (Questionnaire 18). There was another 20% who claimed that the support of their peers enhanced their teaching, "Team planning with other teachers to get ideas about how we are to meet all curriculum expectations" (Questionnaire 19). There were 16% of the respondents who reported that external resources were essential. Further, an additional 8% who claimed familiarity with the course enhanced their teaching, specifically the more they taught the course the better they taught it. A further 8% did not answer this question.

14) Does the course address a topic that had been overlooked in previous curriculum?

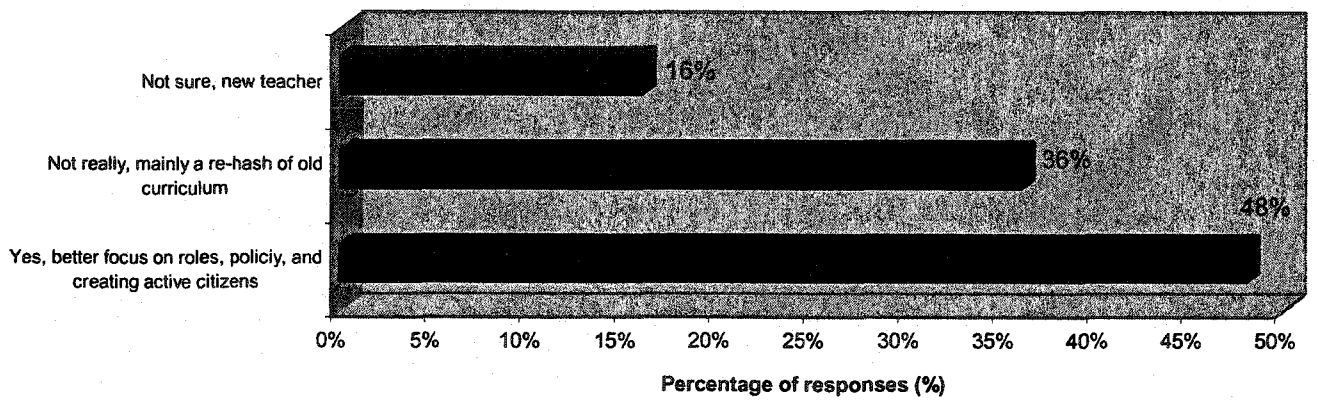


Figure xv

This question was posed to allow the teachers to examine their beliefs and understanding of the initiation and implementation phases of the civics course. It is stated by Levin (1976) that change has three influences or pressures. It was the goal of this question to understand whether the teachers felt that this course was proposed within the new curriculum because they felt that there existed some forms of internal contradictions within the curriculum, or if the teachers believed that this course was introduced for an addition reason.

There were 48% of the respondents that stated that they believed this course does in fact address areas not covered by the previous curriculum. Specifically, the teachers felt that this course has a better focus on roles and responsibilities of a citizen, better focus on politics (both globally and locally), and they felt the course attempts to activate students to think beyond themselves, then compared to the old history curriculum.

A history course can teach Canadian government, but civics as well as touching on governmental issues, teaches kids how the different levels of government affect our

everyday lives and most importantly, how to work within the framework to be good citizens (Questionnaire 16).

There were 36% of the participants who felt that this course is only a rehash of previous curricula, and that this new course does not offer any new insights into teaching civics or citizenship, "It is my understanding that the government unit was always the last unit in the old history program. Which I am sure not many teachers were able to reach that point during their teaching" (Questionnaire 1). The remaining 16% claimed that they were not familiar with previous curricula and so a comparison was not possible.

15) From your experience teaching the course, do you feel that there was sufficient teacher input into the creation of the civics curriculum?

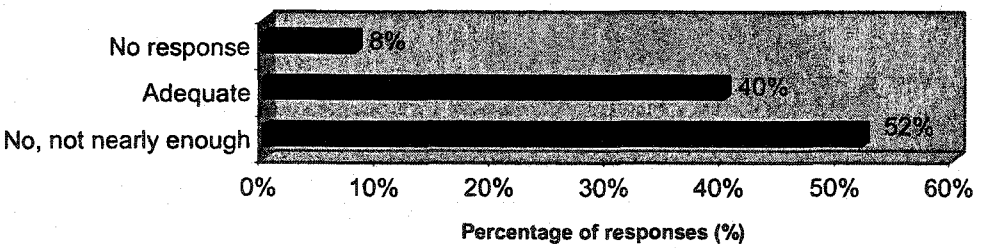


Figure xvi

The goal of the question was to have the participants review and examine the expectations of the course as well as their teaching experiences. This analysis of their experiences would then allow the participants to evaluate the course and determine, based on these experiences, whether they felt that their fellow teachers had had sufficient input into the initiation and implementation of this course. More then half of the participants, 52% responded with a no. They felt that the course was too compact, and made too many demands on the teacher/school/resources, to have had sufficient teacher input, "Not at all. Some of the curriculum expectations are not possible to achieve in the short time period that is allotted for the

civics course. There also seems to be a lack of balance in the expectations" (Questionnaire 1). Another participant shares this sentiment of a lack in sufficient teacher input in the following manner, "HA! HA! HA! I wasn't aware that real teachers actually had input into the curriculum they are told to implement in the schools" (Questionnaire 22). There were 40% of the participants who felt the course had adequate teacher input into its initiation and implementation, "Yes, but there is still a lot to cover in 45 days, not a lot of flexibility to cover all expectations, i.e. local government" (Questionnaire 20). A further 8% of the participants had no comment.

16) Could the course be offered more effectively? If so, how?

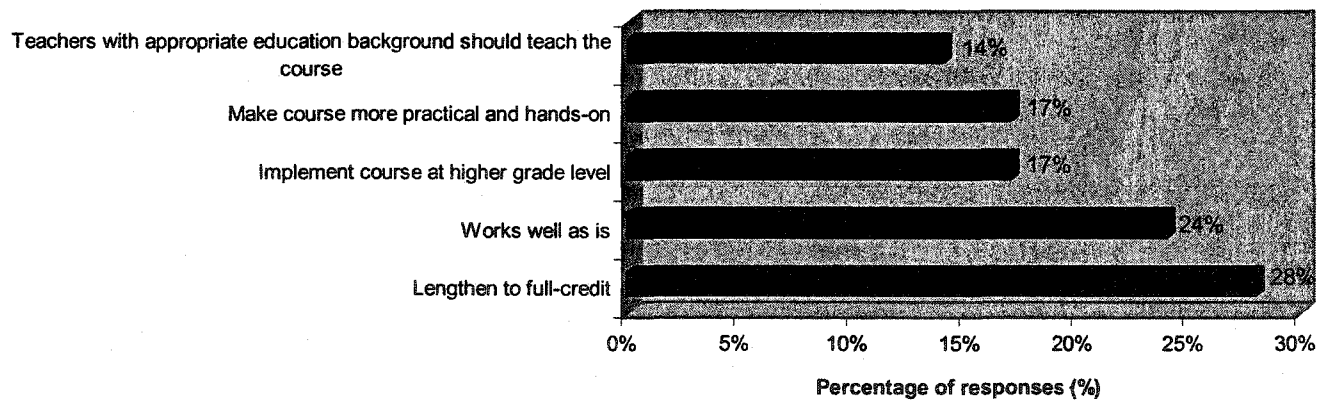


Figure xvii

Teachers offered insight into their perceived trouble areas with the civics course. The responses allow the teachers to outline those areas of the course that they feel may limit their abilities to teach the course as intended. There were 28% who felt the course needed to be longer, extended to a full credit course stating, "Yes, [the course needs to be] at a different grade level (for older students), furthermore, having the course offered as a full credit instead of a half course" (Questionnaire 9). One quarter, 24% felt the course worked as is stating that, "I believe it

effective" (Questionnaire 16). There were 17% of the participants that felt that the course needed to be implemented to a higher-grade level. An additional 17% stated that the course needed to be more hands-on and less theoretical. A further 14% felt that the course needed to be taught by teachers with the appropriate educational background suggesting, "Ensure history specialists teach the course. Do not farm it out so as to simply finish out timetables" (Questionnaire 2). Another participant echoed this sentiment in the following manner,

> I feel the effectiveness of the course depends greatly on the individual teacher, their background knowledge of the subject, their educational background, their teachable subjects, the training they have received to teach the course. All of this will increase their enthusiasm for the subject matter they are to teach (Questionnaire 10).

17) What recommendations would you put forth to the Ministry of Education about the course?

The previous question asked teachers to give ideas as to how to make the course more effective. This question allows the participants to give their own personal input into the initiation and implementation of the course. By asking them to give their own personal recommendations to the Ministry of Education, the question allowed the participants to be proactive, allowing them to consider any and all areas of concern that they may have with regards to the civics course.

Response	Percentage of Teachers
Responded	78%
No response	22%

Table i

Even with the option of modifying the course, 22% had no comment, or comments that implied that they felt that any response would be ignored, "They wouldn't listen to us anyways so let them [the ministry] figure it out" (Questionnaire 17).

Of those who responded	Percentage of Teachers
Increase the course length/time frame	26%
Implement at older grade	22%
Review the course expectations	22%
Stream the course	7%
Better access, increase resources	7%
Only teachers with appropriate backgrounds teach course	7%
They [the ministry] doesn't care about the teachers' ideas	4%
Leave the course as is	4%

Table ii

Of the remaining participants, there were 22% who responded that expectations needed to be revised and made attainable for both the teacher and the students, "Have teachers involved in writing the curriculum instead of Ph.D.'s that have not taught in the high school classroom for the past 20 years" (Questionnaire 7). "This [course] should be more of a course for exploration and uninhibited learning, more than the course the expectations indicate. It's hard to get the students to get past that" (Questionnaire 10).

Similarly, 22% felt the course should be offered to older students, "Have the course at an older grade, make the course a full credit course, demand that teachers with history/social science degrees teach it" (Questionnaire 9). Furthermore, there were 26% who stated that they would have extended the period allotted for the course in the curriculum, lengthening the course to a full credit. Furthermore, 7% stated that they want better and more accessible resources available.

An additional 7% responded that only civics conversant teachers should teach the course, "More money is needed for textbooks/resources and a stipulation that only history teachers should teach this course" (Questionnaire 2). With 7% who stated that they would stream the course. A further 4% stated that it doesn't matter what they thought because the Ministry of Education will do what they please. With 4% of the teachers, said the course should be left as is, exclaiming, "Keep it! My students really enjoy it" (Questionnaire 5).

18) Overall, what would be the best way to describe your feelings regarding the civics curriculum?

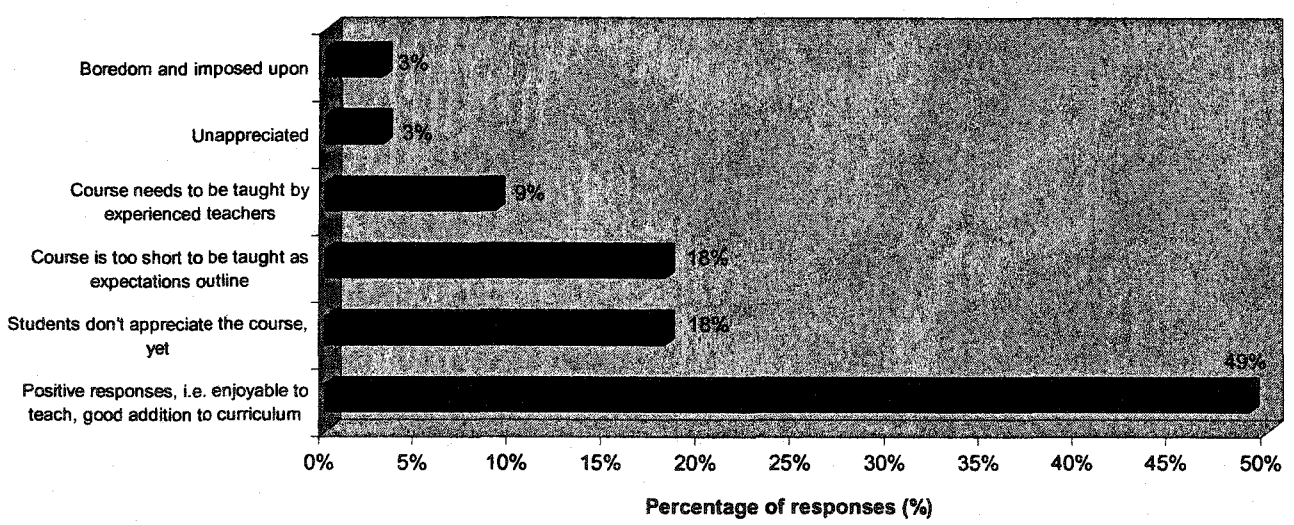


Figure xviii

The responses to the questions assist in ascertaining the overall efficacy beliefs held by the teachers. Nearly half, 49% of the responses were positive, stating that they enjoy the course,

> Generally, I like it. I use what is critical to teach, those subjects I find interesting. I locate those topics that make for good debates. In general terms I do what I feel is best with the curriculum, to make it better, when considering the limited time and usually disinterested audience (Questionnaire 22).

Likewise there were those participants who valued the message the course provided to their students, stating that,

> I think it was a great addition to our curriculum. People need to be aware of how decisions are made and how those decisions will affect their lives before they happen. This is a starting point to inform students where to get the information they need (Questionnaire 5).

There were 18% who felt that the students do not appreciate the course at this point in their lives, but feel that they will as they get older,

> I find many of the students have a difficult time relating to course content or find it boring. Perhaps, implementing the course at a later grade when students are more mature and develop a perspective on important issues they would be able to relate and enjoy the course a lot more (Questionnaire 19).

An additional 18% felt that the course is too short to be taken seriously by students or to be taught the way it was intended,

> Students, in general terms, find the material dry and excessive. If a teacher goes in with little or no experience, they find it hard to motivate the students. It [the course and lessons] has to be activity/project based. This means less writing, more discussion, debates, or hands-on work, and of course negating some expectations (Questionnaire 10).

Another described,

> This course was offered as a one term (half semester) course. It was sometimes difficult to cover the entire course content, let al. one meet all course expectations. They also limited the number of opportunities for summative evaluations. For an applied (and lower) level students, the limited time affected their ability to cope with the material, as

much of the course work had to be textbook and question/answer work driven (Questionnaire 12).

There were 9% who felt that the course needed to be taught by teachers who better understood the course and expectations. With 3% that stated that there is a need for more resources to aid in the appreciation for the course. Finally, 3% said "I'm finally starting to get over my feelings of boredom with the subject matter and cynicism with this, this government's machinations and tinkering"(Questionnaire 6).

From reviewing the information gathered within the questionnaires, the following can be summarized, the majority of civics teachers do not hold the relevant educational background to teach the course, as determined by the Ministry of Education and Training. The majority of civics teachers had taught the civics course only twice at most. Further, it was observed that the majority of teachers reported that the training sessions were either not offered to them or not sufficient to teach the course as intended by the curriculum documents. The respondents stated that their peers were their largest source of support, while one fourth of the respondents reported that they usually work alone.

Moreover, the participants stated that they believed that the course was created either as a political tool or to accommodate discrepancies within previous curricula. A majority of participants stated that they believed that the volume of expectations of the course were the largest hindrance to implementing the course. Further, the respondents stated that the course was too theoretical for all students to succeed. Half of the participants stated that they believed the civics course needed to be implemented in another fashion, i.e. changing the grade, age level, streamed vs. de-streamed. The other half of the participants believed that the course needed some tweaking to improve implementation.

Three quarters of the participants felt that they did not teach the course as well as they had intended. Many of them stated that time constraints, unrealistic expectations, and their lack of adequate training/background limited their ability to implement and teach the course as outlined within the curriculum documents. Approximately half of the participants felt that the course worked well in theory, but needed some minor changes to be implemented properly. The other half of the teachers felt that the course needs significant changes to allow for proper implementation.

Interviews

The responses provided within the open-ended questionnaires were very rich and thick in their descriptions of experiences and beliefs pertaining to the initiation and implementation of the secondary school civics course. Even though the format of the open-ended questionnaires allowed the participants to express themselves fully, there were still instances where clarification and further probing of the participants responses were warranted and desired. The method used to gather this clarification was through the use of semi-structured interview sessions. The interview participants volunteered to participate by indicating so on their open-ended questionnaires. Furthermore, each of the semi-structured interview sessions was crafted specifically for the individual who was being interviewed. The process of question generation occurred by reviewing, interpreting, and synthesizing the responses that were given by the first interview participant on their open-ended questionnaire. This method created the questions for the first interview session. Likewise, this process of question generation was used for designing the questions used in each of the other two interview sessions.

Each of the three interview sessions took place independently from the others. In fact, there was a single participant chosen from each of the three randomly selected school boards,

and due to the geographic separation of the three boards, the three interviews occurred weeks apart from one another. As stated previously, the questions asked during the interview sessions arose from their individual responses given within each individual's questionnaire. Although each interview session took place independently from the others and was created specifically for the individual being interviewed, there were seven overlapping and reoccurring themes present in all interviews.

The information gathered from the interview sessions will be presented in the same order of reoccurring themes. This presentation method will enable the reader to follow the information more succinctly. The themes are presented in the following order: (a) the teachers who are being assigned to teach the civics course; (b) types and availability of training provided to the civics teachers; (c) support structures available to the civics teachers; (d) resources available to the civics teachers; (e) civics teachers views on the ability to meet all course expectations; (f) time constraints felt by civics teachers; and (g) civics teachers views on the appropriate measures needed to determine student participation.

Interview 1

At the time of the interview, participant 1, Tammy (a pseudonym), was starting her second year of teaching, and this was her first year with a full timetable. She graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in History and did not receive any training from the Ministry of Education regarding the civics course, nor did she receive any additional training from her school board. At the time of the interview, Tammy was teaching one civics class and had taught the course once before in the previous school year. The school Tammy taught at was in the centre of the city and had an estimate of 1800 to 2000 students. Tammy was one of four teachers who was teaching the civics course that semester.

When asked about the teachers who are teaching the course, Tammy stated that she believed the course was "dumped" onto new teachers, regardless of teaching specialties. She went further to explain that,

> ...there are certain teachers from the history department who teach it, but often when there are teachers who are short on their timeline requirements, other departments such as, English, French, and Business, what have you, they will pick up the civics line (Tammy, p. 7).

She was then asked if these teachers had any training for the civics course. Tammy stated, "Not as far as I am aware" (Tammy, p. 7). The participant was then asked if she felt a teacher's personal background in addition to a lack of adequate ministerial or board training would affect their ability to teach the civics course. Tammy reported that,

> I think it effects the students views on the course, they might view the course as not too serious because they have a teacher teaching who really isn't either versed in the topic area, or isn't interested in the course content. These people are probably teaching it for the first time so their delivery will not be as smooth as someone with the appropriate background would. Also if you are from the social science department you will probably try harder to do a good job because the course falls in your department of study and you will want to demonstrate to your [department] heads that you can teach well (Tammy, p. 7).

This statement also alluded to the fact that those teachers from teaching disciplines other than the social sciences might not try as hard to implement the course as outlined within the course expectations.

The next theme that emerged from the interview session was the availability of support structures. These supports were outlined in the first interview session as existing both within the board and within the school. During the interview session, Tammy reported that the school board put together writing teams to aid in the implementation of the new courses. When asked who organized these teams, it was discovered that most schools within this school board had a Learning Coordinator present. Tammy described the Learning Coordinator thusly, "The Learning Coordinator puts together information for all first year teachers, if they don't have any information, if they don't have any resources available to them, they will find resources, for them" (Tammy, p. 2). When asked about other supports within the schools, specifically administratively, Tammy stated that,

> ...VP's [Vice principals] can get you the names of the Learning Coordinators and provide you with the contact information...mainly what is done is you approach your department head, and if they can't help then you go to your VP (Tammy, pp. 2-3).

Tammy stated that while there are a few forms of support available to the new or inexperienced teacher, the main source of support exists in the form of peers. It was stated that Learning Coordinators are also helpful in connecting teachers with one another to aid in sharing their resources.

Tammy stated that sharing of resources amongst teachers is a necessity, mainly because there are so few resources available. When asked specifically about textbooks and their availability for her to use, Tammy stated that, "For me yes, but for the first few years the course was offered no, because they had to order and create them" (Tammy, p. 3). Tammy also states that resource manuals, and supplementary documents are either not available or hard to find "So I have to find, (on my own), a copy of the teacher resource book, Ministry documents, teacher

resources, textbooks, and the board units that were created by those writing teams" (Tammy, p.3).

The theme of expectations that was used within the data presentation section of this study, is a broad description of the term that all participants made mention of. The context in which Tammy described the theme expectations is within the context of balance and attainability of the expectations. When asked if she felt the expectations were appropriate for the course, Tammy replied, "...I do think the some of the course expectations are easily reached, but some expectations are too... um, there are just too many to teach and to get to" (Tammy, p. 6). It was then asked to further explain the comment 'just too many expectations', to which Tammy responded "Too many for a teacher in a half course to cover, and the expectations in the course do not cover all the KITCA (Knowledge, Inquiry, Thinking, Communication, Application) categories, well they do cover them all, but not equally" (Tammy, p. 3). In follow-up to this it was asked whether the participant felt that the expectations were unattainable and unbalanced to which she replied, "Yes, both" (Tammy, p. 6).

Tammy described how the sheer volume of expectations is a limiting factor to the proper implementation of the civics course. Specifically Tammy stated, "Well, it's a half course which means it's 11 weeks, and the amount of information they need to cover in those 11 weeks and to do it thoroughly, it's impossible. There is just far too much information" (Tammy, p. 4). Tammy was asked about the implementation of the course, specifically about the length of time allotted to teach the course and whether or not she felt that this course warranted being offered as a full-credit course. Tammy stated that,

> I think the teacher would be more comfortable with having to cover the amount of expectations in the a greater amount of time opposed to having to cram this many

> expectations into a half credit course. ...If the course was implemented at a higher age group, you would be able to go to things that would be more relevant to them. Grade 10's are usually and tend to be more immature (p. 5).

Tammy alluded to the fact that she believed the grade 10 students to be too immature for the course. She was then asked what type of students would benefit from this course. Tammy felt that older students would benefit from this course, stating that grade 10 students "just don't have the mindset for it" (p. 3). She went on to further explain that the expectations outlined within the curriculum documents "...becomes too much for them" (p. 4).

When asked if there were any other areas that she felt hindered successful implementation of the course, Tammy spoke of the open nature of the curriculum. She stated that this open nature "is a major problem" (p. 4), and when further probed about her feelings she stated that,

> ...Your academic students are further ahead than your applied students. ... You see you need to find a balance for all the students, between the applied and the academic. In finding that balance, even some of the applied kids can't live up to the expectations [of the teacher and the curriculum]. I mean you can just look at them sometimes during class and you can see that they are lost. So, if they did make it so that there was one for applied, one for academic I think the course would be able to be taught and implemented more effectively (p. 4).

From reviewing the interview session with Tammy, it can be summarized that she believes that the civics course is used as a time-filler or pacifier for teachers who are new to a school. She feels that a lack of background with the civics curriculum is a negative situation for both the teacher and the students. Tammy has also informed us that there might have been

training sessions available in the first year the course was implemented but not any longer, and those teachers who received training are not teaching the course now. The supports available to a struggling teacher were limited and consisted of peers, department heads, vice principals, and board-appointed Learning Coordinators. Similarly, the resources available to a teacher were limited to hand-me-downs and whatever a teacher could find on their own.

Tammy stated that she believed that the expectations found in the curriculum documents were unbalanced and unattainable for all students. She also felt that time constraints worked against her from implementing the course properly, stating that the time allotted to the course was insufficient based on the number of expectations on the teacher. Tammy further stated, that in her opinion, while the course was necessary at some point, this age group was too young. She also stated that if all students were to benefit from the course then it needed to be streamed.

Interview 2

Interview Participant two, Anthony (a pseudonym), was starting his fourteenth year of teaching at the time of the interview. Anthony has a background in Music, English, and Library Studies, and had graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in Music. At the time of the interview Anthony was teaching one class of civics and had taught the course twice in the past two academic years. Anthony received training from the Ministry of Education, as part of a one-day seminar that was comprised of not only information pertaining to the civics course but also included information concerning the entire newly implemented social studies curriculum. Anthony teaches in a school that has approximately 450 students and he has been the only civics teacher within his school over the last two academic years.

Anthony was asked about his observations and beliefs about the teachers who were teaching the civics course, to which he responded,

> Well in this school and the board it appears that is mostly teachers who are out of their subject areas… As far as new teachers, one of the civics teachers was relatively new; the others have been here for a while. It appears that a lot of the teachers across the board …aren't within their background (p. 11).

When asked about his own specific background and training, Anthony explained that he was an out-of-subject teacher. Further he explained that there was a training session offered once by the board but explained that "I had only taught the course the once at that point, and I don't have the history/civics background that they did so, being a cross-discipline teacher I didn't understand some of the things they were talking about" (p. 10).

When Anthony was asked to detail that singular training session, he reported that the session consisted of a gathering of civics teachers from the board, where they discussed the curriculum objectives and networked. The main purpose, in the participant's view, was to "develop a network of civics teachers. We did look at some specifics of the course…" (p. 10).

It was asked whether there were resources presented at the training session. Anthony stated that he could not remember any resources being issued, but did go on to explain that most teachers acquire resources via two main methods, "The majority of resources that are available to new teachers will and usually come from self-made models, or from retiring teachers" (p. 11).

When Anthony was asked about his experiences regarding the course expectations, he stated that he could not answer the question fully because he has not had the opportunity to dissect the expectations yet. Anthony went on to explain that the time constraints he has experienced have worked against him in trying to understand and teach the expectations. Anthony has described the time constraints within two separate contexts. Anthony first expressed

time within the context of acquiring the course to his course load, and he then described time in context of teaching the course and meeting all expectations. Anthony explained that it was

> ...because when I was first given this course I had just enough time to review the textbook and I went into survival mode. I haven't really been given the time to assimilate all the expectations in the course documents. I have reviewed the outlines, but have not delved too deep into the expectations. To be honest with you I cannot meet all the expectations and am not trying to, due to the time allotted to teach the course. Half the time, the time spent within classes is limited because of interruptions... As a teacher, you keep losing those days... Which of course never allows you to teach the class, or course you or the government had intended (p. 10).

It can be observed by the participant's comments that time and the lack thereof is a problem that he experienced with the course. To follow-up, he was also asked what other areas he believed hindered the implementation of the course, as well as other areas of concern that he had witnessed. Anthony stated that,

> ...the problem that I am finding is that because it is an open course the students that we would have called basic level, who are in that course, are having a hard and difficult time grasping the concepts because they are kinda abstract... we only offer this as a one-term course, there is not enough time to go into things and explain things in more depth (p. 9).

It was then asked if he believed that all students seemed to be having difficulties with the course as it is currently being implemented. Anthony stated that not all students were suffering, in fact he stated that, "The advanced or academic leveled students seem to be doing well, and of course the ones in the middle some of them are struggling because they are at the lower end of the academic vs. applied spectrum..." (p. 9).

When asked if there was a way that he believed might encourage all the students to perform well within the civics course, Anthony stated that there were changes that might improve student participation and success. Namely,

> ...try to make the course relevant to the students by displaying and presenting student examples, but because of time there is not a lot of practical things that students can do to get them interested. It would be ideal to be able to incorporate some sort of practical component to the course (p. 12).

In summary, it is observed that from Anthony's experience, the majority of civics teachers within his school and within his board are new teachers, with most of them being asked to teach outside of their subject discipline. Anthony was a participant in a board training session and admits that while it may have been a successful manner in which to introduce the course, that the training session did little to prepare him to teach the course as intended by the curricular documents. The main sources of support that Anthony felt were from that of his peers, and he believed that peer support structures are a mainstay in acquiring and developing resources.

Anthony stated that he felt the course expectations are too in-depth and excessive for the time allotted. The time constraint of timetable acquisitions was another time factor that hindered his ability to assimilate the course into his personal teaching background. Anthony expressed that the course has flaws that may allow for teaching troubles, namely Anthony stated that the open nature of the course was a hindrance. Anthony also made it clear that the course needs to be more relevant and practical for the students to succeed.

Interview 3

Interview Participant 3, Leslie (a pseudonym), at the time of the interview was starting her second year of teaching, and this was her first year with a full timetable. She graduated with

a Bachelors of Arts in French and did not receive any additional training from the Ministry of Education regarding the civics course, nor did she receive any additional training from her school board. At the time of the interview, Leslie was not teaching the civics class, but had taught the course twice before in the previous school year. The school Leslie taught at was in the centre of the city and had 1200 to 1500 students enrolled. When Leslie had taught the civics course, she was one of three teachers who were teaching the civics course within her school.

As in the previous interviews the issue of trained civics teachers arose. Leslie was asked who she saw being offered or told to teach the civics courses. Leslie explained that in her experience the civics course was offered to a variety of different people, stating that it, "Depends on the school, in one school it seems that the civics course is taught by whoever has a hole to fill in their timetable, at other schools they try to give the civics course to social science teachers..." (p. 14).

When asked about her own specific background and if she felt it was a disadvantage not being a social science teacher and not receiving the one-time only board and ministry-level training she expressed that,

> Yes, it is a definite disadvantage from not having the training or the created exemplars that were a direct offshoot of the training sessions. I do like history... politics... and current events, but I don't have any formal training in those and I haven't even taken any university courses in those topics, so whatever interest and information I bring to the course is just on a personal level. That is hard, and the fact that I was swamped with trying to do my other courses within my specialty, trying to demonstrate an ability to the language department head that I could perform there, civics really took a major background focus in my teaching mind" (p. 14).

Leslie mentioned exemplars that were created within the training sessions. When asked to further elaborate about their use as teaching aides, Leslie explained that these resources were initially intended to be used by all civics teachers, but these exemplars have not yet been produced.

As mentioned by Anthony, the mainstay of the new teacher's resources and support structure is based on receiving a hand-me-down copy of the unit and lesson plans from previous civics teachers. Leslie explains that,

> ...unfortunately these types of supports don't exist everywhere. For example, the course that I borrowed from the individual who taught the course prior to me was pretty shabby because they had taught the course under the same conditions that I did, short notice and without having a background in the topic (p.16).

The resources available to the teacher seemed to be limited according to Leslie. She was asked about other resources that she was aware of within the board. Leslie identified textbooks, textbook reference books, teacher's hand-me-downs, and, depending on the school there may be videos which, in her words, "are incredibly painful to watch" (p. 15). Leslie was also asked about the availability of the textbooks, specifically, whether or not she had new or old books. Leslie stated that, "...they are new, they came out with the course the year I taught, but that would lead me to believe that the textbooks were not available the first couple of times the course was offered" (p. 15).

When reviewing Leslie's questionnaire it had been mention that time constraints were a hindrance to her being able to teach/implement the course as intended. When asked to elaborate on her position Leslie, explained that,

> ...you only have a half semester to teach the course, and even the textbook is not constructed in a manner that would allow you to pace it properly... There is just too

> much information for the time allotted to teach it. But of course that also depends on the teachers interpretation of the expectations and decisions on which expectations deserve more time than others (p. 16).

It also becomes clear that Leslie had two interpretations of the time constraints that hindered her ability to properly teach/implement the course as intended. As observed in the above statement, Leslie pointed to the course allotted time, but she also made it clear that there was the time constraint of preparation. Leslie informed us that sometimes the teachers do not know that they are teaching the class until days before the beginning of the school year,

> ...sometimes you get a little notice and sometimes you don't. It depends on how much shuffling around the board that occurs and a course like civics/careers studies, that is the type of course that gets shuffled the most. And usually lands on the new teachers, young teachers, or the cross-discipline teachers (p. 15).

When asked about her observations about the students and their appreciation of the course, Leslie maintains that, while the grade is probably the best age group based on maturity and workload, "the majority of students do not share this type of concerns for the government, or politics as represented within the texts, and [curricular] guidelines" (p. 17).

To summarize the comments made by Leslie during her interview session, it was observed that she felt the civics course within her board is used as a time-filler for teachers. Further, she observed that the majority of civics teachers were newly hired teachers and the majority of them were teaching out of their discipline. She stated that she was aware that her board had exemplar writing sessions at some point in the past three years, but has yet to see any documents emerge from those sessions. Leslie, like the others, felt that peers were the mainstay

of support for civics teachers, and that the only way of attaining resources was through acquiring hand-me-downs from previous teachers.

Leslie stated that she felt the expectations of the course were too excessive to be taught within the time allotted, but felt that the course could not manage with full credit status. With that being said, Leslie did state that the half credit period is too short to properly implement the course, and a compromise between the two was necessary. Leslie also felt that there was time constraints placed on her by the school board, namely the date on which she was assigned the course. The course was assigned to Leslie, as in the other two cases, just days before the school year. Leslie believes that the course, based on the students' workload, has been implemented at the appropriate grade, but still feels that this age group does not show interest in the topic areas covered.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to review and summarize the data presented within the study, develop a conclusion regarding the study, and to develop recommendations for further actions and follow-up studies. The purpose of this study was to examine the teacher efficacy beliefs held by those teachers who were either currently teaching the civics course or who had taught the civics course in the past, and determine, based on their responses, if their attitudes would assist in the long-term continuation of the newly initiated/implemented civics course.

Methodology

There were two methods used to gather the data for this study and included open-ended questionnaires as well as semi-structured interview sessions. The findings from both research methods were compared and contrasted with one another. The similarities and the differences between the two research methods were identified and recorded. Each of these two methods were used to elicit the lived experiences of the participants, and attempted to develop a well-rounded and in-depth conclusion to the research questions.

Summary and Discussion

Based on the data presented in the previous chapter, the following can be summarized and concluded about the lived experiences of the Ontario secondary school civics teachers found within those three randomly selected boards used within this study.

Influence on Change

As described by Fullan (1991), if a proposed change is easily recognized by teachers as addressing an important need then it is more likely to be implemented. This feeling concerning outside influences acting on the educational system is addressed by Fullan (1991). Fullan states

that the factors that influence changes to the curriculum and the interpretations of those influences may lead teachers, who are asked to implement the new curriculum, to gain emotions or attitudes that may lead to the new changes not being successfully institutionalized.

Similarly, political pressures within the implementation process can also lead to many possible outcomes for the proposed changes and therefore can lead to many feelings being expressed by those people who must implement the changes. The obvious outcomes are the failure or the success of the proposed changes. Moreover, the amount of political pressure placed on the implementers could have numerous effects on the way in which that pressure is interpreted. The amount of political pressure may affect the trust the implementers have in the changes that they are being asked to implement. Henson (1995) states, "Reform can only be built on a platform of trust and consensus" (p. 125).

The building of trust is important to the teachers and schools that must implement the new changes. With the increasing number of changes that are currently occurring in the educational system, it becomes increasingly difficult for teachers to interpret and question the changes that are being asked to incorporate by outside forces.

It is described within the data that the majority of the respondents stated that they believed the civics course was created as a political tool without a trace of significant teacher input. One respondent stated, "Have teachers involved in writing the curriculum instead of Ph.D.'s" (Questionnaire 7).

Ownership

The second summarization that can be made from the responses of the civics teachers was that there was insufficient teacher input into the creation of the civics curriculum, thereby reducing their sense of ownership of the course. According to Fullan (1993), unless reform is

owned by teachers and is generated interactively between centralized authorities and local schools, it cannot make a substantive difference in generating changed pedagogical practices. This lack of perceived ownership affects the teachers' understandings of how the changes that they are making within their classrooms and to their teaching loads will be completed. As stated by Fullan (1991), these feelings can arise because teachers are not usually members of the committees that create the changes to the curriculum that they are asked to implement. With a lack of ownership, there may be a decrease in the perceived sense of responsibility for insuring that these changes reach the continuation phase.

Indeed the lack of teacher input maybe a detriment to implementation and continuation of the new course. According to Fullan and Park (1981),

> Specifically, the chances of changing practice are enhanced when school systems. 2) have set up a system for obtaining teacher input about the need for a given change, and have provided opportunities for professional development on a continuous basis during implementation.... Teacher input means that teachers are giving and receiving help and helping to define change in practice (p. 18).

Henson (1995) also stated that, "The literature also provides suggestions as to how teachers can best be enticed to get involved. Early involvement, that is, during the planning stage, is especially important" (p. 249). Therefore, it would appear that the lack of teacher input into the creation and implementation of the changes asked of them to incorporate, could ultimately lead to the demise of the new changes.

It was demonstrated in this study that early involvement of teachers in the creation and initiation process would earn the policy creators rewards in the end. These rewards, of course, will be the an increase in cooperation of the teachers in the implementation process. It can be

observed that if an initiator of change wishes to have their changes accepted and helped along the implementation and continuation phases of the policy-making process it is in their best interests to include mainstream teachers into the initiation phase of the change. It is further demonstrated that for a change to be incorporated, there is a need to involve all members of the educational system, and the changes must have a clear purpose.

Teachers

When a course is taught within a secondary school, the students and the parents assume that the teacher is well versed in the subject area in which they teach. It is an assumption that has merit, an assumption that is reinforced by the OMET when they inform the public that, "Teachers and principals are key implementers, as they use professional expertise to align teaching, assessment and reporting practices with the new curriculum and policies" (OMET, November 2002, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca /eng/document/curricul/ update/winter00/winter00.html). The public is led to believe that the teachers within the schools are going to understand the curriculum and implement it accordingly.

From reviewing the responses given by the participants, it can be summarized that the teachers had concerns regarding the teachers who are teaching the course. Specifically, teachers made the request that, ideally, only those who have a social science degree teach the course within the schools. The concerns raised by these respondents are even more prudent when taking into account the information gathered by the first two questions of the questionnaire, where it was reported that nearly two thirds of the civics teachers did not hold a social science degree, and were teaching the course for the first or second time. Clearly the request made by the respondents is a legitimate concern for the successful implementation and continuation of the civics course.

Training

One striking aspect of many of the studies that review change within the educational setting is the importance placed on teacher training to insure the full benefits of those newly crafted changes will be achieved. Studies show that those teachers who had received in-service training sessions, which pertained to newly crafted curriculum, more often will obtain significantly higher levels of student performances. As Means, Blando, Olson, Middleton, Remz, and Zorfass (1993) have illustrated with the inclusion of increased technology training for teachers who have implemented new technology applications within the school setting, that by its mere inclusion "Technology applications alone will not bring about significant change in teaching and learning. Teachers also need to re-evaluate and revitalize the curriculum through appropriate training sessions" (p. 3)

As can be identified by the data in the study, it can be stated that the training provided by the ministry was insufficient. The data generated by the respondents suggests that those who did receive or attend the one-time training session felt that it did not provide them with any practical approaches to teaching the course. Moreover, it is also noted that the majority of all the current civics teachers had not received any training, and they answered that there was an initial opportunity to attend training sessions. This also raises the same issue of new and out-of-subject teachers. If most civics teachers are new to the civics classroom, who is providing the training for the new civics teachers with the information obtained at the one-time training session? It starts to become clear that most of the new civics teachers did not receive the benefits of the previously offered training sessions.

Support Structures

All members of the school environment act as support structures for all teachers within the school. Sound supports are important within the schools during the change process because change is usually perceived and interpreted at the individual teacher's solitary perspective. Since change is generally perceived as the individual's responsibility, interactions among teachers are a potentially powerful influence upon the success or failure of change. However, as illustrated by Fullan (1991), the realities of 'classroom press' mean that teachers have few routine opportunities to interact with each other or with other adults. When they do, their most effective source of assistance is other teachers, followed by administrators and then specialists.

Aside from peers, the leaders within the school community are viewed as equals in the change process. The role of leader can be any person in the hierarchy of the school system. The factor that is a determinant in the success of the new change is the effectiveness and power of that leader. Henson (1995) states,

> The contributions of the members of the critical mass, who absorb conflicting messages from the other groups as they wait to do what they must will be determined by the leadership they receive. Left alone, the majority will do little or nothing; correctly motivated, they often surprise even themselves with their contributions. (p. 261).

Henson illustrates the positive influence a truly effective leader may have on the group.

Notwithstanding, it was observed from the data that the majority of respondents stated that when confronted with difficulties in the implementation of the civics course, they would usually seek the aid of a fellow teacher, consult with their department heads or they would stick it out and try to solve the problem on their own. When dealing with the implementation and continuation of a new course it is essential that the entire school-body work together, and when

confronted with difficulties, the teacher should have the perception that they could have found solace within the leaders of the school. While it may feel to some that the teachers were the only participants in the implementation process, they certainly cannot perform this task alone.

Resources

Not only is the availability of an influential leader essential to the change process, but also the availability of useful, accessible resources is as equally important. As illustrated by Fullan (1991),

> Inadequate quality and even the simple unavailability of materials and other resources can result when adoption decisions are made on grounds of political necessity, or even on grounds of perceived need without the follow-up or preparation time necessary to generate adequate materials. Ambitious projects are nearly always politically driven. As a result, the time line between the initiation decision and start-up is typically too short to attend to matters of quality (p. 72).

Furthermore, it is easy to understand that with the ever-shrinking budgets within the schools, teachers are always seeking effective and accessible resources to aid in their understanding and deployment of new changes. Thus, the complications of implementing new curriculum, courses, or changes were only magnified by the lack of adequate resources/materials available to the teachers. As Fullan and Park (1981) claimed, "As already discussed, a key tool in successful implementation plan is the allocation of resources, both internal and external" (p. 54). These views about resources were furthered by Fullan (2001), as he explained;

> The new policy or innovation as a set of materials and resources is the most visible aspect of change, and the easiest to employ, ... revolutionary [changes], are based on

fundamental changes in conception, which in turn relate to skills and materials (pp. 44-45).

The message of both authors illustrates how the availability of usable materials/resources eases the implementation process. By providing teachers with a hardcopy of materials/resources for use within the classroom, the ability to realize course expectations, and would have increased the teachers ability to gage the depth of each of the expectations for the course, and thereby decreasing the guess work that existed for the teachers within the schools.

Further, as reported by the respondents, the resources that were being used within the three different school boards ranged from barely adequate to insufficient, with almost all of them having reported that they always add to or supplement standard resource materials. Additionally, it was also reported within the interview sessions that in all of the boards, the basic and essential resource for the classroom, the civics textbook, was not available to the teacher until the beginning of the second year of implementation.

Course Expectations

Researchers Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984) suggested that teachers were willing to put forth a greater effort and implement important changes if the change addressed a certain need and demonstrated practicality. Of course, this raises the question of who determines the needs? The point is that desirable changes from the point of view of the OMET, for example, might not be desired or needed by teachers within the schools. Even if agreement exists about the need for a change, it is also important that clarity exists about both the goals of the change and the means by which they are to be achieved.

Furthermore, Henson (1995) stated that within the curricula design process, there are essential criteria that should be kept in mind. These criteria are,

> Scope...refers to the breadth of the curriculum at any level or at any given time... Sequence...is concerned with the order of topics over time... Continuity...refers to the 'smoothness' or absence of disruption in the curriculum over time... Articulation... refers to the smooth flow of curriculum on both dimensions, vertical and horizontal... Balance... *'Well-rounded'* (pp.178-9).

According to Fullan (1992) and Hargreaves (1994), there is also considerable evidence that where top-down structural reforms are implemented too rapidly or with insufficient foresight, then confusion, ambiguity, and conflict are likely results. Consequently, if the people who created the change or curriculum are out-of-touch with the true needs of the classroom teacher or the students enrolled in the course, or if they implement the course hastily, their crafted changes may not be easily adaptable to the actual classroom environment.

The respondents expressed their concerns regarding the expectations of the course. The comments received stated that many of the respondents felt that there were two main problems with the expectations. The first problem dealt with the sheer volume of the expectations, while the second dealt with the extent of background knowledge necessary for the students to be successful at understanding and putting into practice the information found within the expectations. It has been stated that when creating and designing the expectations of a new course, it becomes important that the expectations are clear, concise, and appropriate for the students enrolled in the course.

Course Practicality

As outlined by Barber (1992), Hodgetts (1968), and, Marsh (1999), integrating the concepts taught within the classroom and implementing the lessons learned in a contemporary and practical application will vastly increase the sense of understanding, activism, political

motivations, and charity, and achieve the ultimate goal of any civic course, a greater sense of citizenship.

The above information touched upon another of the summarized points made by the data. The respondents felt as though the curriculum was not accessible to all students, many felt as though the curriculum is too theoretical to be used by the students in a practical manner. It was further stated that the respondents felt that the curriculum alienated those students who were not studying within the academic stream.

Time Constraints

The final point that can be made from the respondents lived experiences is that of time. The teachers mentioned time within three different contexts. The first context pertained to the time allotted to teachers to prepare to teach the course. All interview participants stated that they received the civics course days before the school year began. This point of properly trained teachers has been addressed previously.

The second context of time, as mentioned by the teachers, is their own personal time. It was stated that the teachers teaching the course are mostly out-of subject teachers. This means that the civics teachers must adapt their schedules to accommodate learning and understanding the course materials prior to teaching the lessons to their students. Further, as mentioned in interview 3, these teachers are usually first year teachers who are trying to impress department heads and therefore are not as conscientious about their out-of-subject courses like civics.

The third context of time, as described by the participants, deals primarily with the fact that the civics course is a half semester course, but has as many learning expectations as a full semester course. The respondents stated that they have felt rushed to complete the course. As it

can be seen from their responses, teachers are the people who are usually asked to participate in, make personal sacrifices for, and implement these changes.

Teachers are on the frontlines of the change process. They are the people who are asked to devote time and work with the newly crafted materials and resources. It is important to ensure that when trying to implement change that the first consideration made is to the ultimate implementer, the teacher. Bruno (1997) has pointed out that,

> The numerous waves of school reforms in public education, all requiring-but not explicitly considering- the need for more of a teacher's time *effort*, and a corresponding of lowering in teacher satisfaction, have created a situation where any attempt at future school reforms will be discredited or compared to those reforms that failed in the past... To increase teacher participation rates and time investment in school reform efforts, the school organization will have to align itself, in time, to the world of the classroom teacher (p. 132).

Conclusion

In conclusion, when comparing and contrasting the information gathered through the two data sets, it becomes easy to identify the answer to the first research question. Specifically, it is affirmative, that the introduction of the Ontario secondary civics course has affected the civics teachers' sense of teacher efficacy. The answer to the second question, that being the implication of these affected teachers' sense of efficacy, can be found within the responses to the final questions of the questionnaires. When asked about modifications to the curriculum and their overall feelings about the course, the respondents made it clear that they are pleased to see a course address civic awareness. However, the majority of respondents made it clear that there needs to be a wide variety of changes made to the course to improve its implementation and

ultimately it chances for long-term continuation. The changes needed as well as the necessary follow-ups to this study will be discussed further in the next section of the study.

Follow-up

As indicated by the responses generated by the questionnaires and interview sessions, the civics teachers admire the attempts made by this course, but they feel modifications are necessary to allow for this course to be fully integrated within the curriculum. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the OMET to conduct an examination into some of the recommendations made by the respondents within this study.

(1) This study suggests that all Ontario school boards should restrict the number of out-of-subject teachers teaching the secondary civics course.

(2) Results from the study indicate that the teacher training sessions that occurred on a one-time basis when the course was first implemented should be re-introduced.

(3) The OMET should begin to review the resources available to the civics teachers. This study suggests that more practical and contemporary resources should be created and made available to all teachers in all secondary schools across the province.

(4) The OMET should begin to examine the length or time frame allotted to the course within the curriculum. The course should include consideration for both the appropriate grade to take the course, as well as the academic nature of the course.

Further Study

Further study is required to gather teacher efficacy data from more school boards across the province. The data gathered from this study cannot be used as a blanket description of the lived experiences of all secondary school civics teachers from the entire province and, therefore, more subjects from more school boards are needed. Additional studies could be conducted to acquire a more specific determination of the depth of the effected teachers' efficacy, and determine its consequences for the long term continuation of the civics course.

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Ontario Teachers' Perceptions of the Secondary School Civics Course
Survey Questionnaire
Anonymity is assured

1. Briefly, What is your educational background?

2. What is your background with the civics course?

3. What do you believe to be the influences, either externally or internally, that have initiated or shaped the course within the secondary curriculum

4. Was there training available/given by the ministry, school board, or your own individual school to help integrate the new course into the curriculum?

5. What support structures are in place if concerns or questions arise pertaining to the civics course?

6. What resources/materials are available to teach the class?

7. Are the resources/materials that are available, sufficient to use to teach the course?

8. Is the course offered at the correct level, (Grade, age, academic background)?

9. If not, what changes would you make?

10. Does the course allow students to put newly learned course information into practice?

11. How would you assess your ability to meet the course expectations as outlined in the civics curricular documents?

12. What has limited your ability to meet those expectations?

13. What has enhanced your ability to meet those expectations?

14. Does the course address a topic that had been overlooked in previous curriculum?

15. From your experience teaching the course, do you feel that there was sufficient teacher input into the creation of the curriculum?

16. Could the course be offered more effectively? If so, how?

17. What recommendations would you put forth to the Ministry of Education about the course?

18. Overall, what would be the best way to describe your feelings regarding the civics curriculum?

Those wishing to participate in an interview please include contact information

Dear Participant:

The focus of this study is to investigate Ontario teachers' perceptions of the secondary school civics course. Teacher's input will be gathered on topics that include, the influences that have shaped the curricula, training received to implement the course, as well as the types of resources available to the teachers, and the types of support structures in place to aid in the implementation of the course. To accomplish this goal we have developed an open-ended questionnaire/interview. You are asked to respond to only those questions that you feel comfortable answering.

To insure confidentiality we ask that you do not place your name, the name of the school you teach at, or any other identifying information on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate we must inform you that all data collected through this questionnaire will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study, you can contact Andrew G. Pinckston or his thesis supivisor Dr. Patrick Brady. It should be mentioned that you have the right to withdraw from this study at anytime without any negative repercussions.

Andrew G. Pinckston
E-mail address: agpincks@lakeheadu.ca
Telephone: (807) 346 - 4814

Dr. Patrick Brady

Telephone: (807) 343 - 8682

Thank you for your cooperation

Sincerely

Andrew G. Pinckston

Participant Consent Form

My signature on this consent form indicates that I agree to participate in a study by Andrew G. Pinckston, teachers' perceptions regarding the grade 10 civics course. I have read and understood the following:

1) This study is being conducted for the purpose of a research project.
2) I am a volunteer and can withdraw from participating in this study at any time.
3) There is no apparent risk of physical or psychological harm from my involvement in this study.
4) All data will be kept confidential and will be stored at Lakehead University for seven (7) years after the study is completed.
5) All resultant reports are accessible to me at anytime after the study is completed.

The natures of this study, its purpose and the procedures have been explained to me.

Name of Participant Signature of Participant Date(Y/M/D)

To the Superintendent

My name is Andrew G. Pinckston, I am a graduate student at Lakehead University. I am writing to ask your permission to enter the secondary schools within your district board in order to gather data for my thesis. "*Investigating teacher's experiences and efficacy beliefs regarding the Secondary School Civics Course: A case study of three school boards within Ontario*" The data needed for the completion of my thesis will require me to distribute open-ended surveys to the civics teachers within your board. Additionally, I will need to interview as many as 2 teachers from your board.

The Lakehead University Senate ethics committee has accepted my proposed thesis, and I have included a copy of the ethic package for your convenience.

If you agree to participate, we must inform you that all data collected through this questionnaire will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study, you can contact Andrew G. Pinckston or his thesis supervisor Dr. Patrick Brady.

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Thank you for your cooperation

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Thank you for your cooperation

Sincerely

Andrew G. Pinckston

Semi-Structured Interview Points

- Ministry/Board affiliation regarding implementation
- What resources were either available, or constructed to ease implementation
- Specifics about grade selection and course duration for the course
- Course expectations
    - Specifically, number of them
    - Attainability
    - Ease of relatability to the students
- Teachers
    - Specifically, Trained
    - Experience
    - Comfortable
    - Background with curriculum
- Support structures within the schools
    - Specifically, other teachers, access to help if/when needed