

Teacher Candidates' Policy Agency to Reframe the Meaning of Citizenship in the Ontario Secondary School Curriculum

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Abstract

Curriculum policy implementation occurs within a network of state, district, school, and classroom level policies that operate within and around educators' use of formal curriculum policy documents. Starting from this observation, we report a study of teacher candidates' policy framing activities in their use of citizenship education curriculum policy documents in the Province of Ontario, Canada. We use a frame analysis methodology to examine how four teacher candidates from one Teacher Education Program in Ontario (1) frame citizenship, (2) perceive their use of the curriculum policy document, and (3)

perceive the influence of a network of curriculum policy influences in their schools. Findings reveal that the candidates each have unique ways of framing citizenship, which align to varying degrees with how the documents frame citizenship. Candidates portray themselves as able to work around policy requirements and pressures where those are misaligned with their own framings of citizenship. They needed to do this to foster student civic action. On balance, broader policy pressures appear to reinforce formal curriculum policy that does not explicitly encourage civic engagement. We conclude the formal curriculum should incorporate a specific requirement in this area to provide policy leverage to educators interested in teaching through student civic action. We also take up the issue of potential politicization of the citizenship education through teacher education programs, with our findings suggesting this is highly unlikely.

Keywords: curriculum, policy, politics, citizenship, citizenship education, frame analysis, Canada, secondary school, high school

Résumé

La mise en œuvre de politiques en matière de programmes d'études s'effectue dans le cadre d'un réseau de politiques au niveau de l'État, du district, de l'école et de la salle de classe, grâce à et autour de l'utilisation des documents-cadres par les enseignants du programme d'études. Partant de cette observation, nous présentons une étude sur les activités de conception des politiques des futurs enseignants dans leur utilisation des documents-cadres du programme d'éducation à la citoyenneté de l'Ontario, au Canada. Nous utilisons une méthodologie d'analyse de cadre (*frame analysis*) pour examiner comment quatre candidats à l'enseignement d'un programme de formation des enseignants en Ontario (1) définissent la citoyenneté, (2) perçoivent leur utilisation du document-cadre du programme, et (3) perçoivent l'effet d'un réseau d'influences des politiques de programme d'études dans leurs écoles. Les résultats révèlent que les candidats ont chacun une façon unique de définir la citoyenneté, qui correspond à des degrés divers à la façon dont les documents définissent la citoyenneté. Les candidats se présentent comme capables de contourner les exigences et les pressions politiques lorsque celles-ci ne correspondent pas à leur propre conception de la citoyenneté, ce qu'ils ont dû faire pour encourager l'action civique des étudiants. Dans l'ensemble, les pressions politiques plus larges semblent renforcer la

politique officielle des programmes d'études qui n'encourage pas expressément l'engagement civique. Nous concluons que le programme d'études officiel devrait intégrer une exigence spécifique dans ce domaine afin de fournir un levier politique aux éducateurs intéressés par l'enseignement par l'action civique des étudiants. Nous abordons également la question de la politisation potentielle de l'éducation à la citoyenneté par le moyen des programmes de formation des enseignants, nos conclusions indiquant que cela est très peu probable.

Mots-clés : analyse de cadre, Canada, école secondaire, éducation à la citoyenneté, politique, programme d'études

Introduction

In 2012, an article in Canadian news magazine *Maclean's* caused controversy by accusing teachers of “brainwashing” students to advocate for social justice causes (Reynolds, 2012). The article portrayed the primary source of this supposed politicization of the curriculum to be teacher education programs, which were described as the “architects” of the educational system (Reynolds, 2012, para. 2). The public controversy around the *Maclean's* article focused on whether students' civic engagement should include political activities; however, the portrayal of a direct causal link between the curriculum of teacher education programs and the curriculum of public schools was also problematic. As is well established in the academic literature, educational policy implementation is complex. There are many competing policy influences, with particular inputs and outputs being loosely coupled at best (Ball et al., 2012). It is rarely clear to actors, including those involved in designing, delivering, and, indeed, studying in teacher education programs, where and how they should exert pressure to affect the intended policy direction in the system.

This article addresses the relationship between these two issues raised by the *Maclean's* article: (1) the policy problem of how best to prepare students as citizens within public schools, and (2) the role and agency of teacher candidates as policy actors to shape citizenship education in relation to provincially-mandated curriculum. Specifically, we use policy frame analysis to examine in-depth how four teacher candidates in one teacher education program framed citizenship and citizenship education when teaching courses mandated in Ontario's *Canadian and World Studies 9 and 10* (CWS 9 & 10) curriculum policy document (Ontario Ministry of Education [OME], 2013). The CWS 9 & 10 document prescribes the learning outcomes—idiosyncratically termed “expectations” in Ontario curriculum policies—for Grade 9 geography, Grade 10 history, and Grade 10 civics. The citizenship-related expectations woven into these courses are considered the foundation for citizenship education at the secondary school level in the province, and their successful completion is required for graduation.

The teacher candidates were part of a cohort specializing in urban secondary school settings, with the latter defined by the Ontario government as schools in urban neighbourhoods with “high rates of poverty, criminal and gang activity, a lack of

community resources and student achievement issues” (OME, 2012, p. 1).¹ The four teacher candidates involved in this study were placed at five different urban secondary schools across their two mandatory practicum experiences during their program.

Our findings illustrate the complex ways in which these candidates used their professional judgement in navigating the relationships between their own values and ideals of citizenship and the official curriculum policy materials and other policy influences operating in urban schools. Building on existing research on teacher candidates as policy actors (Hara, 2017; Heineke et al., 2015), we argue the participants in this study demonstrate a high degree of policy agency, including the willingness and ability to reimagine the official curriculum when it is misaligned with their own perspectives on citizenship education. At the same time, we explore how their efforts to guide students in forms of civic engagement encountered various obstacles with respect to the network of competing or non-complementary policies and procedures.

Literature Review

Curriculum Policy and Teacher Agency

Several years ago, Connelly (2013) pointed to a surprising lack of studies examining the official curriculum from a public policy perspective, with Westbury and colleagues (2016) confirming this in their overview of the small but growing body of research in this area. A key contribution in recent years to understanding curriculum-as-policy has been Connelly and Connelly's (2013) distinction of three interrelated types of curriculum policy—formal, implicit, and prudential. Official curriculum policy documents—especially their directive statements as to what should be taught—is *formal* curriculum policy, an important aspect of which is the degree that such documents prescribe classroom practice (Luke et al., 2013). Here, formal curriculum policies can vary, from providing prescriptive and

1 In the Canadian context, the neighbourhoods characterized as “urban” are not necessarily located in city centres, but are low-income neighbourhoods with concentrated populations of immigrants and other racialized minorities (Butler et al., 2019; Daniel, 2010).

detailed directions, to offering high-level goals that leave teachers significant leeway to shape curricular content, pedagogy, and assessment in the classroom.

These formal curriculum policies should also be understood as situated in a wider network of policies:

Guidelines [i.e., curriculum policy documents] are poised between what we call *implicit curriculum policy* in the form of contextual pressures on the matter of what should be taught in schools, and *prudential curriculum policy* in the form of practical adaptations, modifications and interpretations of guidelines. (Connelly & Connelly, 2013, p. 61)

Implicit curriculum policy incorporates many other policies produced by ministries of education, school boards, and other implicit policy actors, such as non-governmental or private sector organizations, that prepare and circulate curricular resources to influence education, who, in turn, influence the enactment of curriculum policies in schools. Prudential curriculum policy encompasses school-level influences, as well as individual values and practices, which shape classroom-level instructional planning and delivery, and the assessment, evaluation, and reporting of learning in relation to formal and implicit policies.

Within this matrix of policy pressures and influences, teachers practice varying degrees of policy agency. Datnow (2012) notes: “The agency of teachers is part of a complex dynamic, interwoven with the structural and cultural features of the school, district, and the larger policy environment” (p. 194). Teachers’ policy agency is embedded in a range of formal, implicit, and prudential policy forces that variously constrain and enable their choices about classroom content and instruction. Our use of “policy agency” in this article thus refers to the degree to which teacher candidates are able to work with and around these policy pressures to shape content and instruction according to their own professional judgement, values, and beliefs.

A focus on policy agency of teacher candidates addresses the role of teacher candidates as policy actors (Heineke et al., 2015). Few studies address this question. Among them, Ball and colleagues (2012) describe how newly qualified teachers tend to “exhibit ‘policy dependency’ and high levels of compliance” (p. 63). Hara (2017), finds that teacher candidates treat policy compliance as a simple, binary choice, with no grey areas or room for appropriating policy in ways that provide for agency, and Heineke and

colleagues (2015) found teacher candidates demonstrated agency in urban schools by “advocating on behalf of diverse children” (p. 383). There is a need for further studies to enrich this developing topic—hence, the research reported here.

Formal, Implicit, and Prudential Citizenship Curriculum Policy in Ontario

Historically, formal curriculum policies in Ontario shifted from being prescriptive of teachers' practices in the early 20th century to being open-ended in the post-war period (Clausen, 2016). The current outcomes-based form of the Ontario curriculum policy documents, including the CWS 9 & 10 document that is the focus here, was established in a major reform undertaken in the late 1990s (Pinto, 2012). The current formal curriculum policies are more prescriptive than the “general statements of advice” provided by policies in the 1960s (Clausen, 2016, p. 216). However, the overall effect of these policies on teachers' policy agency is disputed. Bickmore (2014) and Broom (2015) find Canadian citizenship curriculum policies to be flexible to local adaptation by teachers. In contrast, Gidney (1999) and Clausen (2016) see the current policies as a move toward the prescriptive policies of the early 20th century. However, Hughes and Sears (2008) and Luke and colleagues (2013) link the outcomes-based form of the policies to international best practices that respect teacher professionalism.

Looking beyond the curriculum policy documents themselves, Anderson and Ben Jaafar (2003) acknowledge that the outcomes-based format can support teacher professionalism, but suggest such policies need to be understood with reference to the wider policy network. The authors argue: “This ‘professionalization’ argument is countered by increased measures to hold teachers accountable for student learning, and to regulate the working conditions in which teachers do their work” (p. 42). This signals a tension between the *formal* curriculum policy that provides room for teachers' professional judgment and the restrictive network of *implicit* curriculum policies that surround it. Using the concept of “policy layers,” Pinto (2015) describes the network of implicit curriculum policies surrounding teachers' implementation of formal curriculum policies:

Since 2003, policy layers have accumulated with regulation of areas previously not governed by any provincially sanctioned policy, including prescriptive mandates for assessment and evaluation in classrooms, environmental practices,

mandated daily physical activity, mental health policy, narrow equity mandates, changes to English-language learning and financial literacy, to name a few. (p. 143)

In relation to citizenship education, Winton (2012) draws attention to a network of “safe schools” and “character development” policies in the early 21st century.² Because these policies are connected to Ontario’s citizenship education policies, they can also be understood as implicit policy pressures that push citizenship education away from any form of collective civic action and toward individualized compliance with the status quo (Winton, 2012).

Within this complicated matrix of formal and implicit curriculum policies, teachers’ policy agency with respect to citizenship education is variable. Evans (2006) finds a gap between teachers’ self-reported values and their pedagogical practices, noting teachers value engaging students in civic action beyond the classroom, but rarely do so in practice. Llewellyn and colleagues (2010) attribute this problem to excessive formal and implicit policy pressures in Ontario: “Teachers pointed to long lists of content and assessments as the reason why essays and tests took precedence over interactive lessons that may encourage students to engage in democratic reform, such as running meetings and even civil protest” (p. 802). In contrast, Schweisfurth (2006) presents a case study of several teachers who creatively interpret the formal civics curriculum to present their own model of global citizenship to students, indicating teacher agency can occur through *prudential* curriculum policy at the school level. More recently, Evans and colleagues (2019) suggest that practices of civic engagement have become increasingly directed toward students’ informal use of social media; while some scholars advocate for the unique advantages of students undertaking direct civic action in their communities (Banks, 2017; Broom et al., 2017). Meanwhile, McLean and colleagues (2017) argue that students often desire to engage in collective civic action but are only given opportunities to participate in individual activities, such as volunteering with civil society organizations.

2 According to Joshee and colleagues (2016), safe school and character development policies are reactions to the perception of various threats to student safety, including bullying and other forms of violence, and attempt to control student actions by making students individually responsible for the school environment.

In this article, we explore further the complex network of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies around citizenship education in Ontario through the perspectives of teacher candidates learning to navigate this network.

Theoretical Framework

We understand citizenship as a holistic network of beliefs and practices connecting the person, the state, and society (Cohen, 1999). This understanding incorporates a range of possible perspectives on citizenship, including such elements as legal status, affective identification, and transformative action. In a previous article (Butler, 2018), we drew on the work of Charles Taylor (2004) and other political philosophers to develop a typology of five dimensions of citizenship—political, public, cultural, juridical, and economic. We use them here to understand the framing of citizenship in formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies.

The *political* dimension of citizenship incorporates how we, as citizens, imagine ourselves as participating in collective decision making, with emphasis on formal democratic structures at the level of the nation-state, but also within or beyond the nation-state. The *public* dimension incorporates how we imagine ourselves as constituting a shared realm of social interaction and communal participation beyond any particular situated community, with emphasis on the nation-state as an “imagined community” (Anderson, 2006, p. 25). The public realm blurs into the political realm, but the public dimension captures the mechanisms of collective action that operate beyond formal state-enforced structures (e.g., through civil society organizations). The *cultural* dimension is related to the public dimension, but emphasizes smaller-scale and more organic communities, whether these are face-to-face communities or transnational, mediated communities (Banks, 2008). The organic communities of the cultural dimension can be understood as the experiential basis from which the imagined community of the public realm is projected (Anderson, 2006; Taylor, 2004). The *juridical* dimension incorporates how we imagine ourselves as operating within a universalized moral order that endows us with inherent rights and imposes ethical obligations on us (Cohen, 1999; Taylor, 2004). The juridical dimension incorporates the formal legal status of citizenship, but also looks beyond it to

the philosophical assumptions that underpin contemporary legal structures.³ The economic dimension incorporates how we imagine ourselves as autonomous actors operating within a universalized realm of mutually beneficial exchange (Taylor, 2004).

Methodology

To make sense of how policy actors engage with the five dimensions of citizenship within policy contexts, we use frame analysis as a methodological approach (Engel & Ortloff, 2009; Park et al., 2012). Frame analysis studies the language of policy actors to understand how they make sense of a policy context (Entman, 1993). A common focus is how policy actors present the *problem* for which a particular policy is a *solution* (Fernández, 2018; Park et al., 2012). The emphasis is on finding the coherence between problem and solution framing within the policy actor's worldview (Wagenaar, 2011).

This assumption of internal coherence aligns with the philosophical approach of Taylor (2004), whose work underpins our typology of the dimensions of citizenship. We thus bring these two theories together heuristically in our analysis. We use frame analysis to find the internal coherence of each teacher candidate's worldview on citizenship in terms of how they frame the problem to which citizenship education is a solution and the dimensions of citizenship they emphasize. We track the indirect and recursive manner in which they negotiate this framing within and around the demands and impositions of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies on their practice. Frame analysis also enables a focus on the agency of teacher candidates as policy actors. As Ocelík and Osička (2014) suggest, "framing is a policy-making activity itself" (p. 99). This activity is the focus of our analysis.

Data for our frame analysis were collected through interviews with teacher candidates in urban schools. We focus on their understandings of citizenship in their engagements with the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum policy document. These findings were drawn from a multi-year research project that studied teacher candidates' engagements with

3 Cohen (1999) notes the assumptions of the juridical realm are different from those of the political realm: "Apparently the juridical and democratic components of the citizenship principle are in tension: the former universalizing and inclusive but apolitical and individualistic, the latter political, internally egalitarian and uniform but externally exclusive and particularizing" (p. 250).

citizenship education and digital technologies in urban secondary schools in a city in Ontario (Kane et al., 2017). Eight teacher candidates from an urban education cohort in one teacher education program agreed to participate. They were interviewed three times over the course of their two-year program (from 2016 to 2018)—once after each of their two mandatory practicums and once at the end of the program. These interviews followed a semi-structured protocol, which asked a series of questions about their experience in their school, their understanding of citizenship in relation to the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum, their engagement with “digital citizenship,” which is an approach to citizenship education promoted by various levels of government, including the local school boards (Kane et al., 2017). Following common practice, the protocol provided a guideline but the interviewees were given significant leeway to direct the conversation (Wagenaar, 2011). The length of interviews varied from 20 to 60 minutes. Full verbatim transcriptions were produced for each interview.

Among the teacher candidates who participated, four were selected for the present study based on the inclusion criteria that they had taught at least one course from the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum in one of their practicum placements. Among them, these four teacher candidates had taught in five different urban schools administered by two school boards. Because each candidate had been interviewed three times, the data set consisted of 12 interview transcripts. Each of these four teacher candidates was assigned a pseudonym (Table 1).

These data were subjected to a qualitative frame analysis, involving three separate rounds of inductive coding. The three interviews for each teacher candidate were analyzed together to study overall patterns in each teacher candidate’s framing, but the origins of codes and coded segments were tracked to observe any changes in each candidate’s framing over time. We summarize the rounds of coding for the twelve teacher candidate interviews in Table 1.

Table 1*Summary of Data Sources and Coding Process*

Teacher candidate	Interviews analyzed (by month and length of audio)	Coding cycle	Coding method	# of codes
Stephen	May 2016 – 0:16:31	1	initial/in vivo coding	184
	January 2017 – 0:43:13	2	initial/process coding	16
	April 2017 – 0:32:46	3	focused/process coding	5
Brianna	May 2016 – 1:07:47	1	initial/in vivo coding	248
	January 2017 – 1:02:39	2	initial/process coding	21
	April 2017 – 0:46:01	3	focused/process coding	7
Edward	May 2016 – 0:17:27	1	initial/in vivo coding	185
	February 2017 – 0:40:32	2	initial/process coding	16
	April 2017 – 0:22:18	3	focused/process coding	5
Adam	May 2016 – 0:42:20	1	initial/in vivo coding	257
	January 2017 – 0:43:18	2	initial/process coding	23
	April 2017 – 0:20:28	3	focused/process coding	7

The first two rounds of coding followed the practice of initial coding, which is intended to provide an initial survey of the data that is both detailed and open-ended (Saldaña, 2012). The coding during those two rounds used what Saldaña (2012) calls process coding, which involves using gerunds (i.e., verbs ending in “-ing”) to capture key actions in the data. Wagenaar (2011) advises that using gerunds to code for actions is a helpful way to keep the coding focused on what interviewees are *doing*, either verbally or in their described actions, rather than jumping prematurely to theoretical categories. In keeping with the practice of frame analysis, particular attention was paid at this stage to the act of diagnosing policy problems (Entman, 1993; Fernández, 2018). The third round of coding used a process in which initial codes with explanatory power were identified and other codes were clustered under them to form categories (Saldaña, 2012). This focused coding began by copying the initial codes onto a page and organizing them into various groupings to explore potential categories (Saldaña, 2012). Once satisfactory categories had emerged, a key code was selected, or a new code was developed, to capture each

category. As Saldaña (2012) suggests, the key code was not always the one most frequently used, but rather the one with greatest explanatory power.

Findings

This section begins with an overview of key features of the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum policy document to provide context for the findings. We then turn to the framing activities of the teacher candidates. Our objective is to present (1) each candidate's policy framing of citizenship in relation to problems and solutions as well as to the dimensions of citizenship, and (2) each candidate's reflections on their experiences of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies in teaching citizenship.

The Canadian and World Studies Grades 9 & 10 Curriculum Policy Document

Similar to other Ontario curriculum policy documents, CWS 9 & 10 is centred on a series of discrete statements of student learning outcomes, called "overall expectations." Teachers are responsible for planning, delivering, and assessing classroom learning based on these overall expectations (OME, 2010). Each overall expectation is supported with several "specific expectations," which are intended to support detailed planning but teachers are not obligated to incorporate any or all of them. Each document also includes an introductory section, referred to as "front matter," which presents guidance on various curricular and pedagogical issues.

A key element in the front matter of the CWS 9 & 10 document is the "Citizenship Education Framework" (CEF), presented as a resource to help teachers incorporate citizenship education into the courses outlined in the document (OME, 2013, p. 10). The CEF is portrayed visually as three concentric circles divided into four quadrants. Surrounding text describes the main features: "the outer circle lists the four main elements of citizenship education—active participation, identity, attributes, and structures" and "the second circle outlines ways in which students may develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with responsible citizenship" (OME, 2013, p. 9). This framework presents what many would consider a reasonably holistic and balanced approach to citizenship education (e.g., Evans et al., 2019). It incorporates a combination of

elements of what we have called the political, public, juridical, and cultural dimensions of citizenship.⁴

Stephen: Framing Citizenship as Fostering Social Integration

Stephen framed citizenship mainly in terms of its political and public dimensions, which centre on developing a sense of shared belonging within the nation-state. With this ideal in mind, he focused on the idea of social integration, in the sense of bringing all legal citizens into a shared sense of affective identification, belonging, and participation:

But to be a Canadian citizen means we're all living in this society together. We have to respect one another, we have to empathize with one another, we have to just support each other... I realize different people have different conceptions of that, but for me it means we need to help each other out. That's kind of the cost of living in a society.

Stephen's problem framing of citizenship related to a lack of social integration, as perceived through his experience teaching in an urban school with a high population of new immigrant students. His solution framing emphasized fostering the integration of students in various communities, scaling from the school up to the nation-state:

A lot of the students, their families, are from different countries. They may be recent arrivals. And so I think this idea that we have to support each other, and we have to understand each other, takes on a higher level of prominence...because we need to help these students integrate into the society.

His implicit theory of action about how to address this problem with integration started with active participation in community-building activities, which then leads to the development of affective identification.

Stephen taught History 10 courses in both of his practicum experiences, and presented himself as having a complex relationship to the formal curriculum policy. On the one hand, he spoke of a history teacher in his school who did not use the curriculum

4 As we have examined elsewhere (Butler, 2018), the framing of citizenship presented in the CEF does not align with the framing of the overall and specific expectations in the document, which emphasize the economic dimension of citizenship at the expense of other dimensions.

documents at all in his lesson planning and instruction. Stephen characterized this as “bizarre.” On the other hand, he described himself as ignoring the CEF in the CWS 9 & 10 document:

I know every document has the citizenship section in it. I haven't really looked at that because I feel like with my own experiences...I've spent some time thinking about what it means to be a citizen in modern Canada. So I feel like I haven't looked at it, but I have an idea already. So anything that the ministry puts out is more a guideline in that respect.

Elsewhere he described himself as on a “spectrum” between ignoring the curriculum and following it by rote. Rather than either of these two extremes, he reported creatively using the curriculum to achieve his own ideas of citizenship education: “I can take little bits from different expectations and craft a narrative that will enhance citizenship.” In line with his framing of citizenship, he saw the creation of these historical narratives as primarily serving to foster social integration:

I try to emphasize certain things in the curriculum that might help students integrate today. So I talk about racism in the past, I talk about how for a long time Canadian society really didn't accept newcomers. And my hope by doing that is that we can all learn together, we can all learn from the past and we can try to make our future and our present better.

Stephen's perspective foregrounds the importance of *prudential* curriculum policy in translating *formal* curriculum policy into the classroom based on his personal and emerging professional judgements. Stephen selectively drew on the formal curriculum policy, emphasizing particular expectations that allowed him to focus on the *political* and *public* dimensions of citizenship, to align the curriculum with his objective of fostering social integration.

Brianna: Framing Citizenship as Creating Inclusive Spaces

Brianna's problem framing of citizenship drew from her lived experience as a Black woman.⁵ The core problem she described was systemic, institutionalized racism, extending from schools up to the nation-state. A key concern was the exclusion of minorities from positions of authority, including in the teaching profession. She described how minority students confided in her that they were not comfortable approaching white authority figures: "Whether it's concerning race or religion...they are afraid to approach other teachers because of what they will say or them undervaluing or invalidating their feelings." She also problematized institutional efforts to create a sense of common culture, which obscures cultural differences. Her framing ran counter to Stephen's objective of social integration. Instead, she advocated for schools and other institutions to recognize, cultivate, and celebrate diverse communities.

Brianna's solution framing required active individual and collective efforts to counteract institutionalized racism and to foster inclusion. She expressed this using a language of social roles:

That's citizenship for me in general. How well can you be inclusive in welcoming others, respecting others, and understand that you do have a role in your society or in your place. And can you follow through with that role.

Brianna's framing of citizenship, therefore, combined the *cultural* and *juridical* dimensions. She saw the primary objective of citizenship education as strengthening organic cultural communities, but this goal is constrained by the power of institutional structures, including schools and nation-states. To counteract institutionalized racism, she saw a need for overarching structures of juridical responsibility that could reinforce inclusion and diversity over institutionalized homogeneity.

Brianna spoke at length in her first interview about the history curriculum, critiquing it for a lack of minority representation:

5 A reviewer of our original manuscript asked why detail was included about Brianna being a Black woman, but equivalent detail was not offered for the other three participants. We included this detail about Brianna because race and racialization were key to how she conceived of citizenship and citizenship education. The original study from which data were drawn for this article was not framed with critical race theory; therefore, its design and instrumentation did not produce data that would allow us to analyze and interpret all participants' perceptions on this basis. This would be an important contribution for a future study.

The curriculum is not inclusive... They have made a change to include women... But even then it's western European women, because when they talk about women's suffrage, who are the few ladies who got women to vote for their rights? But then again, if you look at who was allowed to vote, it was white women and white men. So is this inclusive? You have to own that, but you can't own that if you're a person of colour.

She described her planned approach to teaching history, which would adapt the curriculum expectations to allow for inclusive content and pedagogy. At the same time, she was critical of the unintended consequences of the leeway the formal curriculum seemed to allow, expressing concern with the impact of systemic racism on teachers' choices: "We have the choice in many ways and we decide to choose things that I'm not entirely happy about." She seemed to advocate for a formal curriculum that would be more prescriptive about teaching for inclusion.

After teaching a civics course in her second practicum, Brianna observed that the curriculum encouraged civic engagement beyond the school: "Because of the Grade 10 Civics class and the content that we were discussing, it was impossible not to make the connection inside and out." Brianna's experience of the civics curriculum was filtered through the advocacy of a local youth organization, whose programming she used in her classroom. The Ontario civics curriculum requires students to "develop a plan of action" to address "a civic issue of personal interest," but not to implement that plan (OME, 2013, p. 156). The local youth organization translates the civics curriculum into a program that requires implementing a plan. Brianna's resulting description illustrates the potential for reframing *formal* policies in light of *implicit* and *prudential* curriculum policies.

Edward: Framing Citizenship as Building Common Understandings

Edward's framing of citizenship was focused on interpersonal communication, rather than more concrete forms of civic action, and on the development of common understandings between individuals in a globalized field of activity mediated by digital technologies. His problem framing emphasized biases or prejudices that prevent interpersonal understanding: "Obviously you can't get rid of bias. We all have our own bias but if you try to limit it then you're being a good citizen. You're trying to be more open to other people, other

citizens.” Edward offered a key example of bias in the prejudice he perceived against his school and its urban neighbourhood, even as he described the latter as “really rough.” He explained:

During my practicum, we had a couple of secure schools [i.e., school lock-down procedures] because there was a shooting or stabbing on the street in the surrounding neighbourhood. But see, that’s what we try as a school. We show them that we’re safe here. It’s different out there, but we’re safe here, and we want to show [the city] that this community’s still good... You can’t just have your prejudice over us because we’re in a bad neighborhood... So we try to bring active citizenship in defending our community.

When asked whether there are any school-based programs that involve students in their immediate community, he dismissed that as a possibility, saying: “We obviously stay on the school grounds.”

Edward taught Grade 9 Geography in both practicum experiences. He appeared to be comfortable with the direction of the *formal* curriculum policy. This seemed to stem from a basic alignment between his own *prudential* curriculum policies and what he found in the curriculum document. Where this alignment was not present, he portrayed himself as willing to work outside the bounds of the formal policy. Asked about the place of citizenship in the curriculum, he said: “It is there but it’s not obvious. It’s kind of the teacher’s job to make it obvious.” This involved having his students engage in digital interactions (e.g., through the comments on YouTube videos) with the goal of building mutual understanding within a globalized community—what he referred to as “active citizenship in the online world.” While he emphasized a form of global citizenship over citizenship in the nation-state, he discussed Canada as providing a space of safety within which citizens could be free to engage in globalized communications through digital media. Edward’s emphasis on digital media in teaching citizenship reinforced his framing of citizenship as a matter of communication in the *juridical* realm, but he also described his use of digital technologies as complying with a school board policy initiative. As we have discussed elsewhere, our partner school boards have a network of *implicit* curriculum policies on “digital citizenship,” which are communicated to teachers and students through such devices as posters displayed in school hallways (Kane et al., 2017).

Adam: Framing Citizenship as Acting for Collective Progress

Adam's problem framing of citizenship focused on the fragmentation of society into individuals pursuing selfish goals. He described this problem within the educational system:

A lot of times when I'm reading curriculum documents and when students understand assignments, it's for their own benefit and it's something that they're doing to really push their own careers or their own education further.

His solution framing was thus focused on redirecting the individual toward collective purposes:

I wholeheartedly believe in the progression of humanity. And that's my number one drive...and so, as a teacher I want to shape the next generation. Kind of push them in the right direction.

Adam's solution framing included a theory of action regarding how to move from the problem of fragmentation to the goal of contributing to collective progress. This process starts with an affective incentive ("inspiration"), then building awareness, then involvement with the local community, then engagement at the global level. Adam's framing of citizenship thus presented a hybrid of the *juridical* and *public* dimensions of citizenship, incorporating the global scale and moral weight of the former with the large-scale collective identification of the latter.

Adam taught Grade 10 history in his first practicum, and spoke of the potential of the formal curriculum policy to foster civic action:

It's good because they give you a little bit more freedom that way to sculpt your lessons and throw in your own ideas. Within the history curriculum, they have a whole section on the Citizenship Framework. And they expect you to implement that throughout your lessons.

He went on to link the CEF to his framing of the purpose of citizenship: "That's the really important thing about establishing that whole Citizenship Framework within your teaching. To make a difference. To try your best to progress."

In Adam's later interviews, a misalignment appeared to have developed between his *prudential* curriculum policies and his perception of the *formal* curriculum policies. He became critical of a curriculum that did not direct students towards civic action:

It's difficult to try and push students to actually act on their own without giving them a...solid game plan. Student agency is something that is very hard to structure because you want to let them do their own thing but at the same time if you let them do their own thing they have no guidance whatsoever... The curriculum should reflect some kind of concrete action plan rather than just looking at the issues.

He seemed to advocate for including civic action in the curriculum as a *formal* policy directive.

Despite his goal of moving students toward civic action, he seemed to encounter a recurrent challenge in which his projects got stuck at the level of awareness. He spoke of the value of digital media for engaging students in citizenship, but also described how students "get caught in that social media hole" of discussing a problem but never acting on it. He also attempted to launch an environmental action project engaging students in reconstructing a local greenhouse but observed: "Unfortunately...[that] was kind of put on the backburner because there was a lot of paperwork...and it seemed like it was too much of a task to handle." Instead of this action-oriented project, he got involved in starting a club to discuss and possibly address environmental issues. Here, he observed: "It's basically just getting together with the students and talking about local environmental issues, global environmental issues, and just kind of making the school a little bit more aware of some of these dilemmas."

In the context of his broader framing of citizenship, these examples illustrate Adam's perception of *formal*, *implicit*, and *prudential* curriculum policy influences that affected his ability to enact his own *prudential* curriculum policy goal of engaging students in civic action.

Discussion

In keeping with the findings of Heineke and colleagues (2015), the teacher candidates demonstrated policy agency in navigating the complex influences of citizenship curriculum policies. Each of them had their own framing of citizenship, which aligned to varying degrees with their perception of the framing in the *formal* curriculum. The teacher candidates framed citizenship in terms of *prudential* curriculum policies that emphasized different aspects of our typology: Stephen's can be described as *political-public*, Brianna's as *cultural-juridical*, Edward's as *juridical*, and Adam's as *juridical-public*. Where there was a misalignment between their own prudential curriculum policies and their perception of the framing of the formal curriculum policy, all four candidates expressed how they reimagined the curriculum to achieve their own policy goals.

An area of tension between the formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies was related to student civic engagement. All four candidates emphasized active civic engagement beyond the school as part of their solution framing, although each framed this objective differently. Stephen and Edward framed civic engagement as more of a cognitive activity (see Llewellyn et al., 2010). More specifically, in keeping with his emphasis on the political and public dimensions of citizenship, Stephen prioritized the development of students' identification with Canada, while Edward emphasized the juridical dimension in relation to interpersonal communication through digital technologies. Brianna and Adam, meanwhile, expressed a desire to engage students in more transformative forms of civic action (McLean et al., 2017), reflecting their shared emphasis on the juridical dimension of citizenship. However, their emphases also diverged: Adam's focus on the public dimension resulted in a desire to engage students in large-scale social transformation, while Brianna's focus on the cultural dimension resulted in a desire to engage students in smaller-scale transformative actions within their neighbourhoods, institutions, and cultural communities. These different *prudential* curriculum policies resulted in different experiences of the *formal* curriculum policy. While Adam was initially enthusiastic about the CEF as a resource to encourage students to move from awareness of social issues to direct action, he later became critical of the lack of clear direction in the curriculum for student civic action. On the whole, however, the candidates did not view the formal curriculum policy as a significant impediment to active citizenship. They all felt comfortable working around it, whether ignoring the CEF as an act of *prudential*

curriculum policy, as Stephen reported doing, or supplementing it with *implicit* curriculum policies, as Brianna described doing in relation to the local youth organization's resources.

There were *implicit* and *prudential* policy influences that these teacher candidates observed as impediments to student civic engagement. These ranged from Brianna's concerns about the ethical complexities of engaging students in a marginalized urban neighbourhood (see Daniel, 2010), to Adam's experience of his greenhouse plans being thwarted by "paperwork" (Llewellyn et al., 2010), and to Edward's rejection of the possibility of leaving the school grounds because of his own concerns about the "rough" urban neighbourhood and the policy influences linking citizenship education to safe school environments (Winton, 2012). Meanwhile, a range of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies operate to redirect civic engagement online (Evans et al., 2019; Kane et al., 2017). The teacher candidates, particularly Edward, portray online communication as a positive form of civic engagement; but Adam raises a concern about excessive online engagement as an incentive for endless talk about social issues with no space for transformative action, a perspective echoed by other educators in similar contexts (see Kane et al., 2017). Brianna's experience with a local youth organization's resources indicates that implicit curriculum policies can enable civic engagement outside the classroom. Nonetheless, the evidence presented here suggests that, on balance, the complex network of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies in urban schools discourages student civic action where it involves leaving the school grounds.

Brianna and Adam seemed to suggest the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum should be reformed to include stronger directives toward the inclusion of minority perspectives and active civic engagement, respectively. Since these interviews were conducted, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2018) released a revision of the CWS 9 & 10 document, in which the history courses were edited to include more Indigenous perspectives. This can be seen as a small step toward satisfying Brianna's concerns, although no such revisions were made to the geography and civics courses. Meanwhile, Adam's concerns remain relevant. Within the current CWS 9 & 10 curriculum, we believe the inclusion of expectations that more directly encourage civic action would be a positive step. This would serve two purposes. It would encourage teachers to at least consider these activities as possibilities. It would also give teachers policy leverage to justify such activities in the face of the implicit policy pressures discouraging them. Such a reform may be necessary to bring

Ontario citizenship education into greater balance, if one believes that civic engagement within students' neighbourhoods and communities is a policy option that should be enabled in public schools (Banks, 2017; Broom et al., 2017).

Conclusion

This article has analyzed the policy framing activities of a group of teacher candidates in relation to Ontario's citizenship curriculum, drawing on a theoretical lens that combines a typology of citizenship education with an understanding that the agency of teacher candidates takes shape within a network of formal, implicit, and prudential policies. Viewed from this vantage point, the candidates demonstrated considerable policy agency, including the willingness to reimagine the curriculum to bring it into better alignment with their emerging professional judgement, values, and knowledge related to citizenship and citizenship education. In describing their values related to citizenship education, the four teacher candidates all emphasized a different combination of the five dimensions of citizenship in our typology. These different values and beliefs resulted in different policy decisions in relation to how they described their engagement with the CWS 9 & 10 curriculum.

We also illustrated the barriers the candidates encountered in their efforts to engage students in civic action. The network of formal, implicit, and prudential curriculum policies operating within and around Ontario schools exerts contradictory pressures on teachers and students. We have noted that some of these pressures encourage and enable student civic engagement, but the overall balance of policy pressures in Ontario schools serves to discourage student engagement in civic action, especially when it involves physically leaving the school grounds. We have addressed these issues from a policy perspective, resulting in the policy recommendation that Ontario's citizenship education curriculum policies should be revised to incorporate more explicit encouragement for student civic engagement. While it is beyond the scope of this article, our research also raises some significant pedagogical questions, including how teacher education programs should engage with the significant variation in how teacher candidates teach citizenship based on their personal values and beliefs. There is a need for future research to address these issues from a pedagogical perspective.

In the introduction, we presented an example of a popular magazine article that positioned teacher education programs as the “architects” of an effort, through their preparation of teacher candidates, to “brainwash” students to engage in direct civic and political action. Based on this study, it appears the policy forces at work in relation to civic education in public schools are more complex than the *Maclean's* article suggested. Our findings report on a small sample of teacher candidates, who were part of the same cohort of the same urban education program. Yet, they framed citizenship education in remarkably different ways. This suggests that teacher candidates are not the uniform politicizing influence suggested in the magazine article. It also suggests that teacher candidates have more policy agency than the article implied, and the power of teacher education programs to direct their curricular and pedagogical choices is limited at best. At the same time, the candidates described a range of curriculum policies that variously constrained their choices, especially in relation to integrating authentic civic engagement. Their policy agency has limitations. It would be simplistic to assume that emerging teachers, or their teacher education programs, could single-handedly implement a widespread change in the educational system. If there has been a widespread and uniform politicization of the curriculum—which our findings suggest is unlikely—the explanation for it will be embedded in a more complex and interconnected network of policy influences and actors.

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