

A Study of Chinese Immigrant Students' Experiences of High School Civics in Ontario

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ABSTRACT

The Ontario Grade 10 Civics curriculum reflects Canada's desire for good citizens. Since Canadian schools have a diverse population, many of whom are immigrants, civics education students from diverse cultural backgrounds deserve attention. This study examines how young Chinese immigrant students who came to Canada experienced the transition from Chinese conceptions of the "good" citizen that they learned in China to Canadian ones. This thesis specifically probes students' perception of civic responsibility, civic participation, and critical thinking conveyed in the Chinese and Canadian civic education courses, and asks how, if at all, do participants perceive their experiences as Chinese immigrants affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences? The study included in-depth interviews with Ontario Chinese immigrant students who attended civic education classes at least in Chinese elementary schools and subsequently moved to Canada before the required Ontario grade 10 civics course. The findings generally demonstrate different experiences of Chinese and Canadian citizenship education and indicate Chinese immigrant students' educational and cultural backgrounds are significant factors influencing their Canadian civic education experiences. These findings have important implications for guiding future Canadian citizenship education practices by better understanding the interests, needs, and values of Chinese immigrant students.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On February 7, 2020, I woke up and read some news on Chinese social media: the doctor Li Wenliang, one of the whistleblowers in Wuhan who had warned other medical professionals about the severity of novel coronavirus had then been summoned by local police and reprimanded for “spreading rumour”, died from the coronavirus infection.

I was still in Canada four months later when I witnessed the enormous crowds of people gathering on Parliament Hill, shouting slogans, and raising signs which read, “Black Lives Matter”. I am not a Canadian citizen, but I could feel how these protesters sought to address long-standing problems of police violence towards racial minorities by exercising their civic rights to speak up and demand change.

From then, I wondered: What kind of citizens makes a country truly thrive? Are qualified or good citizens the ones who constantly praise the country’s remarkable deeds, who express homogenous perspectives on socially controversial issues, who don’t criticize government decisions? Or are good citizens the ones who represent and understand a variety of perspectives and who step forward, when necessary, to critique government actions with which they disagree? Why do we have these different versions of “good” citizenship in different countries such as China and Canada?

Schools have long been assigned the task to shape good citizens, to guarantee that young people are equipped with civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions most desired or valued in their corresponding societies (Merry, 2020; Xu, 2016). However, how schools define good citizens and what teaching approaches have been taken to educate good citizens remain contentious. Citizenship education varies both within and between different nation states.

At the same time, increasing global migration drives many students to move from one social, political, and educational context to another. A typical North American classroom often incorporates students from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds (Banks, 2014). In particular, Canada has the fourth-highest proportion of immigrants in its population among OECD countries (OECD, 2019). Although immigrant students coming to Canada have obtained legal

citizenship, their sense of belonging to the nation, civic learning opportunities, and levels of civic participation are frequently overlooked. Research about civic education in diverse classrooms is also lacking (Callahan & Obenchain, 2016; Molina Girón, 2012).

Why devote attention to Chinese immigrants specifically? The population of Chinese immigrants (649,260) was ranked as the second-largest foreign-born group in Canada, constituting a significant portion of Canadian society (Statistics Canada, 2017). Meanwhile, many Chinese immigrant parents see education as one of the most crucial reasons that they chose to immigrate to Canada (Yao, 2015). Although schools play a significant role in easing the transition Chinese immigrant students face, their struggles and confusion in schools do not get sufficient attention in Canadian classrooms (Li, 2009). Furthermore, the “model minority” stereotype highlighted in both Canadian and U.S. culture portrays Chinese immigrant students as hard-workers, without problems, and generally successful academically and economically—particularly in comparison with African Americans and Latinos (Hsu, 2017; Hu, 1989). Chinese immigrant students, in fact, are often unrecognised, underrepresented, and excluded from not only dominant discourses in educational study and policy but also in research on marginalized and minority communities. As a result, educational policy discussions regarding funding programs, services, and educational resources tend to focus on ethnic groups other than Asian students (Siu, 1996; Sue & Sue, 1999; Uba, 2003).

It is worth noticing another rationale for studying Chinese immigrant students’ Canadian citizenship education experience: the different ideologies that underlie Chinese and North American civic education. For Chinese citizenship education, patriotism, collectivism, and nationalism are the main themes (Tu, 2011). Civic participation (especially critical forms of participation such as protest) is limited (Zhang & Fagan, 2016). Critical thinking, when it comes to matters of government policy, is seen neither important nor desirable (Kai & Yujie, 2013; Tu, 2011). In Canada and the United States, patriotism and nationalism are also often central themes for school-based civic education (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Westheimer, 2008, 2010). But while unquestioning support for government policies might be seen as desirable by some, Canadian and American political scientists, civic education experts, many pundits, and ordinary citizens underscore the importance of civic and political engagement that includes critical analysis of social policies and government decisions (Westheimer, 2015).

How do these significantly distinctive political and ideological cultures influence the educational experiences of students moving from China to Canada to begin a new life? Might citizenship education be particularly beneficial for Chinese immigrant students to ease their transition from the Chinese context to a Canadian context, to prepare them for effective citizenship beyond the legal status level in Canadian society, or even to orient a politically engaged life for future development?

More importantly, I wonder how young Chinese immigrants to Canada experience the transitions from one vision of good citizenship taught in schools in their country of origin to a different vision taught in a new country. With the purpose of filling the gap in understanding citizenship education studies specifically focused on Chinese immigrant students, this study explores Chinese Canadian immigrant students' experiences attending the required Ontario grade 10 Civics Education course. The Ontario grade 10 civics curriculum guidelines highlight the importance of "the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship, the role of governments, and how people can get involved in the political process and take action on issues of civic importance" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018, p.149). The overall objectives of the course include what the guidelines call "political inquiry", "civic skill development", "civic awareness", and "civic engagement and action" (see Appendix A for detailed descriptions). Little attention is given to the fact that Chinese Canadian immigrant students who enroll in this mandatory course may have received a very different kind of citizenship education in China. Thus, eligible participants for this study are Chinese Canadian immigrant students who were born and brought up in Mainland China received Chinese civic education, later immigrated to Canada, and enrolled in Ontario's mandatory Grade 10 civics education course. High school paves a foundation for youths becoming informed and effective citizens in a democratic society; the knowledge, values and dispositions these students adopt in their civic education classes, therefore, merits careful study.

Through this research, I sought to answer mainly three research questions under the guidance of Westheimer and Kahne (2004)'s conceptual framework. These three research questions are the following:

1. To the extent they can recall, how do participants describe the sense of citizenship they had in China including their civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking?

2. How do participants describe their experiences in the Ontario grade 10 citizenship education course, in particular, the sense of civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking conveyed?

3. How, if at all, do participants perceive their experience as Chinese immigrants affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences?

Before delving into the civic education experiences of Chinese Canadian immigrant students in Ontario high schools, previous research and theoretical framework provide a basis for in-depth study of their experiences. Therefore, I structure my thesis as follows: the literature review section first reviews relevant studies on theories and practices of citizenship education in North America, empirical work of Chinese immigrant students' struggling experiences in Canadian schools, and studies of Chinese citizenship education; the methodology then presents how I design my research, which includes the aspects of participants and settings, data collection, and data analysis; next, to offer a vivid image of participants' stories, I depict Chinese immigrant students' experiences in Chapter 4. Following Chapter 4, I analyze participants' experiences of Chinese citizenship education in Chapter 5, Canadian citizenship education in Chapter 6, and how their Chinese immigrant experiences influence their Canadian civic education experiences in Chapter 7. In closing, Chapter 8 first summarizes the main findings and discusses how some important findings contribute to the existing literature. Then, it notes the limitations and strengths of the study. Finally, I detail the implications for relevant parties in guiding future practices of Canadian citizenship education.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CONSIDERATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

This section focuses on three relevant aspects of citizenship education in North America: existing debates in citizenship education; best practices applied in teaching; and how citizenship education handles diversity. Before addressing these areas, however, I start with a brief historical background of citizenship education in the Canadian context.

Canada has witnessed transformations in values and principles of citizenship education in educational agendas from time to time, which are largely intertwined with historical events. Canada was formed by four British colonies in 1867. Following the British North American Act, the law of nation was formulated, which built a British colonial country and enjoyed certain rights for its French people. While the native people were not consulted to engage in the confederation, rather, they were transferred to reserves and controlled via the Indian Act with discrimination (Broom et al., 2017). From 1867 to 1940, “Assimilationist nation building” has been the feature of citizenship education, inculcating patriotism and fostering nationalism in Canadian adolescents through textbooks (Francis, 1997; Wertsch, 2002). Assimilating various ethnic groups to English traditions was also the goal for schools (Broom, 2011; Osborne, 1996) since the nation encouraged immigration in the early twentieth century. However, diverse groups in schools tried to integrate and oppose assimilation and establish their own complicated identities (Bruno-Joffre & Mitchell, 1998). With the introduction of American social studies subject during the 1930s, Canadian schools intended to instruct citizenship using history or comprehensive social sciences study (Broom & Evans, 2015; Jorgensen, 2012). Character education was the emphasis of social citizenship. Population and economy increased after the Second World War. Due to the Holocaust and the signing of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, diverse groups urged the reinforcement of human rights protection (Patrias, 2006; Troper, 2002). Integration was considered to replace assimilation by the Canadian government in the early 1950s as the new Canadian belief. Following the ten years from the 1960s to 1970s, the idea of identity becomes prevailing for Canadians to realize how they understand themselves and interpret their history. In 1982, Canada achieved complete independence with the passing of the Constitution Act, 1982. Since then, Canada can amend the constitution without the approval of United Kingdom. Also, with the

approval of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, social justice and democratic citizenship was promoted in this multicultural policy (Joshee, 2004; Ungerleider, 1992). And in the 1980s, curricula aimed to develop students' acceptance of inclusion and multiculturalism and their support of global citizenship and the environment (Broom, 2008; Osborne, 1996). In the late 1980s and 1990s, with the growth of neoliberal politics in Canada, education was increasingly associated with economic efficiency training (Dei et al., 2001). During the period of neoliberalism, the economic agenda substituted for the civic consciousness of activists (Osborne, 2001). Consequently, in Canada, the focus on civic education gradually diminished in the mid-1990s (Joshee, 2004). Nonetheless, since the late 1990s, interest in civic education has revived: policymakers, researchers and educators re-examine and investigate the meaning of active citizenship (Exchange, 2001; Wall et al., 2000). Results from the South House Exchange (2001) indicate education that promotes peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding, and tolerance remains a critical element of Canadian education programs.

Conceptions of Citizenship and Various Aims of Citizenship Education

Definitions of citizenship and diverse dimensions of citizenship education have been heatedly debated among scholars in various disciplines over recent decades (see for example, in Joppke, 2010; Marshall, 1964; Sears & Hughs, 1996). Citizenship must be recognized by certain nation-states from a legal point of view: "the concept of citizenship offers people living in these nation-states certain civil, social, political, and economic rights and responsibilities" (Choi, 2016, p.3). Heater (2004) demonstrated four meanings of citizenship, specifically, status, identity, virtues, and participation. Status denotes the legal status in a country where people are endowed with rights and privileges while committing to the state (Janoski & Gran, 2002). Identity represents the sense of belonging to the nation and a community (Banks, 2014). Immigrants usually resonate with ethnic and/or cultural identity rather than national identity (Ladson-Billings, 2004). National identity is defined as the mostly affirmative, crucial emotional attachment with a nation (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which also called "patriotism" (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989). In a similar vein, according to Schaar (2002), patriotism is based on abstract ideas or values, which will produce emotional attachment and love. The term "nationalism", however, refers to a sense of cultural belonging based on specific facts about ancestry or races (Allport, 1954/1995; Evans, 1952; Schaar,

2002). Civic virtues refer to the quality, disposition, and behavior of the citizen, which are prerequisites for prosperous democracy. Kymlicka and Norman (2000) stated a good citizen should possess four genres of civic virtues: namely general, social, economic, and political virtues. Civic participation signifies raising voices and having influence in public policy through three patterns, including electoral participation (e.g. voting or running for office), noninstitutionalized participation (e.g. signing a petition, demonstrations, strikes), and volunteering in communities (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013; Kostelka & Scott, 2016; Van et al., 2016). Moreover, more inclusive terms have been proposed to satisfy the diverse citizenship needs of different groups. Cultural citizenship demonstrates community identification through shared experience and joint commitment notwithstanding the difference between ethnic and sexual minorities (Bosniak, 2008; Choi, 2016). Multicultural citizenship stresses the importance of equality advocacy among socially and culturally diverse groups (Banks, 2009). These citizenship conceptions are pertinent to Canadian's increasing diversity.

With regard to citizenship education, a consensus is identified among scholars, policymakers, and practitioners that the central aim is to prepare youth with civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become good citizens for the development of functional citizenry and vigorous democracy. Yet, different voices amplified concerning the purpose of citizenship education, diverse models elucidate how citizenship education responds to social changes. Thus, the citizenship education domain is filled with diverse but competing perspectives. Some conservatives mainly support more of what Heater (1992) terms "national civic education" (p. 28). Consistent coverage of content and imparting of certain values involving unity, patriotism, and harmony of the society are promoted. This approach designed for students to learn the theories of citizenship education contains studying the knowledge about the government system and developing a sense of proudness for the country's deeds (Simon, 2005). Those who are in support of the reconstruction approach to citizenship education consists of intellectuals who criticize the restriction conservatives put on learning theories of citizenship education, instead, they suggest more emphasis on reflective and practical democratic approaches to meet the ends of active and thoughtful participation in both social and political domains (Geboers et al., 2013), which encompasses the inclination to volunteer, self-efficacy to make a change in social circumstances, and the tendency to protest against injustice (Torney-Purta, 2004). Other researchers believe both practicing and learning should be combined to facilitate students becoming good citizens in a

democratic society. They highlight the necessity of preparing informed voters, promoting public deliberation (Parker, 2003; Simon, 2005), and developing critical thinking ability (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Westheimer, 2015) by applying the “issues centered curriculum” (Ochoa-Becker, 2007) in which students investigate, analyze and exchange views on controversial social issues or government policies, and be involved in simulations, debates, and decision-making (Bixby & Pace, 2014). In the recent civic education programs, there exists more social justice and transformative concepts of civic education (Banks, 2017; Broom, 2013; Broom & Evans, 2015). Familiarizing students with unfair treatment suffered by different groups in Canada’s past and present, students are expected to resolve systemic social injustices. Some courses, for example, include injustice issues faced by indigenous people due to colonial and post-colonial policies and racism (Broom et al., 2017).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) identified three visions of good citizenship which include the personally responsible citizen, the participatory citizen, and the social-justice oriented citizen. They derived these categories, originally, through examining ten school civic education programs in the United States. The instructive and applicable nature of this framework further guides citizenship education practices in curricula in Canada (Westheimer, 2008, 2010). Specifically, personally responsible citizen denotes individual acts of responsibility to others such as picking up litter, giving blood if needed, and obeying laws, which most school-based programs emphasized. Yet, this concept fails to develop the other important skills and dispositions to the effective citizenry, and, in certain circumstances, may even “impede rather than enable democratic participation and change” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p.244). Participatory citizenship emphasizes active engagements in civic affairs at the local, national, or sometimes global level. Not only do pedagogical approaches that seek to build on this vision prepare students to understand how government and other institutions work but also encourage collective and organized acts in ones’ community. Meanwhile, skills such as teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving can be facilitated through these pedagogies (Hess, 2009; Parker, 2008). The third vision of good citizenship is the social justice-oriented one or critical thinking one. Students who are in these programs that aim for this vision of the “good” citizen are expected to “critically assess social, political, and economic structures”, “explore collective strategies for change that challenge injustice”, and “address root causes of problems” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p.7). This vision is “least commonly pursued” in civic educational programs (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p. 9).

Note that I intend to use this framework developed by Westheimer and Kahne in my study to examine the evolving vision of “good” citizenship among the group of Chinese Canadian immigrant students in distinct civic educational backgrounds.

Best Practices of Citizenship Education

Debates in the field make teaching practices contentious. However, several approaches to democratic citizenship education are common: discussing contemporary events; studying issues about which the student cares; experiencing an open climate for classroom discussions of social and political topics; studying government, history and related social sciences; providing opportunities to interact with civic role models; engaging in after-school activities; learning about community problems and ways to respond; working on the service-learning project; engaging in simulations (see, for example, Niemi & Junn, 1998; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Kahne et al., 2006; Torney-Purta, 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2007; Verba et al., 1995; Kahne & Sporte, 2009). Also, a bulk of work discovered students’ civic outcomes can be expected after taking the civics course and researching politics topics (McIntosh et al., 2007; Torney-Purta et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2012; Siegel-Stechler, 2019).

Classroom-based civic learning opportunities are identified as having a significant impact on high school students’ civic participation and inclination to vote (Kahne & Sporte, 2009). Different civics topics covered, and the number and recency of civics assignment significantly benefited students’ development in civic and political knowledge (Niemi & Junn, 1998). Such knowledge increased the frequency and quality of civic engagement (Carpini & Keeter, 1996). In addition, results from the *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement’s* (IEA) *Civic Education Study* specified a positive correlation between a particular curricular feature and raising interest in civic life, the capability of applying knowledge precisely, and civic commitments involving willingness and desire to vote (Torney-Purta, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2007). One of the curricular features deserves mentioning refers to class discussions which are in the forms of seminars and deliberation, helping to formulate and study problems, open to multiple perspectives, assess alternatives, exercise problem-solving and decision-making abilities, and take actions (Hess, 2009; Parker, 2003).

Extracurricular activities also were regarded as supportive approaches to future civic participation in the well-controlled longitudinal research (McFarland & Thomas, 2006). To illustrate, community services provide students with opportunities to organize and move towards actions that inform changes in a community context (Boyle-Baisse & Grant, 2004; Root & Billig, 2008). Due to its advantage to combining civic knowledge, behavior, and reflection, students learn through action-oriented experience to “think and act ‘politically’” (Annette, 2008, p. 392). Also, one study conducted among high school students who were involved in service-learning reported increasing development on student’s civic knowledge, behaviors, and dispositions (Billig et al., 2005). Furthermore, it is noteworthy to see that both taking civics courses and participating in extracurricular activities were found influential for increasing the voting likelihood as young adults even after controlling other factors of citizenship education and voter turnout (Siegel-Stechler, 2019).

How Citizenship Education Deals with Diversity in Schools?

Because of the growing diversity within nations across the world, especially in the North American context, classroom has become more and more diverse as school students change from predominantly white to increasingly multicultural and multiracial. Civic education also has been challenged in significant ways in diverse school circumstances, seeing the rising proportion of immigrants who request cultural recognition and rights (Banks, 2007). Immigrants are traditionally disadvantaged and underrepresented politically, citizenship education is essential to amplify voices and considerations which can exert influence on public policy that consider their interests (Banks, 2014). Thus, for young people from different races and ethnic backgrounds, how does the meaning of citizenship education differ from their home country and host country? How does citizenship education respond to this diversity in the school environment? Yet, little is known about civic education in diverse classrooms. Most existing research scrutinized immigrant students’ civic education experience were conducted in the United States, it is pressing to heed that classroom-based research in this area is extremely limited in Canada (Molina Girón, 2012). This review revolves around three themes, comprising civic in-class learning outcomes, civic identity development, and civic participation.

Concerning civic in-class learning outcomes, compared with their native students, immigrant students' experiences are more undervalued. According to the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the second phase of IEA conducted in the U.S., civic achievement scales indicated that African American, Latino, and low-income students have seriously poorer scores than their white, Asian, middle, and upper-class classmates (Baldi et al., 2001; Lutkus, 1999). "Civic achievement gap" is documented more obvious among students who are non-White, from the lower class, immigrant citizens than White, rich, and native peers (Levinson, 2012; Rubin et al., 2009). Students with a vast civic achievement gap reported poorer performance in civic attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors that result in civic participation. Moreover, these students act less trustful of the political system and tend to less participate in political engagement such as voting, communicating with officials, and protesting (Levinson, 2007).

Youth's civic identity development indicates young people's sense of connection and belonging in civic society. For example, Rubin (2007) revealed that African American and Latino students from the lower class in New Jersey encountered a disjunction between their daily civic experience and their civic values provided in class, also reported a sense of desperation of the potentiality in making vital changes in civic life. Besides, immigrant students' national identity is another enduring concern since immigrant students face the transition from one nation to another through experiencing various aspects of a host country to establish a sense of belonging and commitment. National identity can be found stronger than ethnic identity in the study of Lee and Hébert (2006) in a population of 95 immigrant high school students while African American teenagers who experienced racism and discrimination are more inclined to "prioritize...a racial/cultural identity over national identity" (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 114).

Civic participation concerns the aspect of whether immigrant students are taking citizenship education and their later intention of civic engagement. Inequality in civic participation based on race and class is essential due to two causes: deficits within marginalized communities and/or imbalanced allocation of civic learning opportunities (Mirra & Garcia, 2017). In particular, African American and Latino immigrant youth from the lower class is often recruited into resource-limited schools where the access to high-quality civic learning occasions which incorporate in-class social issues discussions, community projects, role-playing, and simulations

are rather constrained compared to the white students from higher socio-economic class (Gould et al., 2011; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Niemi, 2012). Although research indicates that immigrant youngsters are not as highly functioned as native students, because they engage less academically in social studies courses and have a lower rate of finishing them (Callahan & Obenchain, 2016), it remains promising and favorable to note that US immigrant youths' subsequent civic participation benefits from the number of courses in civics and social studies attended (Callahan & Muller, 2013; Callahan et al., 2008), especially when documents about civic involvement are taken home from school to initiate discussions with their parents (Callahan & Muller, 2013).

To sum up, the previous review explores areas involving discussions of conceptions of citizenship and diverse perspectives on purposes of civic education, high-quality approaches to citizenship education, and how citizenship education deals with diversity in schools. Questions remain: What about Chinese immigrants, specifically? Have they adjusted in Canadian schools smoothly?

CHINESE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS

Most Chinese families bring their children to Canada because education is one of the most crucial reasons for them to migrate to Canada to form a fresh start (Yao, 2015). Since Chinese immigrants are always regarded as “model minority” which excels academically at school (Abada et al., 2009), living and learning in a new sociocultural environment, the voices of Chinese immigrant youths' experiences in the transition period are less heard and taken seriously. The following review chiefly pays closer attention to two of the most outstanding challenges—cultural adaptation and social integration.

In terms of cultural adaptation, Chinese immigrants' linguistic and cultural issues are carefully studied during the 21st century. One of the main adjustment issues Chinese immigrant students confront is the English language acquisition issue (Wang, 2016). Notably, they are described as having difficulties with development in writing, speaking skills, and the use of colloquialism (Minichiello, 2001). Cultural discontinuity between schools, homes, and communities is also narrated, namely, the divergence between the Canadian and Chinese education systems, perceived gap between parental expectations in Chinese and Canadian homes, and

inconformity in popular culture that Canadian and Chinese youngsters appreciate (Minichiello, 2001; Wang, 2016). Specifically, Chinese immigrant students found Chinese education focuses more on rote memory training, limited self-expression, exam-oriented with a teacher-centered approach, whereas Canadian ones emphasize comprehensive learning, more problem solving, and skill development-oriented featuring student-centered pattern (Campey, 2002; Minichiello, 2001). Also, Chinese immigrants' parenting is deeply engrained in Chinese Confucian values, who always firmly hold the view that nothing is more important than education, they also believe putting a certain degree of pressure on their children yields positive academic results (Li, 2001). Furthermore, the overlooked Chinese culture in classes worries Chinese Canadian youth. Li (2010) indicated that teachers in some social studies courses either mentioned nothing about China or showed negative attitudes towards China. Indeed, one Chinese immigrant youth expressed dissatisfaction and lack of involvement in this non-inclusive teaching, "Now the Chinese students are more than 50% in school, but they do not teach a thing about China" (Li, 2009, p.493).

Another issue lies in the obstacle in social integration for Chinese immigrant students. Establishing Canadian friendship is not effortless due to the institutional racial discrimination rooted in history. (Bozo et al., 2018; Li, 1998; Sugiman, 1992). Thus, it is a challenging and daunting task for Chinese immigrant youth to integrate into migrated country's schools with a high percentage being discriminated against by peers (Costigan et al., 2010). One student wrote how she had encountered barriers of integrating into school, "I used to hate, and even be afraid of going to school because of all those loneliness of not having close friends and the feeling of not being accepted by any group" (Li, 2010, p.129). Likewise, some students did want to build friendships with Canadian friends, while they noticed the hindrance rests on the difference in culture, language, interest, and activities (Minichiello, 2001). In fact, social circles are formed among migrated students. For instance, the 'banana group' (yellow outside white inside) refers to Canadians-born Chinese (CBC), along with the 'FOB' group meaning fresh off boat stands for new immigrants (Li, 2009). Although some teenagers did have unforgettable friendships during high school, newcomers have more experiences of being discriminated against by teachers and peers (Li, 2009). Cui (2019) argued that the model minority stereotype which depicted Asian people as quiet, obedient and respectful to authorities, tends to put Chinese Canadian students into a discriminated against position where they were regarded as weak and submissive, makes them academically excluded and harassed verbally and physically subsequently by peers.

After detailing the two main challenges faced by Chinese immigrant students, approaches taken to ease their transition are remarkably necessary here. Introducing the significance of citizenship education is justifiable, which might not only facilitate the development of the knowledge, skills, dispositions to a democratic civic life but also contribute to ease the transition for Chinese immigrant students. While spotting the vast discrepancies between Canada and China's education system, what is the status quo of civic education in China?

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN CHINA

Citizenship must be understood within a specific national context. Nevertheless, if we compare certain characteristics of Chinese citizenship with those of North American citizenship, we can better understand Chinese citizenship. Citizenship in China shares some similar features with North American citizenship, which lies in legal understanding and good civic virtues' development. While differences can be found in a detailed narrative. For the legal understanding of citizenship, the concept of citizenship in western democracies sketches the individuals' role in the country's political, economic, and social institutions (Wan, 2004). Nevertheless, Chinese people's understanding of citizenship comes mainly from the Chinese Constitution, which conceptualizes Chinese citizens as owners of China's nationality (Wan, 2004), which also details individual rights and responsibilities. In terms of developing good civic virtues, unlike what North American's pursuit of various aspects of virtues with a focus on individuals, conversely, due to the collectivist orientation of the socialist state, greater emphasis is placed on self-cultivation, the good of society, collectivism, and social harmony over individual rights. More desirable good civic qualities comprise complete allegiance to authority, obedience to the Communist Party of China (CPC), and deep thoughts on personal virtues (Goldman & Perry, 2002). Chinese citizenship is also described as a model of socialist authoritarianism where "national sovereignty, unity and security override citizens' individual rights" (Tse & Lee, 2003, p. 103). Despite there are similarities between the two countries' qualities of citizenship concerning legal aspects and good civic virtues, a prominent distinction noted from Chinese citizenship is North American's civic participation which generated by liberal democracy. However, the concept of democracy promoted by CPC as "Chinese characteristics" is not the same meaning as liberal democracy in western countries, no elections or participation in

decision-making are included, it more refers to “the rule of law” which is grounded in procedural rules for the higher levels of government to wield power (Nathan, 1986).

Before delving into Chinese citizenship education, we must first realize the subtle distinction of corresponding Chinese terms of ‘citizenship’ which worth noticing considering citizenship in China, namely *chenmin* (subjects of a feudal ruler), *guomin* (people of a nation-state), *gongmin* (the public), *shimin* (urban residents), and *renmin* (the people). The first terms used in feudal society (Hooker, 2002), while modern societies use the last four terms more frequently. Despite in some cases, the last four terms can be used interchangeably, unique meanings and slight differences in ideology exist (Goldman & Perry, 2002). Compared with symbolic notions for civil rights, political rights, and social rights (Marshall, 1964), various parts of the relationship between state and society are stressed via the four terms. Guomin stresses on nationalism, gongmin highlights public spirit, shimin underscores urban rights and responsibility, and renmin emphasizes class conflict.

Chinese citizenship education is rooted in “cultural norms, political priorities, social expectations, national economic development aspirations, geopolitical backgrounds, and historical antecedents” (Kennedy, 2004, p.17). A prominent feature of Chinese citizenship education is the mixture of traditional moral education, political education, and citizenship education. According to Yu (2004), ideology is the foundation and guidance of educational vision, policies, and practices, and communism of the Communist Party is the governing ideology of Chinese politics and culture. Political ideology is a vital component of the one-party government system, which has become the key theme of citizenship education, more precisely, ideological-political education (Schurmann, 1968; Walder, 1986). While critiques of western scholars refer to it as indoctrination, brainwashing, or propaganda (Yang, 2002) as they also acknowledge their citizenship education as indoctrination (Westheimer, 2006). Consistent with the Chinese Constitution, the CPC has set the expected goal of citizenship education as nurturing ‘qualified socialist citizens’, which means that citizens should be aware of ‘citizenship and socialist concepts of democracy, the rule of law, freedom, equality, equity, and justice’ (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China (MOEPRC), 2010, p.10). In other words, ‘socialist concepts’ indicate CPC’s official interpretation of the concepts of democracy, freedom, and justice, which citizens should obey rather than think critically and challenge.

Chinese school curriculum is under the direct control from the Chinese government. Promoting CPC's political and social purposes, nurturing students' patriotism and preparing successors for the CPC is the priority of Chinese citizenship education (Law, 2011; Xu, 2016). The themes of patriotism, collectivism, and socialism are spread through extensive citizenship education curriculum, such as citizenship education courses (e.g., ideological morality, political ideology), basic academic subjects (e.g., Chinese language and literacy, geography, and history), diverse activities (e.g., celebrating National Day and visiting patriotic attractions) (Tu, 2011; Xu, 2016). The current compulsory subjects associated with citizenship curriculum are Ideology and Morality in primary schools, Politics in middle schools and high schools (Tu, 2011).

Citizenship education formation and the development of modern states are intertwined historically (Green, 1997), China is no exception. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, CPC has adopted Marxism-Leninism from the Soviet and chose "Marxism and Maoism Theory" as dominant theory for ideological education (Fairbrother, 2003). With the Reform and Opening up policy implemented in 1978, China has witnessed rapid and substantial economic growth, 'yet economic emancipation and increase will cause the public to desire more freedom and democracy' (De Mesquita & Downs, 2005, p.77). This did occur in the 1989 student movement, which endangered CPC's control and challenged its legitimacy. Subsequently, formal reforms of ideological political education initiated (Rosen, 1993), patriotism and nationalism are promoted (Ding, 2006) to encourage loyalty to China and develop national unity or solidarity. Under the influence of the failure of the Chinese radical democratic movement and slow progression of democracy, therefore, students were prevented from becoming political activists. To divert the public's attention from political issues to economic development, "Centering on the Economic Development" was put forward as China's leading goals. Jiang Zemin then managed a set of patriotic movements to advocate 'three loves: love the party, socialism, and the motherland' (Ding, 2006, p.143). Traditional values got revived by suggesting "establishing socialist core values" and "eight honors and shame" by Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao (Fewsmith, 2005, p.2). Xi Jinping presented the "Chinese dream" as the objective of China's development. Especially during Xi's governance, stronger ideological control and economic developments resulted in rising nationalism within China. Therefore, Chinese citizenship education is largely restrained by the political influence in contemporary China (Yu, 2020). The ever-changing

citizenship education curriculum reflects quite accurate transformations in government leadership, political policy, and its constant control (Li et al., 1990; Li, 2018; Yu, 2020).

Chinese Students' Civic Perceptions and Participation

Instead of taking care of students' various features and interests, citizenship education in China is inclined to treat each student in a collective and holistic manner. In addition to the formal curriculum, instilling a sense of emotional affinity with the national flag, emblem, and anthem, teaching the long and remarkable history and recent achievements for nurturing national pride are also vital components of patriotism and nationalism (Fairbrother, 2003, 2004; Lee, 1999, 2005; Li, 2009). For instance, the ancient, world-famous Great Wall is regarded as educational since the Ministry of Education of the central government lists it as one of the educational bases for citizenship education. To inspire more pride in China, schools frequently lead students to visit the Great Wall (Yu, 2004).

Both junior high school students and university students show a strong sense of national pride and identification and awareness of social responsibility (moral and socialism) which reflects the emphasis on nationalism, socialism, and patriotism through Chinese citizenship education (Li, 2018; Ke & Starkey, 2014). Also, they believe that good citizens should respect political leaders and obey authoritative orders rather than express diverse perspectives or participate in political activities (Li, 2018; Tu, 2011). Although citizens seem to be effective from the perspective of China's political principles, university students expressed striking dissatisfaction with various aspects of the received citizenship education, involving the content, compulsory form of attending, teaching approaches (e.g. teacher-centered), the quality for delivering the lectures, and assessment form (e.g. memory tests-based), instead, more interactive activities incorporating discussions, research, simulation, and games are more preferred (Tu, 2011).

Strong sense of civic duties and responsibilities are found in Chinese youth while in fact, their participation in civic affairs and political elections is much lower than expected (Tu, 2011). The values in the social environment also affect Chinese youth's civic participation. China has undergone tremendous social and economic transformations in multidimensional aspects since 1978, especially, open-door policy and modernization have facilitated the changes in social and

economic structure. A major change is a transition from a planned economy to a market-oriented economy, the so-called “socialist market economy”. Correspondingly, new demands for citizenship qualities have emerged as the growth of the socialist market economy, including a cosmopolitan perspective, the pursuit of achievement, open-mindedness, and democratic consciousness (Zhong & Lee, 2008). Young Chinese people are more pragmatic than ever before, who are more inclined to pursue material interests than ideological-political goals (Lee & Ho, 2008). Education dedicated to academic success informs excessive competition and concern on meritocracy, students with better academic performance have more chance of climbing higher social strata, entering better universities, and earning higher incomes. Since educational degrees or diplomas have become increasingly essential for students to have the best careers, which has been well-demonstrated in academic demands for companies or government sections since the 1980s (Tang & Parish, 2000). Their jobs weigh more significance than political engagement. Accordingly, they are committed to professional advancement rather than socialist virtues. Considering party membership, young people acknowledge that joining is a way to secure a good job position, instead of a belief in communism.

Chinese youngsters are likely to participate in online discussions of political and social issues more despite issues associated with internet censorship are inevitable. Considerable measures are taken by the Chinese government to filter, monitor, and control citizens’ use of the internet. The “Great Firewall” was built to prohibit foreign websites, such as Facebook and YouTube (Diamond, 2010). Some of the most provoking situations include not allowing searching and posting specific content; information shared with friends has vanished; controversial issues related to government get deleted (Tu, 2011). Ways are found to deliver information even with these obstacles. In particular, they replace banned words with abbreviations, codes, emojis, or images, they express and comment on sensitive events with different kinds of creative language, and they use Virtual Private Network (VPN) services to access external websites and immediately download, save, and share with their friends. Behaviors like these present active citizenship in which creative problem-solving skills are used to ensure rights and freedoms (Ke & Starkey, 2014). However, people concern if the youth’s struggle for freedom through online citizenship engagement puts in the shade for adhering to laws. For this reason, it is harder for them to develop critical thinking ability and become actively engaged citizens in making decisions for the public good.

Three bodies of work inform this study. The first discusses existing debates, best practices, and diversity consideration of citizenship education in North America. The second considers challenges encountered by Chinese immigrant students in Canadian schools; The third strand presents relevant studies of Chinese version of citizenship education. Ultimately, all the literature brought me to explore the research questions for this thesis, what methodology I chose to explore this central phenomenon is revealed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The exploratory nature of this study led to my choice of the qualitative research methods and in particular, semi-structured interviews. To review, I aim to explore the following research questions using the conceptual framework provided by Westheimer and Kahne (2004) in this paper:

1. To the extent they can recall, how do participants describe the sense of citizenship they had in China including their civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking?
2. How do participants describe their experiences in the Ontario grade 10 citizenship education course, in particular, the sense of civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking conveyed?
3. How, if at all, do participants perceive their experience as Chinese immigrants affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences?

In addition, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), qualitative research allows for the understanding of people's experiences through their interpretations, the way they build their worlds, and the value they ascribe to their experiences. Therefore, I adopted a qualitative research design for this thesis. Also, though this research is not strictly an ethnography, it is motivated by ethnographic approaches. I frequently reflected on my "insider" and "outsider" positions. I was an insider for sharing the same cultural and educational features with my participants, but I was also an outsider from a researcher perspective during the data collection and analysis process. For example, when I interviewed with my participants about the Chinese citizenship education experiences, I used my knowledge and experiences to interpret their experiences and tried to build a mutual understanding of what we went through together as former Chinese students who experienced the civic education in China. While in contrast, it is also noteworthy that I was also an outsider when we discussed their Canadian civic education experiences since my lack of knowledge and experiences would not help me understand what they experienced in Canadian civics classrooms. In this methodology section, I present details of what, how, where I recruited participants and offered a glimpse into how I collected data and analyzed data through the research process.

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTINGS

Regarding Chinese immigrant students' experiences in civics courses, this has scarcely been studied, participants then play a significant role in assisting with the exploration. Since Chinese immigrants from Mainland China are the focus of this study, no consideration is given to students from its Special Administrative Regions (SAR) such as Hong Kong and Macau.

To realize my research purpose, participants of this study are Chinese Canadian immigrant students which refer to those who were born and raised in Mainland China, and later immigrated to Canada, and enrolled in the required grade 10 civics course in Ontario high schools. Since I would like to see the transition from Chinese citizenship education to the Canadian one, I set ideal criteria for participants beforehand. They must be Chinese Canadian immigrant students who at least attended elementary school in China, most or all of high school in Ontario, and ideally are currently in their first undergraduate year at the University of Ottawa in Fall 2020.

In practice, after the ethical approval from the University of Ottawa Research Ethical Board (REB) was obtained, I started the recruitment process. Given the COVID-19 influence, I mainly recruited participants online. First, through my personal network, I used purposeful sampling and recruited an acquaintance who had experienced the central phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Then, I conducted snowball sampling to get in touch with other eligible participants. At the same time, I contacted numerous professors and undergraduate student associations of all faculties in the University of Ottawa through emails. In the recruitment emails, I attached my civics study poster and recruitment information that introduced my study, with the hope of asking them to help distribute the recruitment materials and seeking for volunteers who fit the criteria above.

Through three approaches, I ended up recruiting 6 eligible participants successfully and gained their permission to participate in my study. However, since one interview with a participant was less informative, I did not include the analysis in this thesis. I gave each of these participants a pseudonym to protect participants' privacy in the current thesis. I will call the participants who agreed to participate in my study Matt, Paul, Ann, Sam, and Emma. Matt (21-year-old), coming from Beijing, is a male student currently studying at the University of Ottawa. Ann (23-year-old)

is a female student who came from the Southern part of China—Fuzhou. Like Matt, she attends the University of Ottawa. Emma (21-year-old) is also a female student at the University of Ottawa who came from Shanghai. Paul (21-year-old) who also came from Shanghai enrolled in the University of Toronto as an undergraduate student. Sam (18-year-old) is a male student currently attending high school in Toronto, and like Ann, he was from Fuzhou. They all completed their elementary schooling in China, two of them finished Chinese middle schools, and one completed the 9th grade of Chinese high school. All participants eventually attended high school in Canada and took the mandatory Ontario grade 10 civics course.

DATA COLLECTION

Under the impact of COVID-19, interviews were conducted online with participants. Specifically, we mainly had audio calls on Zoom. The interview protocol (Appendix B) guided the interview process. Based on the interpretation of three visions of good citizens Westheimer and Kahne (2004) proposed, I transformed each vision of the good citizenship into actual interview questions. For example, to investigate “Social justice-oriented citizenship”, I used prompts such as “Have you ever discovered/ discussed/ analyzed/criticize social controversial issues with your friends in class or after class and tried to make a change? After the course, do you find you tend to study and speak for social justice when you see social controversial issues in your daily life?”

Before the start of the formal interviews, I informed all my adult participants of the details in the consent form (Appendix C) which specifies the purpose of the research, the privacy protection, and the potential need of having a follow-up interview. All interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy for transcription. Most of the formal interviews lasted approximately 2 hours. And it's through the 2-hour-long interviews that I was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of their citizenship education experiences in China and Canada. As mentioned earlier, one participant could not provide many details in his interview, and I decided not to use his interview in my analysis. Based on participants' answers in the formal interviews, I also arranged follow-up interviews to delve into the details of their insights, each of which lasted 20-30 minutes. I conducted follow-up interviews because after I finished transcribing their initial interviews, I wanted to delve into the details of certain statements participants made that I had overlooked in

the initial interviews. For instance, Sam initially hadn't talked about freedom of religion in his Canadian civics course, but other students all reported their knowledge on this respect. In Sam's follow up interview, therefore, I asked about this further. Sam then recalled several specific examples on how freedom of religions is being respected and protected in Canada and the role his civics education course played in conveying that knowledge. I also used the follow-up interviews to share my own experiences with Chinese civic education to use our common experiences to elicit further reflection. For instance, I asked more participants in the follow-up interviews about how they sensed the collectivism ideology was perpetuated through the school rules such as the hair length requirement, and the regulations prohibiting puppy love. I became intrigued about their experiences in relation to mine and came to understand the collectivism ideology was a prevailing perpetuation in most participants' Chinese civic education.

The language used in each interview was dependent on the situations. In some cases, I used Chinese to ask about their experiences of Chinese citizenship education, and English for their Canadian civic education experiences to better understand their citizenship education experiences in corresponding cultural and educational contexts. Since Chinese was their native language, and it's also the language teachers adopted when they had the Chinese civic education courses. Also, I believed the specific Chinese terms that I used to describe their Chinese civic education experiences would generate more emotions and memories of the educational situations. The reverse is true for the reason why I used English to ask about their Canadian civics course experiences. Since English language was what their civics teachers used in their Canadian civics class, and I believed the English terms would better help them recall their experiences within the Canadian classroom context.

Generally, I took a hybrid approach to interviews with participants. I used the interview protocol to ensure that I was gathering data systematically so that I would be able to provide detailed analysis. At the same time, I used a more conversational approach to make it as comfortable as possible since I wanted to convey that I cared about their experiences as human beings or as a person from the same cultural and educational backgrounds. After each interview, I asked for participants' evaluations of the interview and used their feedback as a guide in subsequent interviews and to improve my interview techniques in the long run.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in research is a critical phase to discover and elucidate the significance of the explored phenomenon. Overall, I adopted thematic analysis approach which is a flexible method to use when seeking to explore questions regarding participants' experiences and perceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The analysis was done in several phrases, which I consider as a continuous activity since the process of data analysis is engaged with data collection iteratively and data interpretation simultaneously. During the data collection phrase, when I heard those answers in the interviews, I reacted to their words and interpreted their words. Then, when I transcribed their words verbatim and examined the interview transcripts carefully, I input some of the keywords of how each their interview was like and what their civic education experiences were. Next, I was introduced to the NVivo software to store and organize the interviews and started the coding process. Based on the interview transcripts, I created certain codes that fit the reported experiences. The codes for participants' Chinese citizenship education experiences included: civic course experiences in China, patriotism for China, civic conceptions in China, and civic life in China. After familiarizing myself with the transcripts and the coding process, I identified, analyzed, and interpreted the themes that emerged repeatedly. I started coding inductively by using NVivo to see how the content guided analysis. While, as I moved to write individual case analysis and cross-case analyses, I used deductive thinking because the interview questions participants answered were initially informed by the theoretical framework --three visions of "good" citizens. Eventually, five main themes were revealed in this thesis, including course arrangement and teaching approach, patriotism, civic rights and responsibilities, civic participation, and critical thinking in each country—China and Canada. I elaborate on these themes in Chapters 5 and 6. I discuss additional themes in Chapter 7: How participants' Chinese immigrant experiences influence their experiences in Canada.

During the data collection period, I conducted many interviews in Chinese with my participants. For those Chinese interviews, I first transcribed them, and I kept the Chinese version. Later, I translated them to English terms to make it easy for writing the analysis sections. Since the Chinese language they used were rather short and didn't involve any technical terms that needs advanced translating techniques, I translated their words more in a direct way and borrowed the English equivalents when necessary. Yet, on some occasions, I found there was not a direct

corresponding word in English to describe the word in Chinese. For instance, Sam once noted that his parents once taught him to “不要凑热闹” in Chinese. To address this translation issue, I borrowed the English equivalents and added more explanations: “Don’t be a rubberneck, it will bring trouble”.

Participants who had these cross-cultural and cross-educational experiences demonstrated diversity in their stories as Chinese Canadian immigrant students and in visions of good citizenship in Chinese and Canadian citizenship education classrooms. Therefore, in the following chapters, to get us familiar with the participants’ experiences as Chinese Canadian immigrant students, I first offer a glimpse of participants’ stories in Chapter 4. Then, from Chapter 5 to Chapter 7, I will focus on reporting the main findings of how participants describe diverse citizenship education experiences in China and Canada, and how they perceive their experiences as Chinese immigrant students affecting their Canadian civics education experiences.

CHAPTER 4: PARTICIPANTS' STORIES

Six participants have participated in my study, their active participation offered me this valuable opportunity to delve into their intercultural experiences. As stated previously, since one participant provided rather less information in the interview, I included five participants' analysis in this thesis. In this chapter, I depict five participants' stories individually with a hope of giving us a better sense of who they are and what their Chinese immigrant experiences were like before we discuss more details about their Chinese citizenship course experiences and Canadian civics course experiences in Ontario high schools in the following chapters. What was unique about each of their experiences? And do they share similarities in the challenges they faced? The participants' names I use below are pseudonyms.

PARTICIPANT 1—MATT

Matt is a 21-year-old male who is a university student currently majoring in Economics at the University of Ottawa.

Matt was brought up in Beijing, the political capital of China. As a child, he enjoyed primary school since he was the most popular student and a leader who would encourage his classmates to participate collectively in after-school activities.

While to give Matt a better educative life, his parents offered him an alternative — to immigrate to Canada. The immigration process started early when he was in his Chinese primary school. By the time Matt was 13, he had completed his primary school and obtained his Canadian citizenship and moved to Canada to begin his life as a Chinese Canadian immigrant. To give Matt more life choices, his parents had to leave him alone in Canada and go to work in the United States. Later, Matt became a permanent resident of the United States.

On Matt's arrival in Canada, he immediately found language the biggest challenge. He soon deeply realized that mastering the language was the key to getting involved in every aspect of life in Canada. Having inadequate English education in primary school in China and only one Chinese student who didn't even speak Chinese in his Canadian high school made it more difficult

for him to use Chinese to help communicate with others. In the meantime, staying in this all-English environment forced him to quickly master the language, so around one or two years could he fully integrate into Canadian life. Once Matt mastered the language and felt integrated into Canadian life, he found having social interaction was also essential. Surprisingly, not like general Chinese immigrants who would encounter difficulties making friends with Canadians, this wasn't a concern for Matt, he didn't experience any racial discrimination at Canadian schools. And again, he pointed out, "The problem about discrimination is that one didn't get over the language barrier yet. There's very little discrimination in Canadian schools, people don't hate you because of your skin color." Thus, making friends with Canadians for him was effortless. Friends he made were of diverse cultural backgrounds too, including Canadians, Egyptians, Africans, Indians, and Chinese.

Matt, transferring from Chinese education to a Canadian one, sensed the difference between the two countries' education system. How the teaching approach varied between China and Canada caught his eyes. In China, teachers asked him to listen to them obediently in most cases. All students study for the exams. While in Canada, his teacher often came up with diverse in-class activities that encouraged students to be creative. Especially, Matt pointed out, "Group projects and presentations, it wouldn't be possible to see them in China." When he attended the Canadian high school, he was not burdened with stress coming from exams. Instead, he was always encouraged to develop his interests and hobbies. His teacher even once expected him to get a part-time job, and he found this is unlikely to happen in Chinese high schools where "everyone's just dying for the study, you go to classes in seven in the morning and come back at 10, you have no time." Although Matt felt some educational differences in the two different countries, some things didn't change. Interestingly, unlike traditional Chinese parents who would have certain educational expectations for their children, Matt's parents are open-minded, and didn't set specific educational goal for Matt. Matt's father sees the ability of making a living as the most important and practical for his son. He mentioned how his father said to him, "Even if you fail miserably in school, you still got good money to live a decent life, so what's the point of you trying? Just be happy".

PARTICIPANT 2--PAUL

Paul is a 21-year-old male student at the University of Toronto, where he majored in electrical engineering.

Shanghai, the economic capital of China, was Paul's hometown. But he was born and raised in Shanghai's rural area. Instead of surrounded by high-rise buildings or high-tech enterprises, he lived in an industrialized region, with all the factories and enormous machines of some companies. According to his words, "it was very countryside". At some point, Paul's parents noticed that the Shanghai's household registration was hard to obtain for Paul, and this difficulty directly limited Paul's selection of universities to apply to in the future. Therefore, when Paul finished grade 7 in Shanghai's private middle school, Paul moved to Canada. Supposedly, Paul should go to the Canadian middle school to continue the study, but it is a bit different because he had to attend Canadian elementary school instead. The elementary school lasts for eight years, and then four years for high school.

Being put in a classroom where everyone spoke English, he couldn't understand a thing in class. The language seems to be a wall that separates people who understand it and people who don't. With no English, no one hangs out with you, which is just as simple as that. Loneliness was devouring Paul who was in an unfamiliar setting. Furthermore, due to the cultural differences, Paul found it challenging to make friends with Canadian teenagers. The lack of Canadian culture knowledge failed him to understand the daily conversations among his Canadian peers. When they mentioned their hobbies as longboarding—a kind of skateboarding, Paul couldn't relate. When they mentioned certain characters or lines from some movies that he never watched, Paul felt upset. Consequently, he ended up staying at home playing video games himself. And it was difficult to get through the first year. But he realized the number one priority is to catch up on learning English so that at least he could follow the lessons. While on the other hand, Paul soon noticed the environment of Canadian education was relatively relaxed because classes were over at 3 pm. Life, overall, is quite different here in Canada from China, and it's been eight years of immigration, still, Paul hasn't fully integrated into Canadian society.

Paul presents as an honest, outspoken, reflective person through the interview.

PARTICIPANT 3--ANN

Ann is a 23-year-old undergraduate student studying at the University of Ottawa in the finance program.

Before Ann came to Canada, she was born and raised in Fuzhou—the capital city of Fujian Province. As a former student studying in the Chinese schools, she reported the schools in China always set strict rules about students’ uniforms, haircuts, attendance, and puppy love. Especially, within the Chinese education context, puppy love is also called as early love in China, which means to start a romantic relationship too early before university. Some of these requirements and regulations in Chinese schools still confuse her up till now. Interestingly, she still remembered so lucidly that Chinese schools stipulated the hair length. The girls were required to have bangs above the eyebrows, and the length of temples should be above the ears on both sides. For the boys’ hair, they were required to have hair that cannot exceed the length of the finger. She expressed her confusion, “How come one’s hairstyle would affect one’s study?”

By the age of 16, after Ann finished grade 9 in Chinese high school, she came to Canada for family reunion reason. She was first a permanent resident of Canada while she officially became a Canadian citizen in recent years. Since Ann received relatively much more education in China, she speaks fluent Chinese.

As soon as Ann moved to Canada and started her high school in Ottawa, she found some significant challenges. The language was the first thing she brought up with, which was the biggest challenge for her. Further, she noticed that China and Canada have distinguishing requirements on what makes good English. Chinese education sees it more as an art that requires correct grammar. Whereas in Canada, English is considered more as a language to communicate. With the help of the ESL program, she still found oral English and the use of slang was tough for her for a long time. Practices of presentations or public speeches were always needed, and the meaning of the slang would always confuse her and make her look them up. The language also limited her choices of making friends. She made some Chinese friends instead of Canadian ones to feel safe and be supported. She also made the point that the CBC also stayed together because Asian faces would make them feel secure.

When bringing up some personal issues or controversies, Ann wouldn't hesitate to talk about them. Besides the language barrier, she once encountered racial discrimination in her high school where her classmates tricked her during the class, and teachers also said something disrespectful. When I tried to get more details of the unfair treatment, she said, "It just relates to like racism, things like that. I have classmates from other countries, which probably they don't like Chinese. We got into conflict." The racial discrimination from her peers and teachers affected her emotionally and prevented her from focusing on her studies. Certain stereotypes towards Chinese she mentioned also might be the reason why some her Canadian peers would pick on Chinese students, one of which would be Chinese are quiet. Ann further explained that "not because we are quiet, but because of the language barrier we were experiencing sometimes, we don't know how to fight back. We just need a moment there." Except for the racial discrimination encountered in school, she could also feel it implicitly at work that always upset and annoyed her. While she worked at the customer service department, she sensed that some clients sometimes don't want to ask their questions to Ann but the other white staff. Also, Ann commented how less respect received from certain clients, "Sometimes when they see there's a Chinese and they can be less respectful to you. They wouldn't say something to a white person, but they will say that to you."

Moreover, Ann experienced significant differences in cultural, educational, and parental aspects. The cultural difference was evident when it comes to the activities Canadian teenagers enjoy. Going to pubs or clubs was something North American teenagers would enjoy but, it was not a part of the culture for Chinese like her. Additionally, Ann found some educational advantages of the Canadian education system where they emphasized one's active civic participation (voluntary activities, community services, political participation) and emphasized one's development of critical thinking, which was totally different from what Chinese education valued—exams-oriented learning. In addition to cultural and educational aspects, the expectations of her parents also changed from their stay in China to Canada. Her parents initially wanted her to achieve some good grades when they were in China, but gradually, they were influenced by the social environment in Canada somehow, and now they want only happiness for their girl.

Ann sounded lively, passionately, and patiently when interviewing. She mentioned several times that Canadian citizenship brings her more freedom somehow.

PARTICIPANT 4--SAM

Sam just reached 18 and now is a high school student living in Toronto. He attended Canadian kindergarten and the first grade in Canadian primary school. When he was in the second grade in Canada, his parents noticed the significance of learning mandarin for him and then decided to bring him back to China.

Sam's primary school was in a countryside area in Fuzhou, where it's a bit adjacent to the city. As a second grader who never studied Chinese in class, entering the school in the middle of the course made it difficult for him to follow everyone's pace. Subsequently, his bad grades worried both him and his parents. Later, his parents decided to take him back to Canada for education around his 6th grade in China. And he received his Canadian citizenship when he was 14 years old.

Sam returned for Canadian education, but he couldn't get used to it since the education systems were so distinctive. Everyone in China attends the same class and has the same course schedule while for Canadian students, everyone takes a different class, depending on personal choices. But he noted that studying in Canada was a lot easier since there was less homework and more spare time for Canadian students to develop their hobbies. Despite less homework, having communication in English, English writing, and the use of slang was still a struggle for Sam after he returned. As an introvert, being afraid of making mistakes made Sam's communication with others more challenging. Though he once studied English in China, it was relatively basic and couldn't support conversation or writing. At first, Sam couldn't make friends because of the language barrier, but later, he made a Canadian friend who was extremely patient with him. Thanks to his friend, he went through it smoothly. But now, Sam tends to stay with his Chinese friends more, though he can get along well with both Canadian and Chinese students. Even though Sam had never encountered racial discrimination at school, he felt his peers have stereotypes towards Chinese students. For instance, they think "Chinese students are good at math, relatively smarter, and they are all nerds". Sam added that stereotypes are all negative in its essence, "It's already negative when you label others, regardless of whether or not the label is positive or negative. But in fact, one may not be the person you put label on, and one will be hurt by the lack of self-identity."

During the interviews, I found Sam to be mature for his age. Although he mentioned that he wouldn't speak well when having in-person conversations, this telephone interview gave me a sense that he is a talkative person who speaks clearly and thoughtfully.

PARTICIPANT 5--EMMA

Emma is a 20-year-old female student at the University of Ottawa studying in the international development and globalization major.

As a Shanghainese, Emma received Chinese education until middle school. She loathed the Chinese education system because everything was about grades; one must study math that she hated; and teachers' stereotype towards girls' ability to learn math, physics, and chemistry was quite prevalent. As such, her parents started planning immigration to Canada when she was still attending primary school. Since the immigration process was time-consuming, her parents wanted her to get life ready in Canada early.

By the age of 13, when Emma was about to finish the 7th grade of middle school in Shanghai, she flew to Canada alone. The school was in a small town where there were no homestays, which only accepted 9th grade students. To live on campus, Emma had to skip the grade and become a high school student. At first, everything was different, she said. Her parents couldn't keep her company. Her friend who was also from China wasn't even living with her in the same building. Her English language was not so good in the new environment. There was only one-tenth of Chinese at school only, her and her Canadian peers were not into the same pop culture due to different cultural backgrounds. Emma put forward specifically, "I enjoyed video games. But they enjoyed the pop music, maybe Justin Bieber." Moreover unfortunately, Emma encountered racial discrimination in her Ontario high school. She felt excluded by experiencing racial remarks including "Chinese foods smell" and "Chinese don't talk to people". When I asked if this racial discrimination prevented her from focusing on her study, she found it was hard to admit it, but it did affect her academic life since she had to divert some of her attention to dealing with those discriminative experiences. Maybe it's because her school was a private boarding school, and it didn't take her half year to integrate into the school. But it was still a challenging process.

Until now, Emma can name education system differences perceived back then. She implied that the competition between classmates in China was vicious and detailed her reasons for not appreciating the Chinese education system. For instance, Emma's teachers frequently announced students' grades publicly in class. What's worse, her head teacher wanted students with good grades to hang out with each other, and subsequently, certain social bubbles were formed. Even worse, she told me that students with good grades who picked on students' who didn't do well in exams wouldn't get punished. I asked why, she replied with, "Because students with good grades always felt superior to others." In comparison, she noted that Canada also stressed the importance of competition in her high school, but they wouldn't compare students' scores in such an apparent way. The other aspect is that Canadian private school also offers different programs including AP (Advanced Placement) and IB (International Baccalaureate). Her school provided an AP program, where she got to choose her preferred courses—everything except for math-related subjects such as physics or chemistry. While in China, she found she was stuck with the assigned courses. Furthermore, compared to China's big class size, Emma's Canadian school has smaller class size. This allows more discussions and interactions with the teachers and peers where Emma learned relevant knowledge and the skill of how to engage in the discussions. Encouraging students to participate in group discussions provides Emma with a sense of involvement and interactive experience, which she believes is way more effective than the teaching method in China where teachers would only ask students with good grades to answer the questions. One more thing that was also different for Emma was how Canadian schools like her value students' hobbies or interests than Chinese schools do. Emma was especially astonished at how their teachers encouraged them to find their interests in arts, music, and sports in grade 9 courses. However, her Chinese education experiences made her comment, "The main courses-- Chinese, Math, English in Chinese schools always have the priority over anything else."

When interviewing, Emma expressed herself in a relatively slow and calm way, but she always made her point.

CHAPTER 5: CHINESE CITIZENSHIP COURSE EXPERIENCE

COURSE ARRANGEMENT AND TEACHING APPROACH

According to Tu (2011), the Chinese required subjects related to citizenship curriculum are Ideology and Morality in primary schools and Politics in middle schools and high schools. However, most participants reported had Ideology and Morality courses in both elementary schools and middle schools, while only one participant had Politics course in high schools. All participants took the course of Ideology and Morality or Politics courses around 8 years ago. Students' memories of what they learned in class seemed to be faded. While as the interview went on, they could remember the details better.

In Chinese civic education courses, all participants learned laws and morality-focused knowledge that mainly aim to regulate their behaviors. Simple laws related to daily life were introduced to students, such as what constitutes crime. Also, the legal marriage age written in the textbook amused participant Paul the most. It says, "It is against the law to marry a man who's under 22 years old," he recalled, "But that's common practices in rural areas because people who live in rural areas get married earlier than the legal marriage age." There are also very simple laws, Paul added, "If you see money on street, you cannot pick it up and embezzle it." Morality or ethics are also frequent themes brought up by participants in the interviews. Morality focuses on what is highly suggested to do, which means it is not mandatorily required but expected by the country and the society. For instance, being helpful to others, showing respect to elders and taking good care of children are the promoted practices for moral acts. Paul said that how he learned about being helpful to others, "You need to help old people... If you see there's an accident, how do you help? Not that you must do this, but you are highly recommended to." While there are also some expected moral behaviors like "don't throw trash on streets" and "don't waste your food" pointed out by Sam.

Except for Matt's course experience, nearly all participants in the research experienced a teacher-centered teaching approach in Chinese civic courses. As the capital of China, Beijing seemed to have more westernized teaching methods. Matt, once attending primary school in Beijing, enjoyed going to Ideology and Morality course because of the interactions, games, and

outdoor activities he once experienced. Other participants reported that their teachers simply read the textbooks, and the students were required to sit there and listen to the lectures. Most of them said that the course itself was not a major course, Paul voiced, “The teacher even won’t put much attention to that course.” Emma also mentioned, “There’s no such teacher arranged teaching for this class, Chinese teachers from other classes are assigned to teach this course.” With not too much attention on this course, subsequently, most participants described that the learning atmosphere was relatively relaxing.

The way the teacher lectured was also monotonous, because most participants expressed their dissatisfaction towards the lack of in-class activities and the excessive emphasis on rote memorization. Paul had no games or simulations and commented this course as “quite boring”. Emma either experienced in-depth classroom discussions or had homework or feedback because the course didn’t require any exams. Sam also reported the activities they had were of the minimum level. The group project Sam had was to make a poster expanding why pupils shouldn’t do certain things. Particularly, the exam-oriented education takes priority over the grades the most, teachers usually train students’ rote memorization skill to help students do well in exams. Ann stated, “There are a lot of rote memorizations, this is what I remember.” However, the excessive focus on rote memorization also yields consequences. First, the learning goal of attaining high grades for exams makes any form of classroom activities or extracurricular activities unlikely. Ann took the Politics course in her 10th grade and stated that she barely had any in-class activities. After-class events were also hard to see for Ann, reciting what’s on the textbooks and preparing for exams was the main task after class. Ann remarked, “As people go to higher grades, there are fewer after-class activities.” Ann’s teacher provided video materials in class, playing black and white segments of political documentaries on how the new China was established and some recent news or current affairs in China. After watching the videos or reading the textbooks, students didn’t have any classroom discussions, teachers didn’t make interpretations, because students were only required to remember those events and contents. Another obvious consequence of more emphasis on rote memorization makes students develop no other skill but rote memorization. Particularly, students rarely have any problem-solving ability to come up with ideas and solve the problem. In Ann’s case, when her teacher helped to review exam questions before the exam, the way the teacher explained was simply about showing students the answers directly in which chapter of the textbooks and asking students to

recite them. In the exam, there were some open questions that required answers, Ann could solve those questions simply because she knew the complete answer and recited them once not because she had the problem-solving skill. The third consequence lies in how students feel a sense of exhaustion from excessive rote memorization training. Sam also reported how his rote memorization was trained. Since Sam had a few unit tests for that course, he spent most of his time reciting what's on the textbook and voiced his dissatisfaction with the rote memorization training, "In this course, I always remembered that I was reciting things. I hate to memorize many things because my memory is not very good. I feel very tired, it doesn't matter whether it is interesting or not. Because the more things you remember, the more times you look at them, and you feel very tired." Therefore, with these consequences, students reported rather unpleasant study experiences of Chinese citizenship education.

PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON THE IDEOLOGY OF COLLECTIVISM

The course was called Ideology and Morality, many students revealed that the course didn't teach much ideology. However, there were two ideologies--collectivism and patriotism which perpetuated through the learning significantly.

Participants reported their observations of the collectivism ideology in their Chinese education that were perpetuated through various activities in civic education curriculum and the school requirements and rules in general. Matt, at that age, didn't perceive those mainstream activities held at school were mean to indicate collectivism ideology. In other words, what he is describing now is what he wouldn't know back then. The collective activities were more about some team-building events that stick to the group's expectations. For instance, playing sports, singing patriotic songs together, and playing the Chinese language game called "Chinese string up puzzle" as a class impressed him a lot. Also, the collectivism ideology was perpetuated through radio gymnastics. When talking about it, he seemed to be reminiscing. As a daily routine, radio gymnastics are aerobatics that is held twice a day between classes, students gather around on the playground and do those aerobatics with the radio playing. He further commented, "It was good and healthy, can't complain."

Ann once commented, "In China, you just follow what others do". The ideology of collectivism is also embedded in school rules and regulations in Chinese education. And participants reported how they went through the collective rules and regulations set for all

students in their schools and complained how too much collectivism prevents the development of individuality. Students' hair length is measured and regulated, all students wear the same school uniforms, and early love is banned. For the hair length requirement, Sam remarked that even though there were some exceptions for art students or ethnic minorities, most schools in China didn't allow Chinese students to have long hair. In Sam's primary school, boys' hair shouldn't be longer than 2 cm or 3cm, and girls' hair shouldn't be longer than the shoulders. Ann also sounded irritated when talking about this regulation, "Female students tend to become anxious about their appearance because of the hair length they required. Seriously, I don't know why there is such a requirement. It's a weird requirement. I still don't understand why the length of the hair is related to your learning ability to this day." Besides, all students in China wear the same school uniform, according to participants. Ann shared her experience of how her freedom to dress is restricted in Chinese schools, "We also are required to wear uniforms like every day. If you say that to a Canadian, they will say 'that's ridiculous', Because yes, it's ridiculous. Oh, my God. So, they definitely have rules like that." Sam also thinks that buying the school uniform on the way was problematic because he usually lost them during the term, but the school only sent out school uniforms when the term began. Also, when he grew taller, and his body shapes changed, so he had to buy new ones. Emma and Ann both sensed how puppy love is banned at their schools, Ann further specified how and why puppy love was not allowed at her school, "Affecting study is the reason for banning early love. Just as long hair would affect learning, falling in love would affect learning. So, it is still learning-oriented in China". The overly emphasis of collectivism wouldn't be what Matt wants his children to experience, "You know a lot of collectivism, you are not really a kid or a person, so individualism is not a thing." Since the overly emphasis on collectivism leaves no room for individuality development, it is the introverted children who might be affected the most in this kind of education. "Because when collectivism becomes a norm, norm becomes an identificationism. If you don't identify with the group, then you get socially exiled pretty much. So, what if some kids just like to be alone? They don't want to do that stuff."

PATRIOTISM FOR CHINA

Participants reported being proud of China and showed identification with China. They reported that the ideology of patriotism and nationalism were important to maintaining pride in Chinese society. However, participants didn't recognize how their sense of pride for China was connected to their Chinese civic education courses until later. For instance, the teacher never defined what patriotism was in Sam's Ideology and Morality course. Sam only recited the word of patriotism from the 24 words socialist values rather than developing a deep understanding of what patriotism meant to him at that time. Like Sam, it wasn't until our interview that Ann realized how her Politics class instilled in her the patriotic awareness for China by memorizing patriotic-related knowledge. "I didn't think the Politics course was useful in developing my patriotism for China at that time, but it's quite useful to think about it now. When I was in class at that time, I felt that was a cramming method of teaching, coz the teacher only asks you to remember what's in the textbooks. But when I think about it, there are some things that are useful. So at least you know some of the history and the process of party building." Besides, Matt commented that the course implicitly perpetuated the patriotism ideology to pupils in a very smart way that he wouldn't know back then. "The overall learning objective, the whole concept was patriotism, but there wasn't like a syllabus, like a teacher would say 'oh, this is a step-by-step tool, we are gonna get there, the final exam and how great the party is.' Not really that, but it was an interactive way to lead you to patriotism...It's like basically you are letting kids play and teaching them implicitly, developing their political identification, that's literally the dream of it."

Although participants such as Sam and Ann didn't recall being taught to be patriotic as part of the Chinese citizenship education curriculum (e.g., Ideology and Morality, Politics), some explicit patriotic content in basic academic courses and various after class activities indeed evoked the patriotic feelings in participants. Besides the Ideology and Morality course and the Politics course, participants recalled some impressive patriotic content from Chinese Literature, English, to Music of Chinese education. In Chinese literature course, Sam got to learn some Chinese histories and developed his patriotism for China. It was depressing for Sam to read some books including *A Madman's Diary* written by Lu Xun. The content regarding anti-Japanese wars or various unequal treaties in Chinese history made him feel even more patriotic. Similarly in Chinese literature course, Matt recalled a story "5 Heroes on the Langya Mountain" that displays how Chinese Communist soldiers make their contributions to the country. Matt also noted that in his English course, many materials discussed how Chinese people introduce the

country's landmarks, monuments, and some tourist attractions that represent China's great achievement to foreigners coming to China. Further, "Even in the music course, Chinese education is still interested in patriotic songs," Emma commented. Matt used to sing old Chinese songs that dates to the 70s-90s mainly about "loving your country and following the party". Music course therefore also evoked a sense of patriotism. Apart from the courses influence, participants reported certain after class activities are patriotic in essence, such as having the flag-raising ceremony every Monday, singing along with the national anthem, visiting the patriotic tour sites, and celebrating the anniversary of the CPC. Instilling a sense of emotional affinity with the national flag, emblem, and the anthem was regarded as one approach that helped nurture national pride (Fairbrother, 2003, 2004; Lee, 1999, 2005; Li, 2009). Indeed, all participants found the flag-raising ceremony was impressive to them. Matt even considered the flag-raising ceremony held every Monday morning was fun to him, he can recall the details, "So you get to school at 9:30, you line in groups, you have the kids like carry the flag, raise the flag, you know salute to the flag." Although Matt didn't sing along with the national anthem, he knows the lyrics and he can sing along even today. Likewise, Emma also had the similar routine. She has seen the flag-raising ceremony since primary school. And she noted, "Kids who carry the flag seemed to be extremely proud to do that." When the flag was raised, she sang along with the national anthem. She identified with the patriotism teaching method, "These daily events really teach students to love your country." Sam's teacher further required him to watch the Olympic games where Chinese athletes make contribution to China during summer vacation. Moreover, patriotic site tours were arranged for participants to develop patriotism for China since primary school. This is in line with Yu (2004)'s study, participants in this study reported visiting patriotic site tours in their Chinese education. Usually, schools organize those patriotic site tours, and all students go there together. However, it is noteworthy that the patriotic site tours vary from regions to regions. Matt, receiving education in Beijing, went to visit various monuments and ancient buildings. From the Old Summer Palace, he learned what happened to the relics and the history of the Qing dynasty. Patriotism-focused content about Chinese histories and values was also introduced to Matt in the military museum that he really liked. Very selected few were tours generally about learning, Matt stated, "We had like once, at the science museum, that's it." Ann, attending schools in Fuzhou, visited the memorial hall of a historical figure-- Lin Zexu, who is the national hero once destructed tones of illegal opium from British merchants. Overall, this was

an impressive tour for Ann. Ann further pointed out that she didn't have much awareness of patriotism back then, but now she believes her patriotism for China partly originates from these patriotic events. Furthermore, some events held on celebrating the anniversary of CPC were also notable patriotic influence for participants. On the founding anniversary of CPC, Ann reported that her school would broadcast national anthem, and would also collect drafts that praise the country's extraordinary achievements and choose the well-written ones to be aired. Other than schools, Emma also found the onsite propaganda of the patriotism ideology customary held in communities on the celebrating day of CPC's anniversary. She observed, "I have seen a lot of party-building events these days coz it's the 100th anniversary of the party... For instance, there was patriotic music playing loud in the neighborhoods, you can also see the party flag hanging everywhere". Likewise, the media propaganda of patriotism ideology also caught Emma's attention. She observed how the media propaganda keeps making many Chinese patriots express their patriotism for China online more habitually and fiercely. Yet she voiced, "I love my country, but I am not a crazy patriot."

Thus, in line with Tu (2011) and Xu (2016)'s research, participants developed patriotism awareness for China through the extensive citizenship education curriculum, fundamental courses, and various after class activities. Overall, either it's through the courses or the daily patriotic events, participants now sense how China teaches the patriotism ideology in both an implicit and straightforward way. This patriotic education later becomes a patriotic culture that students could identify with it.

All participants became Canadian citizens except for Emma who is currently a permanent resident of Canada. Yet all participants acknowledged their continuing patriotic sentiments for China. It is precisely through diversified and comprehensive teaching methods that all students have cultivated their patriotism and nationalism for China from the perspective of Chinese history, culture, and the economic development of China. Particularly, Sam is proud of the Chinese history, culture, and Chinese people. He said "We have history, long time history, we have a lot of stuff in our history... We speak one of the most difficult languages —Chinese in the world... I am confident about being a Chinese person". Matt also identifies himself with Chinese culture and Chinese people, believing that Chinese culture is a superior culture, "You have the aspects of everything." Like Arab people are associated with the Arabic culture, western people are associated with western values, he identifies himself with Chinese culture. Matt further added

how he identified with Chinese people, he detailed Han race is a combination of different races throughout history after 3000 years of invasion, occupation, and integration, which also includes Manchurians and Mongolians. Han race assimilated all the races eventually. Chinese culture, thus, is a very fused together culture. Therefore, he concluded, “Chinese people are historical and diverse, and races endure, and that’s why people associate with it.” Furthermore, Emma told a story of how Canadians in her high school became very interested in the Chinese musical instruments (Gu qin) and Han Chinese clothing she brought to her school when there was an international day for them to show diverse cultures. Canadian students came to her and asked, “What are you wearing? I’ve never seen this.” Emma would then feel proud to introduce her Chinese culture to those Canadian students. Participants’ answers not only indicated their patriotism for China, but also their nationalism for China. Since their answers are in line with Allport (1954/1995), Evans (1952), and Schaar (2002)’s understanding of nationalism—feel culturally identified with China based on specific facts about decent or races. In addition to feeling proud of the Chinese history and the enriched culture, participants also reported that their patriotism for China originates from China’s economic development. Every time Sam, Emma and Ann see news about China’s economic development, they would feel proud. Particularly, Sam feels proud when he reads some articles about how Chinese companies made significant progress in electronic cars or in space exploration. Overall, in line with researchers’ (Fairbrother, 2003, 2004; Lee, 1999, 2005; Li, 2009) studies, it is true that most students’ sense of patriotism for China indeed originated from learning the long and incredible history and recent achievements.

There are participants who have also taken pride in China’s economic development after they moved to Canada. Although Paul had discerned a minimum level of patriotism education since his Chinese elementary school, it is notable that he didn’t truly develop his patriotism for China until he moved to Canada when he was attending Canadian high school and university. Though moving to Canada was based on his interests for better education, a strong homeland is beneficial for immigrants since this directly relates to his immediate interests. Strong here refers to how China’s GDP ranks second in the world. Paul asserted that “if your homeland is not strong enough, you will be bullied everywhere you go”. He brought up the encounter of how Japanese American immigrants in Canada who once heartedly felt that they were American citizens were still rushed to a concentration camp because of military reasons. “This case is a

constant reminder of any new immigrants...If China becomes stronger, no matter how upset the white people see you, they are less likely to put you into the concentration camp. Take Meng Wanzhou's case, the U.S.A. put her in Canada. While if an Iranian was arrested, one might be tortured." Likewise, Ann also feels proud of China when she found others recognizing China's development. "Last week, I was in a finance class, and the teacher were like, we were having discussion over like China's development, like 5G. And there was white person, the white girl. I think she said, 'Um, I think China and the U.S. they are fighting each other for 5G, like in the 5G industry', and that teacher said 'No, I have to correct you on this thing. Nobody in this world is fighting with China because China dominates the industry'."

Although all participants expressed their love for China as a country, they brought forward their different feelings for the Party. Some participants consider loving China equals loving the Party while most don't, and their reasons are complicated. Loving the country and loving the party is somewhat equal in Paul's and Ann's eyes. Paul narrated the reasons are two folded. The first reason is historical. Over many governments like Bei Yang Government or National government, it's the CPC that unified the country and governs the country eventually. Then, China's economy is developing in a good direction, which counts as the second reason. Paul thinks the CPC takes economics development as the central task and they are taking good care of the economy, especially when it's related to his life back in China. Paul came from a rural background, and the CPC helped to change the rural areas significantly. Ann also draws an equal line between the party and the country since it's the party in China that governs the entire country. She elaborated, "If you don't agree with the management method, government structure, it's difficult for you to identify with the idea of 'I am still patriotic' because the government in China manages the entire country." On the contrary, Sam, Emma, and Matt all think that the country and the party are of different aspects. Matt firmly stated that he is still proud of China but just not proud of the Communist Party because they are different things. Emma further recognized the distinction between the party and the country. Country means the land and the Party means the government. She explained, "Even in history, we had many different parties...It's already history and you cannot change history. And the party right now lasts for decades of years. Nobody knows if it will change in the future. Things of course change, it's always changing." Likewise, Sam also stated that, "China is still China with or without the party...one can love the country but not the party, but these two things have no connection in

essence”. Although Sam agreed that loving China equals loving the party for him, he mentioned that there are people who don’t like the party much. Matt is an example. The more Matt learned about the party, the more he knew that the party has done some good deeds. However, this doesn’t resonate with Matt’s pride in the party not only because of the negative side of it but also because everyone around him doesn’t say good things about it. Family influence was also a big part, he mentioned: “When I was really young, my parents used to tell us don’t trust the party too much...especially if you have a relatively wealthy family background in China, your family don’t like the party.” Though participants have different feelings for the party, one thing they know for sure is they all have their love and pride for the country.

CIVIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN CHINESE CITIZENSHIP

Although all participants identify themselves as Chinese more, they described rather limited civic conceptions of civic rights Chinese citizens enjoy. According to participants, civic rights in China are restricted in several aspects, especially when Matt and Paul voiced similar opinions on this matter. Paul mentioned, “We can’t say there are no civic rights in China, but they are all restricted.” Since Matt is familiar with the amendments of the United States’ constitution, he compared the civic rights of Chinese citizenship to that of American ones. He firmly stated, “You definitely don’t have the right of free speech, that’s for one for sure... you don’t have the rights to bear arms, you don’t have rights to refuse unreasonable search and seizures, you don’t have the rights to your property, you don’t have the rights to remain silent, that’s all that gone.” When I said, “Based on Chinese constitution, we have a variety of civic rights in terms of civic participation in China”, he refuted my statements and said, “The Chinese, the law in China is a funny thing, what they write isn’t actually what they do”. Matt detected that the gap between the law and the practice is still huge.

Voting, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion are what the participants mainly considered as restricted in China. As for voting, all participants delivered inconsistent knowledge on voting rights in China. Voting for most participants can only be realized to a village or community level. Paul mentioned voting in China is relatively restricted to the village level, and it is impossible to vote for the mayor or governor. Similarly, Matt further expanded his knowledge on this respect, “The voting system only for a local level, or maybe like a village

level... Yeah, but for the actual central party control, well, you don't. It's internally referred, that's what they say, right? In technical terms, we voted out the municipal leaders, they would rise in power eventually, quote-on-quote, represent our interest and internally referred." Also, although Ann believes Chinese citizens have the right to vote in China by law, she has never really participated in the process of voting. The reason would be, "China's population is large, and the voting system is not that developed. So, in many cases, it is the community above you that helps you vote for the next incumbent candidate." However, Emma expressed a different view—voting is not realized in China. "We don't have voting obviously," Emma commented. There is only one party in China, compared to Canadian's multi-party system. "Our political system is like this. But in Canada, you can either vote for democratic or other parties," she explained.

Participants reported that freedom of speech is heavily subjected to the strict censorship system in China, "We have the freedom of speech sometimes, but not all the time," Emma remarked. How the censorship system controls the freedom of speech and why freedom of speech is strictly controlled are detailed by participants. Emma explicitly revealed the history of the Chinese censorship system and how it works now. Earlier in 2000s or so, she said that there was no Firewall and there were no restrictions on speech, and people can access Google or Facebook in China. "But now there is Firewall, people have to use VPNs to access those foreign websites. This validates Diamond (2010)'s finding is still true for now, and the Firewall indeed prevents Chinese people from accessing foreign websites. Different from Ke and Starkey's (2014) study, however, participants don't think it's against the law to use VPN and agreed on the lawfulness of the use of VPN. Although Emma found that the use of VPN is strictly regulated during certain periods of time, the use of VPN is tolerably regulated in China was explained by Paul. "You can use it for your own personal use, but you certainly can't make money by spreading it." For instance, Ann spotted that many Chinese international students use VPN when they return to China to take online courses." Paul gave another example, saying that for transoceanic communication, people must use VPN. And especially, Alibaba is operating VPN-related business. Allowing the use of VPN doesn't mean there's no online censorship. According to participants, even though private conversations about controversial issues happen all the time between families and friends and the government wouldn't interfere with this, online group and public discussions might get censored and repressed. Matt detailed, "In bigger group chats,

there's definitely censorship, you are not supposed to talk about certain things." Also, Ann said public censorship occurs if one expresses some unpopular political views on platform like Weibo, "You are mostly censored by the above, it is very likely that this message of yours will be blocked or deleted." Certain historic events or inflammatory speeches that might be regarded as sensitive are not allowed to discuss openly online. For instance, "Like cultural revolution, this is not the topic you want to discuss on the internet. Schools don't even teach the history...or there were some protests in 1980s, we know these events, but we are not taught the deeper, like the reasons, history, or details of these issues," Emma explained. Also, Sam pointed out some inflammatory remarks on how Chinese government didn't do well in certain things would get censored as well. This situation agrees with the Tu (2011)'s study that how the posts associated with government get censored and deleted. Strict censorship on speech isn't only exist online, Matt noticed, there's also on-the-spot censorship. Making flyers that advertise ones' political agenda also could be a problem, which could lead one to be arrested. Furthermore, why China has strict control on freedom of speech is analyzed by Paul. Paul said that before 1989, speech was truly free. Yet, to maintain regime stability, freedom of speech has been restricted since the 1989 turmoil. Except for the domestic influence, there's also international influence that restricts freedom of speech. From the Color Revolutions to the Arab Spring, these controversial issues have led to realization that speech must be controlled. He further mentioned, "Professional cyber warriors from different regions like Australia and the United States still make offensive comments on Chinese social media. For instance, they make money by spreading rumors or talking about human rights in Xinjiang or Tibet. Feminist accounts, environmental protection accounts and LGBTQ accounts in China were all funded by some external networks to spread speech in China."

Regarding the civic rights of freedom of religion, although Chinese government won't interfere with personal religious beliefs, freedom of religion was reported as restricted based on participants' accounts. For instance, Sam, Paul, and Matt pointed out that the Party allows different religions like Buddhism or Christianity to appear in China. While both Sam and Matt don't think there is freedom of religion in China and observed many restrictions are put on religion. Matt explained, "The party doesn't even care if you believe in Buddhism or Chinese Daoism, but if you practice certain religious congregations, that's not the thing." In a similar vein, freedom of religion is a civic right Sam doesn't think Chinese citizens have in China.

Though Sam personally is not a religious believer, he noticed the restrictions China have for religion are much more than those in Canada. “For instance, the China Radio and Television Administration has clearly stipulated things related to religion are not allowed to appear on tv or movies or any forms of entertainment.”

Regarding civic responsibilities, all participants mentioned that the most essential civic responsibilities is obeying the law and the authority. Sam stated, “Obeying the law, that’s it. Even though you don’t pay taxes.” Similarly, Ann agreed obeying the law plays a significant role in constituting civic responsibilities of Chinese citizens. However, what Matt thinks a Chinese citizen’s duties are and what his duties are different. Identifying with the Chinese culture is the only civic responsibility that he expects himself to do. For general Chinese citizens, he indicated that in the Chinese government’s eyes, the power of authority rules all. He sounded affirmatively, “Obeying the law, obeying the authority is the responsibility. The law is, the law is, nothing. But the authority is law, so they can change any way they want.” He further pointed out, “As long as you obey the law and the authority, you live a pretty good life... You know, no one bothers you.”

Vision of Good Chinese Citizens

Based on participants’ statements, all participants expressed similar opinions on what constitutes good Chinese citizens. First and foremost, surprisingly, I found most participants specified being obedient is one of the most significant civic virtues for making good Chinese citizens. This is the first quality mentioned in Matt’s answers of his four general expectations of being good Chinese citizens -- “Be obedient to the government, be supportive of the party’s decisions.” Besides, obeying the law is what Sam and Ann described as important aspect of being obedient to the Chinese government. Keeping the country unified and maintaining social stability are also what obedient Chinese citizens would do, Paul mentioned, “If you are a minority living in Xinjiang or Tibet, you shouldn’t split the country. You should protect the national territorial integrity.”

Making contributions to the Chinese society is the second expectation. Beyond exercising personal obligations, China may expect citizens to be more active in making individual contributions to the society. “A good citizen in China would be, you are a producer,” Matt stated. He further added a good Chinese citizen would contribute voluntarily to the country on the entire

spectrum. Especially, making economic contributions is one significant aspect because it was both brought up by Matt and Ann. They both pointed out that making donations to charities or doing voluntary work for governmental organizations are expected good citizens behaviors. Ann also noticed that the Chinese government expects more young people to start their own businesses.

Except for economic expectation, there is also political expectation--good Chinese citizens shouldn't touch too much on politics. Don't touch too much on politics means silencing one's voices in politics. Paul, as a former Chinese citizen, personally disliked the idea of getting involved in politics several times in the interview. He stated, "Don't touch too much on politics...less politics, more businesses, making money is most important thing." He doesn't support active civic participation in China because he believed political ideals are something after economic development. "China was underdeveloped in 2000s, and people's basic needs should be satisfied. Only when people eat well and get rich could they yearn for personal ideals." Emma also voiced good Chinese citizens should never be active in political activities like protests or demonstrations, "You can protest for LGBTQ rights, which happens. It happens sometimes, like in Shanghai, or like other big cities. These protests are allowed. But if that's what is not allowed, it's the political protests." Matt, however, believed that good Chinese citizens are expected to participate in political activities, but "you are expected to shut the hell up during the activity, just don't talk. You are supposed to voicing your opinions at the representative conference or whatever, but do you see anybody speaking? Nobody speaking, only the chairman speaks, everyone down there just nods." Though Chinese citizens are expected to touch less on politics, there are also political expectations that Chinese government expects citizens to do. Ann said Chinese citizens are expected to become a force contributing to the Party and devote themselves to the governance of the country. In Ann's Politics course, she recalled that her teacher once introduced the process of how to become a civil servant in China, "If you want to join the civil service later, you will know what kind of mechanism will be there for you," she mentioned. Ann noted that some Chinese news also implied how Chinese government wants its citizens to make more political contributions by encouraging more young people to take the civil service exams and participate in the management level of the country.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN CHINA

Civic rights in China are limited and obedience is regarded as the most desired civic quality for making good Chinese citizens. It may not be surprising, then, that participants reported low levels of civic engagement in China. For instance, Ann explained that civic engagement in China is low because watching news every day exposes people to the limitations of participatory politics. Ann argued that unlike in Canada's multi-party system, there won't be serious conflicts or fights between different parties in China because of the one-party system. The frequency of election also determines if citizens have a strong sense of civic engagement in their countries. Ann elaborated, "In North America, elections are held every four years or so. Everyone here seems to have a particularly high degree of civic participation; everyone will discuss the new government. While China elects every ten years, the time gap is large, you won't be discussing this stuff all the time." Yet, all participants tend to show a negative sense of Chinese civic participation for several reasons. One wouldn't participate in Chinese civic life because one doesn't have relevant civic knowledge. Sam's civic participation is passively influenced by his primary school at large because he was just a young pioneer who wore the red scarf around the neck and carried the national flag at school once. So he couldn't understand what civic participation means as a pupil, not to mention active civic participation. Having civic knowledge learned from Chinese citizenship courses but not having access to participate civically is another problem. Both Emma and Ann discovered that the gap between what they learned in theory and what they do in practice is enormous and mentioned that there is no such process for them to vote. Emma stated, "Even though they educate you that you have the voting rights or anything like that, you don't really participate in those events coz you don't have the voting rights." Having channels to civic participation but not having a real sense of civic participation also negatively influences the belief of if civic participation can make a change. For instance, Matt found it unnecessary to participate in Chinese civic life due to family influence, "I didn't see a point in it... You have people representatives, like the big conferences and stuff, but people go there like, that's bored. Like my dad, is a people representative, he didn't do anything, even never one single conference. Like they don't even say anything, just listen to the chairman." This negative sense of civic participation has further led to formation of the belief that Chinese

civic participation is worthless, and the inability to make a change deepens their belief that no change can be made through civic participation. Depending on such a political system in China, Emma noted that Chinese citizens all have lower level of civic participation because they know no changes can be made. She said, “And you know you won’t make any difference in this system. Even people who talk and discuss the political events know they won’t make any changes on this system.” Then, this negative belief that civic participation makes no changes further leads to no more civic participation in the future. Matt observed Chinese people from all walks of life including taxi drivers, people at restaurants, some old man walking his bird tend to discuss the social controversial issues about “who exercise corrupt or has a problem with the system or thinks a new law is stupid”. However, they never tried to make any changes to the issues typically. Overall, participants’ civic participation in China is relatively negative in that sense. In line with Goldman and Perry (2002)’s research, participants demonstrated lower level of civic engagement because the whole Chinese political system values more strict allegiance to authority and obedience to the CPC in making good Chinese citizens.

CRITICAL THINKING IN CHINA

According to Tu (2011), critical thinking is not a rigid requirement in Chinese education, and what participants experienced validates this is true. Throughout the interviews, all the respondents said they experienced no critical thinking development in Chinese citizenship education and criticized this is relatively lacking in general Chinese education. Just as what participants Ann and Emma stated, “No critical thinking is a shortcoming of Chinese education system,” and “I’d say critical thinking is a huge problem in China.” Citizenship courses in China including Ideology and Morality and Politics didn’t involve any training of critical thinking skill, which has been demonstrated explicitly in most participants’ experiences. Sam added that no relevant courses teach people to be critical thinkers in Chinese education because he didn’t need to write essays or have debates. Emma developed critical thinking skill from Canadian education where teachers loved to see students raising different opinions since people are different, “But in China, we are taught to, like, we only have one opinion.” It is difficult to develop critical thinking skills without classroom discussions, Emma further mentioned, “There wasn’t anything impressive to me because there are no classroom discussions at all in that

course. Listening to the teacher reading the textbook is not something that helps develop critical thinking.” Thus, instead of critical thinking, some participants mentioned how their rote memorization skill was developed through the citizenship courses. Sam said, “We just memorized and recited things on the textbook without learning any skills. I just remember that I was memorizing things.”

Why does Chinese education not require the teaching of critical thinking? Participants found the reason why Chinese citizenship course doesn’t teach critical thinking. Since the heart of the Chinese citizenship course is to nurture obedient citizens who need to obey the law and behave morally. Matt voiced strong disappointment, “The whole concept of the course is to discourage people from critical thinking at all”. However, Paul has different reasons on why Chinese government doesn’t develop students’ critical thinking. He considers, in a government’s point of view, critical thinking is the same thing as debating, and a country’s progress cannot be made by only debating. Consequently, “China would cultivate residents of an industrialized society more, and that’s why China doesn’t put it as a priority.”

Participants also criticized the absence of critical thinking as a huge problem in Chinese education because the consequences of not being able to critically think are serious for Chinese students. Paul believes critical thinking skill is what Chinese education to be developed the most, “Because this is a skill that one is not born with, you need to learn it...This skill is most important.” According to participants’ answers, the consequences of no critical thinking education in China turn up in two guises. First, one is not smart. Ann mentioned one big problem is the inability to understand the meaning behind the text in the textbooks. In that Politics course, Ann spent most of her time memorizing what’s on the textbooks and reported there was no such requirement on understanding the meaning of what she recited. Ann specified, “The teacher rarely ask you to understand the specific meaning behind the text. If you don’t understand it, how can you think critically?” Besides, the lack of critical thinking ability fails to identify the goodness and the badness of something and form a judgement. Matt further illustrated a vivid example, “Because there’s a lot of stuff that the Chinese Communist Party has done that’s good. People would not, they couldn’t critically analyze that, you know, to identify what part of that goodness is if you can’t critically think, right? If you just teaching people the party’s good, the party is phenomenal, people don’t even know how, they don’t know why, they don’t know you did. You just know because we said it. If one thing, that’s negative side comes out, you just

collapse your entire belief system. There's like 'Wow, so it was all untrue?' Then you will become reluctant and resistant to their ideas, but then they are preventing that—the negative side comes out, so it kinda becomes like a perfect system. But it will never be perfect.” Second, the limited critical thinking ability prevents students from critically engaging in discussing social controversial issues and the failure of critical discussion further influences their future disposition of speaking up and making changes. When Emma was in Chinese schools, she never got a chance to analyze or discuss social controversial issues. She elaborated the major reason, “We are not taught to discuss those issues because the Chinese education didn't teach us critical thinking. It was a crucial thing, and I'd say critical thinking was a huge problem.” Likewise, Paul reported that no critical thinking training causes barriers for them to join in social controversial issues discussion. Paul didn't discuss any controversial social issues in the Chinese civic class because he thought he didn't have the ability to understand the complexity behind the issues at a young age since certain knowledge and critical thinking ability are required if one wants to analyze a complex social issue. Consequently, he conveyed that he didn't become more active in studying, speaking up, and acting for social justice in his daily life.

Impact of Internet Censorship on Critical Thinking

Except for the Chinese education influence, the Chinese internet censorship also has certain impact on Chinese citizens' critical thinking development. The most significant effect of internet censorship is to suppress discussion of social controversial issues, Paul discovered. Emma also said that though schools did not teach her about the reasons or historical details of the protest issue in 1980s; there's censorship on certain political issues that Chinese people don't want to discuss online. If one wants to discuss certain controversial issues, there's certain difficulty because, according to Paul, certain current hot topics on Baidu Tieba got censored; one cannot either type certain words that are regarded as sensitive; and posts containing those words gets deleted as soon as one post it. But certain methods were used to discuss in an implicit way. For instance, Paul said some Chinese use homophonic characters or historical allusions to refer to these issues obliquely on the websites. And this finding contributes to the Ke and Starkey (2014)'s claim that behaviors like these indicate active citizenship in which creative problem-solving skills are used to ensure rights and freedoms. Yet, the internet censorship keeps Paul and Emma from understanding these social controversial issues in China and seeing a full picture of

the Chinese history. One cannot know the fact, one cannot voice the opinion, and further one cannot think critically. Thus, the internet censorship system can disable critical thinking people to some extent. Also, when some participants want to delve into the fact, they seek more information outside of China. Yet, it is challenging for Chinese citizens to access more information when there is Great Firewall. Emma said, “People really missed the time when there’s no Firewall.” Based on participants’ experiences, the Great Firewall is indeed used to ban foreign websites, which has created more inconveniences for gaining more information for both Chinese and foreigners. On the one hand, the Great Firewall causes some problems for Chinese who want to access more information outside of China. Ann detailed, “For example, he wants to know what’s happening outside of China, he wants to know what foreigners’ ideas and views are. This may cause certain difficulties for some people because he couldn’t find this way to know it.” On the other hand, the existence of the Great Firewall causes negative influences on how foreigners viewed Chinese. There were certain China stereotypes in foreign narratives. Ann noticed that Chinese people are regarded as “blind” in foreigners’ eyes because they would think “Chinese are people inside the wall, and we can’t see it’...But in fact, we are curious, and we can use VPNs to access YouTube and we learn certain things.”

Although Chinese use VPNs to gain access to diverse sources outside of China to try to better understand certain controversial issues within China, according to participants, the other concern that internet censorship exerts lies in the authenticity of information outside of China. Participants believe the sources outside of China aren’t reliable or trustworthy at all for two reasons. One is that the Chinese media cannot report certain issues happened in China. Matt elaborated, “Geographically, the Chinese media should be the first to report any sensitive issues within China, right? But they cannot do it, because of the law, the government. So, how does information outside of China get trustworthy at all? That’s a questionable thing, you can’t report it within the country, but how do foreign reporters get information beforehand other people in China? You can’t determine if that’s trustworthy or not, but there’s some entire Chinese communist party not true, but there’s a great deal that’s true. You can’t trust anything these days.” Another reason is that some foreign media might distort the facts. Paul described how some of the foreign media seldom voice their consciences as they deliberately spread malicious rumors for the sake of ratings, because there are companies behind the media who pay for them. “As employees, we all know we work for the people who pay us. So, there must be their

prejudices in their media reports,” Paul stated. Ann raised the example of Tiananmen Protest back in 1989 and noticed that the foreign media would replay the documentaries they shot every year on the anniversary of this event, which accentuated this as a tragedy that occurred in China during the founding of the country. Although the media said this event as tragedy by using violent suppression, Ann couldn’t agree with what foreign media said and commented just because CPC used some unconventional means to unite the people and protect the regime doesn’t mean this event can be considered as tragedy. Thus, whether through Chinese media or foreign media could Chinese students see a more comprehensive picture of certain events happened in China, because neither of them could report reliable and credible sources-- Chinese media couldn’t show the whole story, foreign media might interpret in a wrong way. Under such circumstances, students cannot think critically because the facts cannot be examined with the evidence being kept in confidential. “Sometimes it’s better not to keep it secret, but the propaganda machine of the Chinese government is still very bureaucratic,” Paul commented.

CHAPTER 6: CANADIAN CIVICS COURSE EXPERIENCE

COURSE ARRANGEMENT AND TEACHING APPROACH

After attending Chinese citizenship courses, participants came to Canada and took the Ontario grade 10 civics course 4 years ago on average, and they tend to have better memories of their Canadian civics course experience than the Chinese one. Especially, Sam just finished the course 2 years ago, so he had fresh memory towards his civics course experience. And in the interview, he detailed everything he remembered to me. The course names also vary among participants. Most recalled having civics course named Civics and Career, only Ann's civics course just named Civics. This is a mandatory course that counts for 0.5 credits. Although it's a mandatory course, there was not much required content in Ann's civics course. She explained, "It's not like a class, but more like an extracurricular activity because it's often taught in the form of playing games." This course is also a prerequisite course for a grade 11's Politics course, according to Emma. Those who took the course called Civics and Career had two semesters for learning civics and career respectively.

The career part mainly focuses on imparting relevant knowledge of future guidance that has practical use in daily life. For instance, Matt did some imaginary job interviews and wrote some resumes that have real-world use for job hunting. Differently, Emma's career part held in the first semester focused on guiding students to apply for universities. Learning to fill out the tax form was a practical content for Sam in his career class. Besides, he also learned what prerequisite courses one need to take for realizing one's dream in the future.

According to participants' accounts, the civics part aims to teach students some fundamental civic knowledge of Canadian's democracy, Canadian political system, government structure, and civic rights Canadian citizens enjoy, which leads students to integrate into the Canadian society. The most important concept of democracy and why Canada is a democratic country were what Emma remembered the most since that was the first time she learned about democracy. To her, democracy means civic rights granted to Canadian citizens that include voting rights and freedom of speech, also means different parties in Canada's political system. Canada's multiparty system was also recalled by Ann, since China has a one-party system, it's

notable to Ann when she was familiarized with different five parties in Canada and the main philosophy in each party. Similarly, the political spectrum also impressed Paul the most. He explained, “The far right is the fascist, the far left is the communist, and the liberal, conservative, green, and NDP are in the middle.” Keywords of government structure refers to “parliament”, “election system” in Matt’s experience. Main figures in the Canadian government and their relations with each other was also learned. Paul specified, “The governor is recommended by the Prime Minister, and the Queen will definitely approve of his position. There is also the Lieutenant Governor, which is a provincial level of position.” In addition to Canadian political system and government structure, participants’ civics course taught civic rights Canadian citizens enjoy. Voting rights were what Matt and Paul’s civics courses emphasized. Other significant Canadian civic rights that include freedom of speech, freedom of political participation, and social benefits were introduced in Sam’s course. Emma further linked the civic rights to Canadian citizens’ strong sense of civic engagement to explain why Canada is a democratic country, she clarifies, “Even though there may be political competitions behind the voting, but you are still granted the voting rights. It’s your civic rights. It makes you feel like you’re participating in this country’s political system as a citizen.”

Apart from learning the civic knowledge in a more teacher-centered approach, according to participants, the teaching approach of the civics course was more student-centered with more diverse in-class activities prepared. Different from Chinese citizenship courses, no textbooks were required for their civics course in Canada. Canadian teachers usually use materials for lectures. Sam’s teacher used Google Classroom to share materials with students. Ann’s teacher also often sent out some printed materials which cover simple knowledge introducing the Canadian tax law. Emma mentioned that her civics course wasn’t restricted by textbooks at all, which was dominated by various in-class activities with teachers and peers.

Compared to the Chinese citizenship courses, instead of having only lectures in most participants’ narrations, all respondents described the learning atmosphere of the civics course as engaging since the teaching approach was more student-centred. In line with previous research (see, for example, Kahne & Sporte, 2009), best practices of citizenship education are discovered in the current research. Diverse in-class activities including games, simulations, classroom discussions, and group projects were prevalent in participants’ experiences. Certain knowledge and skills were acquired through the various engaging in-class activities. Each participant told

me different and detailed stories about what their in-class activities are, how students engage in these activities, and what they learned from these experiences.

Matt was impressed by the ‘manage your business game’ the most, “I think people memorize the game the most, but other stuff like remember pretty much the basics. Specifically, “You can trade resources; people would occupy a power station and sell power at a ridiculous price. You can develop your houses and upgrade it; people were pissed off,” he recalled vividly. The game involved every student because students would discuss the game devotedly after class. Matt expressed his love for this game several times, “It’s like Monopoly but on a whole class scale of 30 people. The game was great, it was just awesome.” Matt indicated that the game was the most interactive and enjoyable part of the civics course which centered around teaching the monetary values, and he learned the basic operation of the capitalist society. In the game, Matt also experienced a strong sense of individualism. He noted, “The learning environment was very competitive, not nearly as supportive as the Chinese civics course. It’s all about competitions and who makes the most money...you want to be the wealthiest person in the game.” Thus, gaining here was more of a focus instead of contributing.

Similarly, the most impressive part for Paul’s civics course was playing games called Civics Mirror, where students simulated a status of a country under a constitution when several types of governance were available, such as the aristocratic and the democratic politics. Students having food, shelter, and water did business with others. Likewise, the ideology of individualism was also emphasized through Paul’s competitive game when he sensed less support from either teachers or peers in his civics courses. He commented, “Students only cared about focusing on themselves, about their personal development.” Additionally, collaboration skill was also gained from the game which he described ironically as “more of a collective activity where a group of people stuck together and gave another group of people a hard time.” However, Paul learned nothing practical from the game and regarded it as underdeveloped due to its chaotic state. It was a free-developing simulation, from which he learned how society works in experimental situations.

Furthermore, what Sam and Ann found most interesting was the simulation where they were engaged in playing different parties. Both their teachers first asked them to choose which party they would like to play and then prepared political topics for them to choose to have election debates on. Students then wrote the speech and delivered it to the mock election debates

where they could present their unique opinions on the topics. Both Ann and Sam developed their civic skills. For instance, Ann perceived that the civics course developed her critical thinking ability and collaboration skill. Because students were supposed to choose which party they wanted to play, “and there's like a draft for you to study for it. And like, you have to say, like, what's your point of view? What's your argument here? And why it has to be logical?” Ann developed her collaboration skill when students of the same party needed to present as a group. Though they might have different opinions on a certain topic, they need to work collectively to choose which opinion most of them agree on. Ann further noted Canadian education not only stresses the importance of critical thinking for individuals but also emphasizes the importance of collaboration when students working together. In Sam's case, every student had responsibilities, some students made PowerPoint presentations and posters for advertising, others organized loads of policy documents. Sam at that time was assigned to design a logo for the party he's in. Though he thought the activity was tedious and couldn't say he enjoyed the whole simulation activity, he developed his research skill. “The logo needs to be symbolic; you need to explain why the logo has the meaning, and where does the meaning come from. Also, you need to cite correctly if you are using others' words.”

Equally important, the classroom discussion of the U.S. election and the simulation about running an election impressed Emma the most. Since that was the time for the 2016 U.S. election, Emma had the discussion of Hilary and Trump's election in class. Emma followed the election her own time, her teacher also showed videos about candidates' speeches and gave students their autonomy to vote for their favored ones. To guess who would win the election, Emma and her peers had mock voting every class and students also stated their reasons of why they wanted to give their votes to certain candidates. In addition to classroom discussion, Emma also had the simulation group project about electing for a new school headmaster. She recalled the details, “So, you design a script of your speech, and you need to say reasons why you're a good headmaster, and you need to take a video... Our group won in the end. It was really fun”. And through these two activities, it is evident that Emma developed her critical thinking ability.

In short, student-centered teaching approach is more applied in Canadian civics course with diverse in-class activities included, and this teaching approach is positively associated with the learning climate of the course. Students, therefore, developed civic knowledge and skills through those engaging and diverse in-class activities. Specifically, most participants acquired

sufficient civic knowledge about how an election debate works and various civic skills. These in-class activities enable students to understand how Canada operates economically and politically, and further pave the solid foundation for students to become informed and responsible voters, and effective participatory citizens in the future.

PATRIOTISM FOR CANADA

According to Westheimer (2006, 2007), North American citizenship education aimed to teach patriotism. Contrary to the literature, despite the civic knowledge and skills participants learned within the civics courses, it is demonstrated in participants' responses that civics course wasn't influential in instilling them a sense of patriotism for Canada. The individualism aspect sensed in the course didn't resonate with being proud of Canada for Matt. The key objective of the civics course for Paul lies in introducing students to the sociopolitical structure of Canadian society, not inculcating a sense of national pride. Only Sam remarked that patriotism was briefly mentioned when it comes to diplomacy in his civics course when his teacher gave witty examples, "The relationship between Canada and the U.S.A. is like you and your neighbor. If your neighbor is cutting the tree planted at your door, you cannot say anything." He further added that some patriotic people who would participate in politics must get irritated by these examples.

Though there was limited coverage of patriotism for Canada in participants' civics courses, participants still developed their national pride for Canada in different aspects. Rather than the civics course, participants including Matt and Paul who stated that the History course greatly helped to develop their patriotism consciousness tend to take more pride in Canadian history. Paul made his point by saying "it is reliable to read history to feel proud because you have to win others in the battle instead of saying our political system is better than theirs." Accordingly, Paul built his pride for Canada in the History course where he spent most of his time learning about World War I. He elaborated on this passionately, "World War I was the war that Canadians are very proud of. At that time, Canada did well in World War I, and especially, Canadian soldiers defeated many German troops at the Vimy Ridge battle. Canada was also a strategic logistics base for the Allied Forces, they trained pilots and the army there. And their weapons are also very different and marvelous since their industrialization started early." Instead

of feeling proud of Canada, what's interesting for participant Emma is when she expressed her sense of proudness for her Ontario high school's history, "Our school has a really long history even before Canada was founded. Yeah, it was founded in 1865, so like over 150 years of history. And it was a boy's school back then, and the students went to the World War I and World War II, and it did make us different from the other Ontario schools."

Other than the courses influence, participants' lived experiences also made them feel proud of the tolerant and safe aspect of Canadian society. Matt is proud of Canada's multicultural aspect that encourages people to respect others' multicultural backgrounds. In line with Matt's statement, Ann explained that compared to the United States, she feels proud of Canada because of the more accepting society and safer social environment Canada has. Precisely, she said, "Canada is more tolerant, and most Canadians are more friendly. If you go to the United States, you will face some serious racial discriminations... Also, it's safer in Canada because Canada has gun control". In addition, participants also expressed how they are proud of social benefits, freedom, and human rights from the Canadian citizenship. Paul reported compared to Chinese citizenship, being a Canadian citizen brings travel benefits to him because Canadian passport make him to travel to many other countries without applying for visas. Likewise, Emma agrees with Paul on the travel benefits she enjoyed as a Canadian permanent resident. "You can just use your PR card to go to the United States before the pandemic...it just sometimes like you don't have to go to the visa centers, you just save your time," she explained. Ann also takes pride in the educational and health benefits she enjoyed. She said, "Like you go to public school, it's totally free, except for post-secondary education." The other is the medical benefits, she commented that there is no payment needed for medical expenses and it's all covered if you are a permanent resident or a Canadian citizen. "Health is a big thing," she stated. Without worrying about the most expensive two aspects, Canadian citizenship overall means more freedom for Ann. Especially, she talked about women's freedom over occupational choices. Her sister now is a female CEO who's running a company in Canada. And they would often talk about, "If we were in China, she wouldn't be that successful compared to living here", since gender equality and human rights are better in Canada compared to China." Female participants Ann and Emma are also proud of gender equality in Canada. "In Canada, you are not biased just because of your gender... and China has more gender inequality issues," Emma remarked. Gender equality is what the Canadian government stresses, the ratio of men to women

is quite equal in the workplace, according to Ann. “Even the ratio of women is larger,” she noticed. Moreover, Ann also described that Canada is being very careful of the minority group on some occasions. For instance, disabled people have a certain priority when queuing or parking.

However, based on participants’ narrations, there are certain features of Canada that most respondents are not that proud of. Emma complained about the insufficient express deliveries in Canada, “We have too many rural areas, and the express delivery is particularly slow, not to mention random losses of packages.” Except for social realities, both Matt and Paul didn’t align with certain political ideals in Canada. Paul thinks the education system in Canada is relatively happiness-oriented since the classes are usually off at 3 pm, “I went home early, and nobody cared what I did...Because to be honest, if you go home from school so early, you will just have fun at home. But in the long run, it’s not good for you to spend too much time playing because you learned nothing, and I suffered from it.” Paul further commented that the happiness-oriented education makes the general vibe in Canada more laid-back. Thus, he pointed out, “If you want to make money, look to the South. Canada is not the right place for personal development.” Paul added that he cannot be proud of the status of Canadian politics because he thinks that the United States is influencing Canada heavily and it doesn’t matter who rises to power in Canadian politics. Also, Matt has concerns about Canada’s multiculturalism because he feels that diversity is not good for building a sense of national pride. He believes that people cannot really be proud of Canada if people identify more with their own ethnic background than with Canada as a nation. “You can’t really be proud of your country,” Matt said, “if you don’t have a strong sense of nationalism.” Canada’s political structure, Matt observed, weakens national pride: “how do you expect your citizen identify with your nation? You just shut every nationalism ideology down.”

CIVIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

All participants conveyed that more civic rights are realized in Canadian civic life. “You are not restricted by a lot of stuff; you live a relatively easier life,” Sam said in the interview. Most participants elaborated on more Canadian civil rights including voting, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion than Canadian civic responsibilities. As previously stated, Emma’s

civics course taught Canadian democracy. Emma further explained how democracy in Canada and China differs in its meanings, she pointed out, “Democracy is more like the rules or regulations embodied in the socialism core values...Freedom and democracy in China are more like regulating yourself, it’s not about encouraging you to participate democratically in civic life. While Canadian democracy makes citizens feel more engaged because every citizen is granted the voting rights.” Emma also depicted the how she experienced the Canadian election, “Canadian candidates would knock on my door and ask me if I am a Canadian citizen and want me to vote for them.” Furthermore, the freedom of voting to Matt also means one don’t have to vote for one specific party. Due to the multiple-party system Canada has, Matt mentioned that Canadian citizens can identify with certain political ideology with different political ideologies presented.

Regarding freedom of speech, some participants think Canadians have a hundred percent freedom of speech while most participants think more restrictions have been put on this respect. Ann firmly believes Canadians have the complete rights of freedom of speech. She detailed, “Canadians will say we have freedom of speech, I mean, in the entire North America, right? They’ll just say, we have the freedom. This made up a great part”. Ann thinks censorship doesn’t exist in Canada and one doesn’t have to be afraid to be banned or get censored from social media platforms. You can do everything you like privately or publicly. You can say whatever you want,” she stated. Nevertheless, most participants like Matt, Paul, and Sam supported the view that the speech is restricted to certain extent in Canada. Matt described that he once exercised freedom of speech in some university courses where he wrote and voiced his personal political opinions without significant penalties at that time. But he noticed that recently Canada tends to put restrictions on free speech, certain use of pronouns was reported to be constrained, and people’s general rights got turned down. He further mentioned, “There could be possibilities of being arrested for what one says in the future”. Paul also believes there are some restricted aspects on freedom of speech because the internet censorship also exists in Canada. In Paul’s opinion, although citizens have certain freedoms including “saying unkind things under Prime Minister’s tweet,” secession and politically incorrect remarks are not acceptable. He gave examples, “You can’t say, make Quebec independent. You will get arrested if you say that. You can’t say the Black Lives Matter movement is problematic, your posts will be deleted eventually for sure.” Because of the powerful political correctness ideology, Paul dares not say certain

things, “It is still very scary, to be honest, the consequences are hard to predict.” Once the official tone is set, posts that speak against it will get deleted. Paul noted this also applies to China’s situation where “we have to be politically correct, no one can escape this”. Similarly, Sam also held the belief that, like China, Canada also restrains freedom of speech by deleting speeches that associated with hate crimes. For instance, Canada also deletes defensive comments made about political leaders, and there are potential consequences of making aggressive speeches about political leaders. Sam detailed, “You can go to the political leader's Twitter to make some crazy speech, and then they will delete your comments and report you right away. And one can hand you a lawyer's letter, if one thinks you slander him or her, he or she can also sue you.”

Freedom of religion is another civic right most participants testified to be relatively freer in Canada. According to participants, religions are free not only because personal religious beliefs are respected in Canada, but also because religious activities are allowed and protected in Canada. Paul is a Christian who believes in Jesus, and he found that his peers who believe in Islam religion would ask for leave and go to participate in their religious activities when necessary. Sam added that the Canadian labor law also respects and protects ones’ religious rights from violations, “You can take a leave for any religious activities. No school or company can refuse to accept you because of your religions, or refuse to approve the religious leave, or lay you off just because you ask for religious leave. These things cannot happen in Canada because the labor law is explicit about this stuff.”

Nevertheless, participants who detailed the civic rights Canadian citizens have unveiled fewer and diverse civic responsibilities for Canadian citizenship. Main ideas of Canadian civic responsibilities from participants include obeying the law, voting, and paying taxes. To be specific, Paul and Sam believe obeying the law is the main responsibility. “In fact, there are not many civic responsibilities that Canada requires me to fulfil...just some law-abiding stuff,” Sam explained. Besides, Matt and Paul think voting is also a civic responsibility. Especially, Matt believes voting is a great responsibility because one can vote for a certain political party one resonate with and let them set their goals. The third responsibility is to pay taxes, which is an essential civic responsibility suggested by Matt, Paul, and Sam. Matt specified the consequence of not paying taxes, “If you don’t pay taxes, you go to jail.” Some participants, Ann, and Emma raised civic responsibilities from other perspectives. Active political engagement is what Ann

considered as a unique Canadian civic responsibility. She detailed the distinction, “I think the government here expects you to discuss the politics, that’s pretty different compared to China. Because the Chinese government don’t want you to talk too much about it. But in Canada, they encourage you and expect you to participate in this as part of the life.” In addition, Emma viewed this from a military perspective: a Canadian citizen needs to defend and protect the country as their civic responsibility. Her viewpoint originates from both school’s history and the media propaganda. “There are many students who joined the army in the WWI and WWII. We also had the monument placed in school; alumni who died in the wars were memorized in this way... And for a while, I have seen the Royal Military School’s advertisements on YouTube, so there’s still media propaganda in this area.”

Vision of Good Canadian Citizens

Consistent with the civic responsibilities, participants have various interpretations on what makes good Canadian citizens. Some fundamental visions include obeying the law and paying the taxes, which are what both China and Canada value. In line with Kymlicka and Norman (2000)’ study, civic virtues for good citizens include four aspects, general, social, economic, and political. This study also indicates from a national perspective, higher levels of civic virtues expectations include political, spiritual, social, and economic aspects. To satisfy the political expectation, participants agree that voting is what they regarded as what good Canadian citizens would do. Specifically, Emma believes good Canadian citizens would vote after careful consideration, since the votes determine the results that will affect the country. Matt also noticed the spiritual expectation for good Canadian citizens incorporates identifying with the multicultural ideology, respecting others’ cultural background, and speaking out for social justice. In addition to the spiritual expectation, economic expectation was also specified by participant Paul on making contributions to the Canadian society. Interestingly, like good Chinese citizens, Paul thinks good Canadian citizens would also actively make contributions to Canada in following aspects. First, working hard is an imperative social aspect for assessing if the citizens are good Canadian citizens. Paul commented, “Don’t bother others and do nothing all day, like smoking marijuana in the street.” Second, good Canadian citizens should contribute to the increase of population since it is meaningful to the society, though it is very burdensome to

the family. If people don't make contributions on the population increase, then there might be fewer consumption. "You need people to consume, home appliances and all kinds of stuff, or there would be no economic development," he explained. While in contrast to Paul's opinion, Ann expressed distinctive opinions on making contributions: it's not the government's expectations but rather having freedom on whether making contributions to the country that makes the contributions more likely. "They will encourage you to make contributions to the country, but it's not required," Ann stated.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN CANADA

Due to more civic rights participants had learned in Canadian civics courses, students raised their awareness of what civics rights they have in Canadian citizenship. Although the civics course didn't teach Matt much about civic rights and duties, it was an introductory phrase that led him to curiosity and self-motivated research. Indeed, it's through the research participant Sam also mastered the civic rights Canadian citizens have. Particularly, seeing the left and the right on the political spectrum helped Sam to acknowledge their unique views on what civic rights each party was concerned about and what pertinent policies they raised. Also, watching the U.S. election in class and having discussions with teachers and peers made Emma more realized of the voting rights Canadian citizens enjoy. Thus, civics courses were regarded as beneficial for raising students' civic awareness. It is also essential to make the civics course mandatory, according to Matt, since it helps to clarify the rights and duties of citizens, and in particular helps to avoid conflict with law enforcement.

With more civic rights informed in civics classes, participants are more inclined to practice those civic rights for civic participation in Canada. Also, most participants believe that active civic participation can exert positive influence both to themselves and the Canadian society. But some participants hold the opposite view. Take Matt, for instance, he deeply believes that either individual or collective power can exert an impact on the society, only greater powers through violence can make a difference. Though it may sound contradictory, Matt still became more active in voicing his opinions and trying to make a change because the civics course provided him with more information that allows him to participate in Canadian civic life freely. More active civic participation brings benefits for Matt--he attained some self-satisfaction

eventually. Matt further gave me an example, “People who protest, they are satisfied, they don’t really care about the outcome. I’m telling you they don’t really know, nor do they care about if they made a difference. What they care is that they are in the process of being there.” Like Matt, Sam also gained a sense of self-satisfaction when he participated in voluntary activities. Through having more social interactions with others, Sam improved his English proficiency. He turned out to become more and more passionate to join in more voluntary activities after attending the civics course, even though he had already fulfilled the whole volunteer hours required by the school. Ann also thinks doing volunteers means a sort of personal development. She was involved in relatively large-scale voluntary activities, such as marathon and dragon boat races, where she developed her collaboration and problem-solving skill with other volunteers working together. Ann explained, “It’s also teamwork. When you say that you are a volunteer, you don’t do it alone. It’s basically a group. Even if everyone is a volunteer, sometimes there are still some issues that you have to tackle with.” Emma not only gained a sense of self-satisfaction but also a sense of being helpful to others through volunteer work. She was a member of wind ensemble and played instruments for the elders at senior homes during the volunteer week. She recalled the details, “Before Christmas, you go to the senior homes, and you see them smiling, it really makes you know, it really makes you feel like you are helping those people.”

Besides voluntary work, participants also are interested in other forms of civic participation that has positive influence for the society or country they would like to live in. Voting in the future is what Ann wanted to do the most since she believes individuals’ voting can exert an influence on their future living prospects in Canada. She explained, “Civic rights like voting are given to you onto your hand, and you can make changes. Individual citizens make a big part of the society, and you’re supposed to choose your own will. How would you expect the government to work? What would you expect new future will be?” Voicing out ones’ opinions is also important civic participation for Sam because he noticed public opinions can exert some power on influencing political decisions. Sam further pointed out that political candidates who run for election would observe what issues most people are concerned about and then cater to the public to please the voters. Thus, depending on the number of the participants, Sam does believe the civic participation can make a change for the society. Protesting was what Emma concerned the most so that she actively joined in both onsite and online protests. Due to her inexperience of protest in China, she became interested in the onsite climate change protest in Canada. Also, due

to the pandemic, she protested online for the Stop Asian Hate movement and the Black Lives Matter movement by sharing protesting posts. The reason why Emma values the importance of protesting is that she believes protesting can raise people's awareness of noticing certain social inequality issues to certain extent. Either it's racism or gender inequality, "Because there is still bias in Canada, coz you cannot teach everyone to have the awareness," she said. Thus, after attending civics courses, participants demonstrated more active civic participation and indicated how the organized and collective participatory acts would bring positive effects to both themselves and the Canadian society.

CRITICAL THINKING IN CANADA

Participants found how Canadian education tends to emphasize the significance of developing critical thinking ability more than Chinese education. This is an ability Paul never developed in China but developed in Canadian high school. Likewise, Emma remarked, "Critical thinking is an important tool that you need for life, and that's what I learned in the Canadian education from high school."

Attending civics course significantly developed Chinese immigrant students' critical thinking, according to participants. Through diverse in-class activities, most participants started to understand what critical thinking means to them. Although Matt learned more knowledge or facts through having social interactions with other critical thinkers, the civics course helped to enlighten the critical thinking aspect of himself. Conversely, critical thinking played a significant role in Ann's civics course so that she perceived it as the learning objective of this course. Through the simulation of playing different parties, teachers arranged different parties for students to choose to play and handed out materials for students to study. Gradually, Ann learned to develop her arguments towards some topics and defend for the logic. Critical thinking to Emma also has similar meaning, since Emma used to have mock election debates discussing why Hilary or Trump would make a great president of the United States, she learned to support her ideas and see critical thinking is the ability to see things have both sides and develop individual arguments accordingly. Critical thinking to Emma also means different ideas are acceptable. When Emma was encouraged to actively join in classroom discussions, she observed her peers were all confident to raise different opinions. Since she once experienced the only voice from her

teachers in China, it was inspiring to her when she was exposed with this idea— “people are different, it’s okay to have different opinions.” Critical thinking to Sam is more of a combination of what Ann and Emma defined. Sam engaged in the election debate simulation activity where he learned to critically think. It’s from this activity that Sam grasped the gist of critical thinking, he elaborated, “If somebody asks you a question, critical thinking means a debate where you need to pick a side and think in different ways. And there shouldn’t be only one answer to the question but multiple answers to that question. And check if the answers are correct because you need to think why.”

Except for civics course, other courses in Canadian education also values students’ critical thinking development. Especially in English class, Paul wrote critical analysis essays in which he learned to look for evidence to support his arguments. Different from Ann’s Chinese civics course teacher, Paul’s English teacher encouraged students to analyze the meaning of the quotes differently. Paul said, “There must be different interpretations of the same quote when it comes to the exam, his teacher would support new insights. The teacher will give you points if you make your point anyway.” Sam also reported that writing essays in English course developed his critical thinking. He said, “When we got in high school, we read Shakespeare. And we wrote book reviews after the reading, and that’s beneficial for critical thinking development.” Emma also developed critical thinking through writing critical papers after she attended university. To write critical papers, Emma read scientific journals and analyzed the strengths and weakness of the journals. From there, the process of reflecting on the articles and writing the critical papers makes her a better critical thinker.

With the critical thinking ability developed, participants tend to study and speak up for social justice more by discussing what Canadian social issues they concern about. Ann once worked collectively with her classmates studying and acting on feminist issues actively in her undergraduate classes where they did collage and wrote letters to the government about how they wanted to change those gender unequal situations or address those existing issues. Besides, Sam also tends to study and discuss more social injustice issues in his daily life. The social injustice issue that Sam concerned was the systemic racial discrimination. As a person who doesn’t like to post anything online, during the recess of his geography class, Sam discussed with his geography teacher how the old Asian woman was physically attacked by the white man on the streets. In their conversation, Sam expressed his deep worries of this issue and thought protests like “Stop

Asian Hate” would be beneficial for weakening the racial discrimination in Canada.

Subsequently, Sam also studied the reason why the Black Lives Matter movement broke out and emphasized the need to see the root causes of problems because this might be the solution for social injustice. Furthermore, Matt did tend to study and speak up for social justice when he resonated with some issues. One of the issues that concerned Matt the most was what he called “collective identificationism”. He explained the term, “It’s a great definition by Professor Peterson from the University of Toronto...Collective identificationism is the urge and need to identify with the group ideology when the person has no clue of what is about, you just shout the slogan for just shouting it”. Matt raised an example--some environmentalists who he thinks blindly identify with the prevailing socio-political climate rather than truly caring about the environment. He suggested that people who posted metal straws on their SNS to show that they were environmentally friendly might use plastic straws the day after they posted it. Matt also criticized people who hate the LGBTQ community but claim to support them as hypocritical, “They want to gain attention, they also want to be supported and loved, but in such a disgusting way.”

When participants used their critical thinking ability to discuss certain social controversial issues, they also confronted certain complexities. For instance, Matt encountered certain difficulties and noticed the problem of the Canadian civics system— the overly focus on individualism causes some Canadians to make claims about morality and social issues without considering other possibilities. Precisely, he said, “They chose to believe what they believe is right without checking evidence, facts, and statistics, that’s a problem.” Although Matt tried to have a rational conversation, they wouldn’t let him. “These people have critical thinking ability, while they just refuse to use it.” Similar to Matt’s opinion, according to Paul, online discussion also tends to inhibit rational dialogue because there are always radical netizens. When Paul showed his interest in discussing global affairs, he once wrote a comment on the North Korean nuclear power issue under an anti-Chinese Youtuber. He wrote that “if North Korea wants to develop their economy, they will make nuclear power work”. Even though it turned out he was right, he was scolded by the internet trolls aggressively and hostilely. He observed that when it comes to online discussion, it’s more of a war of words, and some irresponsible or aggressive speech would incite a war against each other where people finally must divert the attention from the event itself to venting. Paul expressed that there is an urgent need to create a platform that

accepts both sides of voices where people could carefully consider them and discuss them calmly.

Censorship in Canada wasn't considered as an impediment to making social justice-oriented citizens, according to participants. Although Sam found protests regarding environmental protection are not seen widely on social media and he speculated that certain environmentalists' speeches might get restricted by the censorship system, Ann and Emma don't think the censorship in Canada gets in the way of engaging in social controversial issues or trying to make a change that challenge social injustice. Ann mentioned, "There's no censorship in Canada, so you can talk freely about any controversial issues." She raised how the Indian Residential School -related issues ignited anger in most people who criticized the government in unpleasant speeches, but the speeches never got censored. Similarly, Emma also believes this is true, she said, "In this pandemic, they censored news reports that were unfavorable to Canada, but they don't censor personal speeches." Also, different from China's censorship, Emma believes that the intention of Canadians to criticize politicians or the Canadian government is to hold them accountable and make the country better. She explained, "Like in Canada, you can blame the Prime Minister, Trudeau. But everybody still loves Canada, they separate the country and the leader. It feels like the Prime Minister just works for us, but everyone is patriotic, and everyone wants to make the country better."

CHAPTER 7: HOW DO PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES AS CHINESE IMMIGRANTS INFLUENCE THEIR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION EXPERIENCES?

After analyzing the first two research questions regarding Chinese immigrant students' citizenship education experiences in China and Canada, in this section, I intend to answer my third research question: How, if at all, do participants perceive their experiences as Chinese immigrant students affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences? I argue: Yes, as Chinese immigrants, they noticed that their previous Chinese education and culture exert evident influences on their Canadian civic education experiences. As previously mentioned in Chapter 5 and 6, although they changed their citizenship status, their responses indicate strong ethnic and national identity with China. I explored deeper reason and found out why this is the case. Moreover, beyond the scope of this study, I found Canadian civic education exerted more positive influences on Chinese immigrant students than Chinese civic education did. Learning a new type of civic education in Canada not only provided students with the opportunity to know Canadian ideals of good citizenship but also helped students to compare the details of two citizenship education's content to better understand civic knowledge as it pertains to Chinese citizenship. I also discerned more substantial influences derive from the Canadian civics course where participants developed civic knowledge, skills, dispositions so that they all considered it as an essential course that helped ease their transition to Canadian civic life.

STRONGER IDENTIFICATION WITH CHINA THAN IDENTIFICATION WITH CANADA

As stated earlier, every participant who obtained Canadian citizenship or Canadian permanent resident status by law expressed their patriotism for Canada in different aspects. Surprisingly, every participant revealed that they identify themselves more as Chinese than as Canadians. This is in line with what Matt said, "I identify with being a Chinese more...And that's what every immigrant identifies with, they identify more with their origins than being a Canadian." This finding supports the previous research that immigrants usually resonate with ethnic and/or cultural identity rather than national identity (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Through experiencing various aspects of a host country to establish a sense of belonging and commitment, especially given the enormous previous educational influences and cultural differences, it is hard

to develop Canadian civic identity for these Chinese immigrant students. For instance, though it's been 6 years since Sam returned to Canada, he still feels that he doesn't belong to Canada. It is worth noting that despite many years of immigration, all these Chinese immigrant students don't have a strong sense of belonging to Canada due to the significant cultural differences and educational influences.

How Chinese Education Influences their Identification with Canada

One reason why Chinese immigrant students more identify themselves more as Chinese than Canadians is the influence of Chinese education in general and Chinese citizenship education. Chinese education bolsters their ethnic identity as Chinese. For instance, Sam stated, "When I went to China, learning Chinese in Chinese schools was unforgettable experience for me. But after coming to Canada, there is no more other experience that's unforgettable." Thus, the cherished memories of four years of Chinese education experience to Sam are a huge part of the reason why Sam identifies himself as Chinese more. In contrast, different from Sam's four years' education experience in Chinese schools, more Chinese civic education exposures also play a weighty role in strengthening Ann's patriotic identification and a sense of belonging to China. Ann received relatively more Chinese citizenship education than Sam since she didn't come to Canada until she was 16. She commented, "The longer you live in a place, the more you will be affected by the social environment." Different from Ann, Ann thinks her sister's patriotism for China is not as strong as hers. "She came here at the age of nine, and we just joked that she is more like a banana person—yellow outside and white inside because the way she speaks, thinks, or behaves is totally Canadian." In addition, compared to the Canadian civic education, participants consider that the Chinese citizenship courses are more effective and comprehensive in developing their patriotic and nationalistic identification with China. The Chinese citizenship education Emma received is still influential for her. She commented, "The 65-minute course held twice a week simply cannot beat this sociocultural influence." The sustained exposure of civic knowledge in Chinese citizenship education makes students feel more identified with China's patriotism and nationalism ideology. Ann thinks the actual civics course was just one course, but the Ideology and Morality course and Politics course held every single year in China reinforces Chinese nationalism year after year. In addition, implicit daily exposures after class were the key to building more effective national identity in Chinese

students. Matt detailed, “When everything around you that teach the value, the whole, sole purpose of that. All your entertainments, interactions, academic sources, your school, your educational institutions are perpetuating ideologies that really resonates and draws to the core.”

On the other hand, there are some shortcomings of Chinese education that also prevent students from constructing their civic identity as Canadians. The insufficient English language education in China is the most noteworthy educational influences. Participants all indicated that the English language education they received in Chinese schools fell short in the skills of listening, speaking, writing, and the use of slangs. Insufficient English education caused huge language barrier and further amplified their worries in Canadian academic life. Consequently, students had to spend more time practicing these skills, particularly. Listening was one worry to these students due to the insufficient listening training in China. Paul found it challenging to understand the lectures at the sixth grade of Canadian elementary school. For a year, he couldn't follow the class until he memorized lots of vocabularies. Since Paul's Chinese way of learning English was largely reliant on remembering words. Likewise, although Ann received more English education in China, still, the biggest challenge for her was to follow the lectures in civics course. Sometimes, she wouldn't know what the topic was, and she had to seek help from teachers and classmates. Apart from the listening problem, speaking and writing are also obvious issues since there's little training for these two aspects of English education in China. For instance, Sam learned basic English in China, it was not enough to support his conversations with others and essay writings in Canadian class. Notably, Sam was particularly afraid of saying the wrong things and making mistakes when he had oral communication with others and found writing in a different logic and format required by Canadian teachers were difficult to adapt to. Paul also voiced his writing problems—it's more challenging to summarize his thoughts more concisely when writing. Furthermore, the use of slangs also was pointed out to be difficult to understand in either written or spoken forms. Though it's been the eighth year since Paul came to Canada, Paul still can only speak and understand a few of slangs, “For example, push the envelope, I didn't know the meaning of this word until later.” Besides, when Sam communicated with his peers, the slang his peers used always confused him. He had to ask his peers directly for explanations. Likewise, in Ann's case, slangs were found to be perplexing in informal writings when she was trying to understand the text from her Canadian peers. She had to check online to see what that slang means.

At this point, newcomers who experience language barrier are more likely to encounter racial stereotype and discrimination and see themselves as less integrated into Canadian schools. As newcomers, Ann, and Emma who came to attend Canadian high schools both experienced racial discrimination from their high school peers when they experienced English language difficulties. Based on certain racial stereotypes, Emma's peers once verbally assaulted her with the "Chinese don't talk to people" and "Chinese food smells" remarks. In a similar vein, due to her peers' "quiet" stereotype of Chinese students, Ann's peers physically harassed her. Ann attributed this "quiet" racial stereotype as a linguistic barrier issue. She detailed, "They think Chinese are quiet... Sometimes it's not like we are quiet, sometimes we are experiencing language barrier. We don't know how to fight back, right? You just need a moment there. But they think, 'Oh, this guy seems pretty quiet, let's just do something to her.'" Later, Ann diverted some of her attention from focusing on her academic life to dealing with those racial stereotypes and discrimination and tend to hang out more with only students of Chinese backgrounds.

However, Chinese Canadian immigrant students found solutions to get over the language barrier. With the help of the all-English atmosphere and the provisions of ESL programs, students eased their English-related worries and managed the linguistic issues steadily. When two participants Matt and Paul first came to Canada, they attended middle school and primary school respectively. And they didn't report that they had the ESL program to help improve their English. Rather, staying in an all-English environment gradually forced them to adapt to the use of English in daily life. Yet, most participants including Sam, Ann, and Emma all reported their ESL program was beneficial because it significantly mitigated their linguistic worries. Sam detailed his experience as an ESL student, "ESL students have more rights than others, you will have more time than others when you take the exam, you also can bring some paper and write translations on them." It seems that their teachers also play a supportive role in improving their English either by arranging a meeting or explaining more to them in detail.

Just because they mastered the English better doesn't mean they developed Canadian civic identity, since there are still other educational and cultural factors at play, which I will detail shortly. But it is apparent that students who received inadequate English education in China were exposed to the various difficulties, who had to spend more time on improving every single skill except for reading. Thus, language barrier is a powerful indicator that prevents

Chinese immigrant students from feeling academically supported and socially integrated, which further results in the weakening of their Canadian civic identity development.

What's more, insufficient critical thinking training in Chinese education negatively influences the development of participants' critical thinking ability. Since the key objective of Chinese citizenship education courses was to nurture obedience in students, participants usually had to listen to the only voice that's from the teachers and experienced rather limited classroom discussions. Gradually, students who always listened to the teachers didn't have the opportunity to exchange views with others, which leads to poorer ability to think. Emma once condemned how her Chinese education disable her critical thinking by saying, "Sometimes, it's not we dare not to question the teachers, usually we don't have the idea to question them."

The deficient English learning and obedience-oriented Chinese education further cause negative impact on how Chinese immigrant students engage in classroom discussions in Canadian civics course. Part of the problem is the key role deficient English learning in China play. It is the deficient English learning in China that prevents students from understanding the lectures and having effective communication or discussions with Canadian peers and teachers. For instance, either Paul could understand the content taught in class, or Emma could understand her peers' speeches of gender equality during classroom discussions. Especially, with more Canadian native speakers in the class speaking fluent English, Emma became more worried about her in-class participation since the deficient English learning in China prevented her from following her classmates and jumping into the discussion.

At the same time, all participants didn't develop critical thinking ability in Chinese education due to the obedience-oriented Chinese education, and this deficiency further affects students' class engagement in Canadian civics courses. If one wants to engage in social controversial issues discussion, one needs to learn to understand or analyze the complex social issue to certain extent. Paul failed to engage in any Canadian classroom discussions due to the lack of understanding of those issues, "There was no chance in the course for me to discuss those controversial issues," he said, "because at that time I didn't really understand anything at 10th grade." Like Paul's experience, Emma's experience also suggests this is true. Emma couldn't engage in the gender inequality issues discussions not only because of her insufficient oral English but also because of her lack of understanding of these issues. She felt incapable of analyzing and discussing these issues in Canadian civics class. "It was like people coming from a

different location or backgrounds and you see the difference between Canadian students and Chinese students and the way we think. They are talking about some topics that they know but Chinese students don't have a deep understanding with," she noticed, "coz I never learned anything about gender inequality before I came to Canada." Paul and Emma's experience illustrate one lesson about Chinese education: most Chinese students are not taught to be exposed to social controversial issues at schools, then how come they have a deep understanding towards those issues and discuss them when needed? Because of the strong obedience-oriented teaching in Chinese education, participants who hardly developed their critical thinking skills in China tend to sense more difficulties in understanding social controversial issues and engaging in the classroom discussions in Canadian civics courses. Thus, failing to develop critical thinking ability in Chinese education has further hampered Chinese immigrant students' academic participation in Canadian civics courses, thereby influencing their social integration and reducing their sense of belonging to Canada.

How Cultural Differences Influences their Identification with Canada

Besides the educational influences, cultural differences are significant factors in influencing Chinese immigrant students' sense of belonging to Canada. Cultural differences participants perceived include appearance differences, daily use of language differences, history differences, workplace culture differences, and pop culture preference differences. Sam and Emma both suggested that appearance is one aspect that they more identify themselves as Chinese. Sam voiced, "People around me look different from me, and I cannot find many similarities."

Despite the English-speaking environment and the ESL courses, it is still worth noting the cultural differences of what language students tend to use every day. Using Chinese in their daily lives the most seems powerful to weaken their sense of belonging to Canada. Ann and Paul, for instance, are still used to reading Chinese news on Chinese social media. Sam also prefers writing songs in Chinese and having communication with his Chinese peers in Chinese. Emma's parents don't speak English and they speak Chinese in their daily communication.

In addition to appearance and linguistic differences, other recognized cultural differences lie in history differences, workplace differences, and pop culture preferences, which further influences Chinese immigrant students' sense of belonging to Canada. This vast cultural gap

between Canadian and Chinese ones made it even more problematic for students to see Canada as the true homeland. Differences in history and workplace culture are major cultural aspects concern Paul the most. The long history of Canada prevents Paul from understanding the country and integrating into Canada within just a few years. Also, the Canadian workplace culture differs from the Chinese one. Paul believes local Canadians would be more familiar with Canadian workplace culture, would outperform immigrants like him, and tend to have better relationships with others in the workplace. However, Paul, as a first-generation Chinese immigrant, is not confident with his working and interpersonal ability in the Canadian workplace since he thinks it takes time for him to understand the working culture, manage cultural challenges, and fully adapt to the Canadian workplace. Furthermore, due to the pop cultural preference differences, most participants found it difficult to build Canadian friendships. Paul, for example, couldn't either understand the movie lines his Canadian peers mentioned or become interested in the skateboarding Canadian teenagers favored. The music preference of Sam and Emma is also different from that of Canadian teenagers. Sam couldn't build emotional connections with Canadians is partly due to the music he prefers are largely different from what Canadians enjoy. He added, "the music style, singer, or producer I enjoyed is all different from what they enjoyed, it's just no way to explain my thoughts to foreigners clearly." Even if Sam can speak English, Sam couldn't feel totally understood and supported by his Canadian peers. He said, "But Chinese students can understand me better, I think this should be a matter of cultural differences." This finding again supports Minichiello (2001)'s study that the obstacles of making friends lie in the difference in culture.

Overall, the implication is clear: the huge cultural gap has created long-term obstacles for Chinese immigrant students to integrate into Canadian schools and Canadian society instantly, which in turn influences how they build a strong sense of belonging to Canada.

MORE INFLUENCES FROM CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Although Chinese education and culture have a great influence on the development of students' Canadian civic identity, it is worth noting that having the previous Chinese citizenship education experience and attending the Canadian civics courses helps to produce more comprehensive understanding of both citizenships. Participants who acquired the civic

knowledge in both citizenship educations compared the civic content and then sensed similarities and differences of civic rights and duties. For example, most participants found the civic duties in terms of obeying the law are quite identical in two countries. “But many are still quite different,” Emma said. Students recognized what civic participation realized in Canada are less realized in China. Ann raised an example of voting in civic participation, “In China, you don't have the voting rights, or I didn't understand because I was too little. In Canada, you are now aware that you have the right and you can actually use that right. That just make you wonder: ‘Okay, there's a difference between the two citizenships.’”

Perception of Different Focus of Civic Rights and Responsibilities in Chinese and Canadian Citizenship Education

Civic responsibilities in Chinese citizenship are found to be clearer narrations than Chinese civic rights in participants responses, which implies Chinese citizenship education's stronger reinforcement of civic responsibilities. Matt once commented, “The Chinese one's more about, let's say, influencing to you, identifying with the responsibility and being ambiguous about the rights.” As a result, participants cannot be confident about the exact knowledge of civic rights in China. Take, voting rights, for instance, Sam cannot be certain about if he has voting rights since he has never voted in China. Paul never studied civic rights in his Ideology and Morality course. Even though Ann once learned about voting rights in her Politics course, but she wonders if Chinese citizens practice voting rights in practice. However, most participants recalled concisely about the civic responsibilities for Chinese citizens. For instance, obeying the law and the authority is the priority, being patriotic and making all kinds of contributions to China are the good citizens expectations, which I detailed in Chapter 5.

In contrast, for the civic rights and duties in Canadian citizenship, participants came up with richer details of Canadian civic rights and reported rather diverse and fewer narrations about Canadian civic duties. Under the influence of unclear conceptions of civic rights in China, they are more impressed by the accurate expressions of civic rights which I detailed in participants' accounts in Chapter 6. Matt also commented that the Canadian citizenship education is accurate about civic rights one enjoys, “The Canadian ones, they spell it word to word to you...Accuracy, let's say, the Canadian one is better.” However, as for civic duties in Canadian citizenship, Ann found it hard to recall a specific civic responsibility she has practiced in Canadian citizenship.

Developed Understanding of How Chinese Civic Participation Works in Practice

After realizing what kinds of civic rights for participation were realized in Canadian civic education, participants noticed certain rights for civic engagement realized in Canada are more restricted in China. As stated earlier, though students observed some civic rights such as freedom of speech is restricted to certain extent in both China and Canada, students particularly indicated some politically associated speeches cannot not be made in China. Emma noticed, “In Canada, you can say something about Trudeau and comment below his tweets, and this cannot happen in China.” Matt also expressed similar viewpoints, while he further added one cannot actively speak against some legislations or government decisions in China. He emphasized, “Even though you are mentally not aligning with them, you cannot physically go against them. They probably get you shot.” In addition, voting in China, according to Matt, Ann, and Paul, can be realized on a village level and elections cannot be made beyond that level. Unlike voting, political activities like protests or demonstrations are what Emma discovered that Chinese citizens should not be active in at all. Except for the political protests, other protests in China are also unwanted. Paul specified, “The P2P (peer-to-peer) protest broke out in 2018, many people lost their money investing in this lending platform, they couldn’t get the money back. The country didn’t care about this, so it is still difficult to protest in China.” Interestingly, Emma pointed out that Canadian political leaders’ places are more approachable and implied Chinese citizens are more alienated from their political leaders. She thinks letting the citizens know where the Prime Minister (PM) lives makes citizens feel closer to their PM, “You can just go to Trudeau’s house which is located close to Rideau Canal... it’s pretty, the trees, the flowers, the geese... It would be like crazy in China.” Though all participants hardly received any Chinese civic rights education in their Ideology and Morality courses in Chinese primary or middle schools except for Ann who took Politics course where Chinese civic rights for civic participation were introduced in class, participants who attended both Chinese and Canadian citizenship education tend to increase their understanding of both the civic knowledge and how is civic participation being realized in Chinese citizenship. What participants perceived about limited Chinese civic participation forms makes another noteworthy point: Chinese government stress the importance of making good citizens as obedient rather than actively engaging in political participation, which is in line with Li (2018)’s study. And from a national perspective, this testifies Tse and

Lee (2003)'s statement that national sovereignty, unity, and security in Chinese citizenship outweigh individual rights.

CANADIAN CIVICS COURSES HELP EASE TRANSITION TO CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

The influence of Canadian civic education isn't only to make Chinese immigrant students understand the Chinese citizenship better, but more importantly, it helps to improve their civic knowledge and skills that they have never known before in Chinese schools. These acquired knowledge and skills through Canadian civics courses are regarded as vital for easing their transition to Canadian civic life, which further leads students to show stronger interests and willingness to participate civically after attending the civics courses. Therefore, it is crucial for Chinese immigrant students to attend civics course as mandatory courses, based on Matt's and Paul's narrations. "Because this is not common sense, people need civic education," Paul stated. Ann also agrees that it's great that this course is set up as mandatory since the course facilitates all students with diverse backgrounds integrating in Canadian civic life. She emphasized not only it is beneficial for immigrant students, but also it is informative for local Canadian students. "Because they are not like Chinese students who start to receive the kind of Ideology and Morality course since elementary school that you can take every year. They never learned such things until the 10th grade, so outsiders like us don't understand the content, the local people don't know them either."

Then, what new civic knowledge made an impression on participants? Civic knowledge that mostly often expressed related to Canadian political system and voting rights. Since the political system of Canada and the voting system wouldn't be what participants learned in China. It can be demonstrated in Emma's words, "Unlike local students, I wouldn't have so much civic knowledge compared to local students. I went to Canada when I was 13 after all, my parents didn't tell me about this knowledge since a young age, so this course allows me to learn some political concepts and government structure." Chinese immigrant students are particularly impressed by how a legislation become a law since this is not what they learned in Chinese citizenship education. Ann and Paul know the process of how a legislation goes through the parliament. To be specific, Paul said, "How a bill goes to first reading, second reading, third reading, and how it will be sent to the queen for approval." In addition, voting to participants is

also interesting knowledge they never had in Chinese civic education. Specifically, who are entitled to voting rights, what the election looks like, how to vote in a responsible and informed manner are detailed by the students. Matt, for instance, knows voting rights are given to Canadian citizens like him but not the permanent residents living in Canada and implied how his civics course focuses on imparting voting rights. While Ann was once a Canadian permanent resident when she was attending the civics course, the civics course is still reported to be valuable for her voting inclination in Canada. Since she just got her Canadian citizenship, she sounded excited about involving in the voting process, “Now I am a Canadian citizen, next time I would vote for sure.” What an election looks like impressed Emma through watching the U.S. election and having relevant classroom discussion in class. These activities provided her with the opportunity to learn what western democracy is and what an election truly looks like, “Coz that’s the first time I learned about the U.S.A election, which wasn’t something I saw in China, either through internet or school. We didn’t learn anything about the election, and this course just provides me the opportunity to learn how other countries vote their president.” Knowing what a Canadian election looks like is not enough, since how citizens should vote in a responsible and informed manner is also essential. Before voting, students mentioned, citizens should be armed with imperative voting knowledge of how to become informed and responsible voters. First, informed voters need to know the philosophy of each party and the corresponding leaders, which was mentioned by both Paul and Ann. Second, studying political history of Canada is key to seeing a comprehensive picture of Canadian politics, which is specified by Paul. Third, voting after careful consideration, brought up by Emma, is a significant Canadian civic responsibility since the results of the votes would influence one’s future. Paul raised an example of how some people vote without careful consideration, “Unlike some people who are participating in civic life, they will say that ‘the party emblem is very beautiful, so I will vote for them.’ There are people of this kind. This is very interesting, especially if there is a low level of education, this is more likely to happen.”

In addition to the civic knowledge, it is also crucial for Chinese immigrant students to master certain civic skills that they never get developed in China, which helps them to integrate into Canadian citizenship. Despite the developed hands-on skills including voting and tax filling, students developed other skills as civically important which include skepticism, critical thinking, collaboration, and decision-making. Based on their detailed descriptions in Chapter 6,

participants developed their critical thinking to different extents in their civics course. However, here, Matt particularly elaborated on what the four skills mean and how the four skills are connected to each other in forming rational and collective civic participation. Before elaborating on critical thinking skill, Matt pointed out that one needs to be skeptical, meaning one shouldn't believe in everything, one should question things. He doesn't believe in whatever itself in the class and he also warned, "Just don't believe what the media says, usually, it's like 20 percent correct." Matt then viewed that critical thinking means one should consider the scientific evidence or facts presented based on what one observes and hypothesize. This skill is needed because one should be smart, "don't be like Greta Thunberg, coz that's not smart." Once one can be skeptical and can think critically, one needs company and make collective decisions. For the collaboration one, Matt specified "You wanna find people have the same agenda as you. Modifying your opinions and choosing the right syntax conditions to really let other people resonate with you as well." Then, one can form a group of friends who are of the same ideology. Finally, decision making is about making correct decisions, Matt specified, "Don't be all high-headed and saying, 'I am gonna make a change today, I am gonna stop ice melting' just by putting some signs up, we do strategically to make a collective decision."

With all the civic knowledge and skills developed through the civics courses, Chinese immigrant students' civic education experiences demonstrate that students are receiving more influence of Canadian civic education that supports their transition to Canadian civic life better. After learning two versions of citizenship education in China and Canada, these students also perceived that they have become confident about the civic knowledge and civic skills in both Canadian and Chinese citizenships and motivated to participate in Canadian civic life more than they were in China.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There has been very little research relating to Canadian civic education that attends to the experiences of Chinese Canadian immigrant students. Considering the significance of exploring how these students experienced the intercultural civic education, this thesis has contributed to filling this gap by providing an empirical study of Chinese Canadian immigrant students' civic education experiences in both China and Canada and offering a critical exploration of how their Chinese immigrant experiences exert certain impact on their Canadian civic learning experiences.

To unravel the meaning of civic education experiences to the participants, I chiefly used a qualitative research design with semi-structured interviews to answer the three research questions. As stated in Chapter 2, the vision of personally responsible, participatory, and social justice-oriented or critical thinking citizenship was provided by Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) citizenship education study. Based on the three visions of good citizenship, I formulated three specific research questions and examined participants' citizenship education experiences through these perspectives. As a result, in this thesis, all the answers to the research questions are analyzed through thematic analysis.

Together, all the responses to these questions offer an overall portrait of Chinese Canadian immigrants' citizenship education experiences in China and Canada, and how their Chinese immigrant students' experiences exert impact on their Canadian civics' education experiences. Overall, students' descriptions indicate that there is a contrasting difference between how two countries view their good citizenship for their citizenship education. Different focuses of the Chinese citizenship education and Canadian citizenship education yield different kinds of citizens.

The first research question was: *To the extent they can recall, how do participants describe the sense of citizenship they had in China including their civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking?* Investigating their Chinese educational and cultural backgrounds paves the foundation for gaining a comprehensive understanding of their Chinese civic education experiences. In this study, the research finding indicates that, to the extent participants can recall, the vision of citizenship they learned in China emphasized a strong sense of civic duty and responsibility, collectivism, patriotism, and nationalism, conveyed a limited idea of civic participation, did not encourage, or actively discouraged critical thinking.

Through the textbook-oriented teacher-centered teaching approach, students were often required to listen to the teachers' only voice in class. The overall content of Chinese citizenship education reflected in students' interviews usually centers on morality and laws, more civic responsibilities over civic rights, as well as some part of the history and development of CPC. Specifically, Chinese civic education emphasized collectivism and promoted this ideology by setting up school rules and regulations and compulsory collective activities for students. Other than collectivism, in line with earlier research that focused on students' experiences of Chinese citizenship education (Tu, 2011; Xu, 2016), this research also shows similar patterns: students' experiences revealed that the influence of patriotism was comprehensively delivered through both the formal and informal curriculum – all the foundational academic subjects' curriculum as well as the various patriotic-related daily events. Subsequently, through the frequent exposure of “loving China” idea without even knowing the definition of it in daily activities and the patriotic and nationalistic feeling-evoked written words in the textbooks of Ideology and Morality, Politics, English, Chinese Literature, Music subjects, students built their sense of patriotism and nationalism for China correspondingly.

Apart from feeling patriotic for China as one important civic responsibility in Chinese citizenship, equally important, the other main civic responsibility in Chinese citizenship is obeying the law and authority. Previous research described that the complete allegiance to authority, obedience to the CPC, deep thoughts on personal virtues are good civic qualities (Goldman & Perry, 2002), this research keeps supporting their findings that good civic characteristics in Chinese citizenship indeed fall on civic responsibilities that include being obedient to the Chinese government and making contributions to China on the entire spectrum, also this study alternatively shows less political engagement is also desired good civic qualities for Chinese citizens.

With a huge emphasis on civic responsibilities for good Chinese citizens, however, students didn't draw the equal emphasis on Chinese citizens' civic rights, but rather, students reported Chinese citizens' civic rights in terms of voting, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion are all restricted. The findings suggest that Chinese civic education did mention civic rights, but what participants experienced, observed, or heard later was not the case in Chinese citizenship—a huge gap from textbooks and reality. As a result, students who had a negative sense of Chinese civic participation tend to form the negative belief that no changes can be made

through any kinds of civic participation, and consequently tend to show low inclination of participating in future civic participation in China. What's interesting is one participant—Matt—told me that Chinese citizens are expected to participate in politics, to express one's views. But based on his father's experience as a people representative at the conference and what he observed, he reported there's no one speaking at the conference but only the chairman's speaking. This finding supports Tu (2011)'s study that the Chinese citizens' civic participation is limited. Alternatively, this result also agrees with Li (2018)'s study, saying that more obedience is desired instead of expressing diverse perspectives in Chinese citizenship.

When more attention is paid to civic responsibilities over the expectation for civic rights and civic participation, students' critical thinking training, therefore, was not a focus. Previous study indicates that the content of critical thinking is hardly covered in undergraduate courses in China (Kai & Yujie, 2013), this study also suggests critical thinking is neither a requirement in Chinese citizenship education in Ideology and Morality courses took in primary schools and middle schools nor the Politics course in high schools. Since the learning goal and the outcomes are more focused on the grades in exams, and the content appeared on the exams are largely associated with how much knowledge one remembers on the textbooks, teachers thus aimed to train students' rote memorization skill. This result adds to the finding dates to the last two decades when both Campey (2002) and Minichiello (2001) pointed out that Chinese education focuses more on rote memory training, limited self-expression, exam-oriented learning with a teacher-centered approach. This teaching approach corresponds to the aim of nurturing obedient citizens; thus, the training of critical thinking citizens would not be likely to be perceived as the main objective in any curriculum of any subjects in Chinese education. With the influence of Canadian civics course, this study indicates students' strong dissatisfaction towards how critical thinking is not developed in Chinese citizenship education and why it is important for Chinese students. The improper training of critical thinking ability yields consequences: First, one might not be smart in being able to understand the meaning behind the text in textbooks, and one might not be able to form a judgment. Second, one might find it challenging to analyze certain social issues and engage in critical discussions. In addition, the internet censorship also functions as a barrier suppressing online discussion. The lack of training of critical thinking ability and the powerful internet censorship, therefore, lead to fewer chances of critical discussions over social controversial issues and lower future disposition of speaking up and demanding changes. Thus,

Chinese citizenship education indeed teaches students to become obedient citizens, which has consequence on students' lower-level civic participation and critical thinking ability.

Overall, these findings clearly indicate how Chinese citizenship education focuses on the conception of personal responsible citizens and produces obedient and patriotic citizens rather than aiming for cultivating participatory and critical thinking citizens. Based on participants' experiences, the focus on personal responsible citizenship instruction indeed facilitated to nurture submissive, patriotic, and apolitical citizens, while it neglected to develop civic participatory dispositions (e.g., collaboration, problem-solving) and critical thinking skills that are vital to challenge social inequalities (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). These findings are consistent with Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework for the personally responsible citizen. And the overly focus on producing personal responsible citizens indeed fails to develop other significant skills and dispositions to effective citizenry.

In response to the second research question: *How do participants describe their experiences in the Ontario grade 10 citizenship education course, in particular, the sense of civic responsibility, participation, and critical thinking conveyed?* After looking into their experiences of Chinese citizenship education, I expected to see what it is like for them to experience another different kind of citizenship education experience in Canada in terms of civic responsibility, civic participation and critical thinking conveyed. Surprisingly, participants in this study indeed demonstrated sufficient civic knowledge on both civic rights and responsibilities, more awareness, interest, and actions in civic participation, and more developed critical thinking ability through the Ontario grade 10 civic courses.

The teaching approach of the Ontario grade 10 civics course was more of a combination of teacher-centered and student-centered. Although the nuances of the teaching content vary differently in each students' civics classrooms, fundamental civic knowledge that include Canada's political system, government structure, and civic rights and responsibilities were common content students mastered through a more teacher-centered approach. While through a more student-centered teaching method, students who were more encouraged to join in various kinds of in-class activities including classroom discussions, simulations, games, and group projects became equipped with essential civic knowledge and skills under such engaging learning atmosphere. For instance, Emma learned how an election debate works either by watching the 2016 U.S. election or participating in an election simulation. Skills such as critical

thinking skill, collaboration, and research are acquired by most participants through the diverse activities.

With regards to the patriotism content, as Westheimer (2006, 2007) wrote how patriotism was delivered to students in North American citizenship education, I expected the Canadian civics course would also teach students patriotism-related knowledge, yet to my astonishment, there was limited coverage of teaching students to be patriotic and nationalistic in civics course. The analysis also shows that it is more through the History course that helped students to build patriotism awareness and national identification with Canada. Aside from the civic knowledge learned from the civics courses, what makes these Chinese Canadian immigrant students prouder of Canada is the freedom they now enjoy as Canadian citizens and permanent resident, which means more social benefits and more realized civic rights compared to the Chinese citizenship. More civic rights including voting, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of political participation is realized in students' Canadian civic life. Yet, compared to the civic rights, students had fewer narrations about civic responsibilities. Still, they had a broad understanding of what Canadian civic responsibilities look like, apart from obeying the law and paying the taxes. Unexpectedly, what's different from Chinese citizenship education is that voting and active political engagement are regarded as the civic responsibility of Canadian citizens. This result implies contrasting differences from the Chinese civic responsibilities, which also helped them to make sense of Canadian civic duties. At this point, these findings also infer that it is important that students developed a comprehensive understanding of what good Canadian citizenship is and what Canadian citizenship means to them by recognizing and practicing both civic rights and responsibilities. This might add to the Westheimer and Kahne (2004)'s framework that besides the civic responsibilities, developing an understanding of civic rights is much more effective at triggering structural changes in Chinese Canadian immigrant students' perceptions of Canadian citizenship.

Whereas the past researchers have found that the classroom-based civics learning opportunities have a significant impact on high school students' voting propensity (Kahne & Sporte, 2009), the present study has shown that with a primary focus of learning Canadian civics, students reported that they became more inclined to participate civically by, for example, voting. Voicing out opinions, protesting, and doing voluntary activities are also what the participants concerned about and became more active in. This pattern of results also is consistent with a

bunch of previous research (McIntosh et al., 2007; Torney-Purta et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2012; Siegel-Stechler, 2019) that demonstrates positive effects on students' civic outcomes after taking the civics course.

Overall, according to what I learned from participants in this study, Canadian civic education focuses more on producing participatory citizens who are well informed of the civic knowledge. The participatory citizenship centers on active civic engagement. Imparting civic knowledge of civic rights such as voting helps to raise the civic awareness of students. Encouraging students to participate in volunteer activities after class increased their interest to try them out. After taking actions in these organized and collective participatory activities including volunteer work, protesting, and voicing out opinions, students gained a sense of self-satisfaction and found the civic participation beneficial both to them and the Canadian society. In line with previous research (Hess, 2009; Parker, 2008), students in the current study also developed skills including collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making skill through the active civic participation. The raising civic awareness, interest, and actions therefore leads to forming a positive belief that civic participation indeed can make a change both to themselves and the Canadian society. The positive loop further generates more active dispositions for more civic participation in Canadian civic life. More importantly, I noticed when these students participated in voluntary activities, voting, protesting, and voicing their opinions, a part of their motivated reason of participating in these activities lies in the lack of such civic knowledge and practice in China. Curiosity motivates them to participate more actively in Canadian society.

The experiences reported by participants strongly suggest that the Ontario civics education course emphasizes the importance of developing critical thinking citizens. At least to some extent, then, the Ontario civics education course teaches what Westheimer and Kahne (2004) called social justice-oriented citizenship. This study also found that academic subjects other than civics courses, for instance, English course also tend to develop students' critical thinking ability through essay writings. With developed critical thinking ability, students also tend to engage in finding collective methods for change that challenge gender inequality (see in Ann's experience) and speaking up about politics in class without worrying about censorship (see in Matt's experience). Consequently, it is then not surprising to see these students who developed critical thinking show positive tendency to study and speak up for Canadian social justice more. The vision of critical thinking citizens was once reported as far less commonly seen in civic education programs in Westheimer and Kahne (2004)'s study. While in years of changes since this study, this finding has expanded on the results and signified the

significant progress in current Ontario civic education programs which has already switched its focus on aiming to develop critical thinking or social justice-oriented Canadian citizens.

Since these Chinese Canadian immigrant students coming to Canada experienced the transition from one good citizenship in China to another good citizenship in Canada, I wonder if and how these students perceived some effects from their Chinese immigrant experiences as powerful in influencing their Canadian civic education experiences. The third question, thus, considers the role of Chinese immigrants in affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences. The third research question I asked was: *How, if at all, do participants perceive their experience as Chinese immigrants affecting their Canadian citizenship education experiences?* I argued, yes, students found their Chinese Canadian immigrant experiences influence their Canadian citizenship education experiences, especially when Chinese education and culture represent major influencing factors in their civic education experiences.

With regards to students' national identification, a surprising result I found is that most students' sense of patriotism and nationalism for China has grown stronger since their immigration. Despite their Canadian citizenship (or in the case of Emma. Her Canadian permanent resident status), they still maintain great pride in their race, culture, history, and China's economic development. When I re-examined why students showed stronger national identification with China in Chapter 7, both their Chinese educational and cultural factors presented the clarifications. For educational factors, I was surprised by how Chinese civic education had a far-reaching influence on Chinese immigrant students' patriotic and nationalistic identification. Although all participants didn't feel that their patriotic sentiments for China were associated with Chinese citizenship education when they experienced the Chinese citizenship education back in China, they all reported a realization of how the explicit patriotic and nationalistic influences Chinese civic education have been exerted on them in the interviews. This finding reflects the extent to which Chinese citizenship education attaches great value to patriotism and nationalism education and suggests that the learning outcomes have been well met.

Despite the strong influence of Chinese civic education, the limitations of Chinese education that include insufficient English language education and the discouragement of critical thinking skill elucidate reasons why Chinese immigrant students tend to feel less academically supported and socially integrated at Canadian schools, and therefore feel less identified with Canada. In line with previous research Wang (2016) conducted, one key adjustment issues Chinese immigrant students faced was the English language acquisition issue. This thesis also indicates that the insufficient English language

education results in huge barriers for these students. Chinese immigrant students, therefore, had to spend loads of time and efforts making improvements specifically on listening, writing, speaking skills, and the use of slangs. I reflected on the goal of English language education students received in China was largely dependent on marks-oriented training of reading comprehensions, and teachers treated English more as an art than a language, thus, students were often required to remember grammatical rules and vocabularies to be tested on in exams. Consequently, the improper training of listening, speaking, writing, and use of slangs in English led to poorer mastery of the language. Over the past two decades, Minichiello (2001) has studied how Chinese immigrant students found writing, speaking, and use of colloquialisms daunting to them in Canadian schools. Due to the insufficient English education influence in China, it is anticipated that two decades later, language achievement is still a crucial problem for these Chinese immigrant students. To certain extent, this finding shows how Chinese English education remain in stagnation. Also, particularly, according to the newcomers' experience, this study indicates that newcomers who came to attend Canadian high schools with low level of English proficiency were more likely to encounter serious racial discrimination from their high school peers and teachers. In addition to the deficient English language education in China, this study also demonstrates that the obedience and strong duty-oriented Chinese civic education tend to generate low level of critical thinking ability. With the core concept of Chinese civic education discouraging critical thinking, there is no mystery at all about how the presentation of most participants' critical thinking ability in Canadian civics course was dead-on mediocre. For instance, most participants found it challenging to analyze certain social issues and engage in critical discussion in Canadian civics courses because different ideas once were not available to be shared or discussed among classmates in Chinese civic classrooms through the mainly teacher-centered and exam-oriented approach. As a result, Chinese immigrant students found themselves struggling following their peers and raising their own voices on certain issues they didn't even develop a deep understanding with. The long-time efforts that needed to both improve English language and critical thinking skills, thus, directly influenced their academic progress and social integration at schools and in the long run influenced their sense of belonging to Canada.

Another explanation for the finding why Chinese immigrant students built stronger patriotism and nationalistic identification with China since their immigration is that the sense of cultural belonging and emotional connection derived from ethnic identity is stronger than that derived from civic identity.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 7, current research supports Ladson-Billings (2004)'s research on how immigrants often resonate with ethnic and/or cultural identity rather than national identity. This study indeed indicates in addition to the educational influences, in the meanwhile, cultural factors exert wide-ranging influence on shaping students' stronger patriotic and nationalistic identification with China. According to many scholars (Allport, 1954/1995; Evans, 1952; Schaar, 2002), nationalism is based on specific facts about ancestry or races, which yields a sense of cultural belonging. Indeed, despite years of immigration, Chinese immigrant students identified themselves ethnically and culturally as Chinese more. Since the huge cultural differences between Chinese culture and Canadian culture that students reported reflect in many aspects including appearance, daily use of language, history, workplace culture, pop culture preference. The habits formed under the influence of Chinese culture cannot be changed in a short time, and students who were not familiar with the Canadian culture found it challenging to adapt to the new culture immediately. As a result, Chinese immigrant students who developed a sense of cultural belonging to China and built more emotional attachment to China tend to identify themselves more as Chinese than Canadians.

Moreover, beyond the scope of this study, I also found the prevailing influence Canadian Ontario grade 10 civics course brought to these Chinese Canadian immigrant students as beneficial. Having the Chinese citizenship course experience and attending the new Canadian civics course make immigrant students learn new civic knowledge of Chinese citizenship that once Chinese citizenship education didn't inform. Besides, Canadian civics courses also help them to ease their transition to Canadian civic life through imparting essential civic knowledge for civic participation such as voting as civic rights, and the essential civic skills of critical thinking.

In addition to the interpretations of findings I provide above, there are some additional details that are worth noting. First, one detail worth noting is that throughout the course instruction, the Chinese-inclusive content was not sufficiently built-in in Canadian civics course and brought up by the teachers. The finding again shows that except for the brief exposure of China's political ideology, overall, the Canadian citizenship curriculum still has limited coverage of Chinese topics. This was an unexpected result since I had imagined that previous research by Li (2009) reporting how the lack of Chinese-related content influenced Chinese immigrants social studies course experiences would raise the awareness of policymakers and educators to acknowledge Chinese students' cultural and educational backgrounds and show concern to their

experiences and bring their voices to make them feel engaged in the class. The inclusion and the discussion of their Chinese citizenship education backgrounds not only would make Chinese students better understand Canadian citizenship but also would contribute to the diversity in multicultural classes Canadian government promotes. Yet, to my surprise, after a decade, based on all participants' narrations, I found the Chinese Canadian immigrant students' educational and cultural backgrounds were mostly disregarded in the Canadian citizenship education curriculum. Even though Canada emphasizes the value of multicultural ideology, this study did not indicate that Chinese immigrant students had opportunities to include to discuss their multicultural experiences in Ontario civics course.

A second detail worth noting is how the experiences of racial discrimination were related to language barrier remain questionable. In the current research, as newcomers, Ann, and Emma, coming to Canada and starting their education experience in Ontario high schools with low level of English proficiency, somehow experienced racial discrimination-based verbal or physical harassment from their peers and teachers. Consequently, they tend to make more Chinese friends to support them rather than trying to make Canadian friends. The pattern of the result is clear: newcomers with language barrier tend to encounter racial discrimination. This result indicates consistency with Bozo and others' study in 2018 that racial discrimination impedes making friends with Canadians, also shows consistency with Li (2009)'s research that newcomers have more experiences of being discriminated against by teachers and peers. Yet, when I reflected on Matt and Ann's words, I think of the role language barrier that might be played in their racial discrimination experiences. According to Matt, he stated the problem of racial discrimination is one didn't get over the language barrier yet. It is significant to notice Matt's statement because this might be true for Ann's experience, as she once reported how the "quiet" stereotype her peers had for Chinese students is wrong in essence since it totally ignored the language barrier she was experiencing. Therefore, I wonder if this racial stereotype labelling Chinese students as "quiet" in essence is built on ignoring Chinese immigrant students' educational and cultural backgrounds and trying to make the racial discrimination justified.

Thirdly, it is also noteworthy to see how Canadian citizenship education can change in response to improve immigrant students' sense of belonging to Canada. Canadian citizenship education doesn't emphasize civic responsibility as much as what Chinese citizenship does since both civic duty and patriotic or nationalistic content was briefly covered in Ontario grade 10 civics courses. Especially when

Chinese Canadian immigrant students reported their sense of belonging to Canada was not as strong as China. One explanation considers the influence of the strong Chinese patriotic and nationalistic education influences that I described earlier. Another possible explanation is that the patriotic and nationalistic education in Canadian civics course wasn't influential enough to build their sense of belonging to Canada. Matt once complained that Canadian's diversity or multicultural ideology isn't beneficial for building a strong sense of nationalism. Therefore, the deliberation of how multicultural ideology can live with patriotic and nationalistic education of civic responsible citizenship may be included in the Canadian civic education reform agenda.

Finally, what makes the vision of social justice or critical thinking-oriented citizen teaching significant is that the current research indicates that Chinese students developed critical thinking ability in Canadian civics courses, but not in Chinese schools. Canadian citizenship education, then, does more to develop social justice-oriented citizens than civic education in China. Still, it remains room for improvement in Canadian citizenship education. What Chinese immigrant students reported their learning from classroom discussions of social controversial issues is limited due to both influence of their insufficient English language education in China and the zero training of thinking critically in China. There might be still many Canadian teachers who are not aware of the fact that most Chinese students are not prepared with the training of critical thinking ability and adequate comprehension of Canadian social injustice issues tend to overlook the importance of offering more help to students from distinctive educational and cultural backgrounds.

LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS

The first important limitation I acknowledge is how COVID-19 pandemic makes the data collection process challenging and different. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, everything turns to online, it was challenging to recruit eligible participants since I had to conduct the recruitment online. I sent around a hundred emails to professors at the University of Ottawa to introduce my study, and finally recruited six participants in time. A qualified participant didn't notice the email from the professor in her mailbox in time, and she reached out to me one month after I completed the recruitment process. Thus, if there was no COVID-19 pandemic, I supposed that I could have had more timely recruitment. For instance, I could have conversations with staff working in the

Chinese Canadian associations onsite, and the staff might introduce more participants to me more promptly. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a negative impact on the format of interviews I conducted with my participants. It's through the face-to-face interviews that more interactions, trust, and meaningful relationships are generated between the researcher and the participants. However, the pandemic makes a haul to all that. I ended up conducting virtual telephone interviews with all my participants just to make sure they felt more comfortable that way. During some interviews, I somehow sensed one participant didn't gain enough trust from me and the answers provided were relatively indirect. When I reflected on my interview process, I found that I might have only focused on wanting to know their experiences more urgently rather than building a meaningful relationship with this person.

Another limitation stemmed from my assumption that participants would all be fully fluent in English. I always found myself starting to interview in English. However, it is surprising that almost all the participants felt more relaxed and expressive when speaking Chinese, and that some of them didn't feel confident in English language even years after immigrating to Canada. So, I could have understood their experiences better in their native language and gained more details if I had asked participants about their preference of languages in advance. I also should have considered that since the Chinese language is their native language, they may use Chinese more often than English. This limitation could be addressed in future research.

The third limitation comes from the potential of age-related effects in the data. Participants' cognitive ability and their vision of citizenship might develop as they grow up (in addition to or instead of being influenced by their new educational, ideological, and political community). For example, participants experienced Chinese citizenship education 8 years ago. The content of their current description of Chinese citizenship education experience is largely affected by their current ages and level of cognitive abilities. Similarly, participants experienced Canadian citizenship education 4 years ago, but participants' current age and cognitive ability still affect their descriptions and answers to some of the Canadian citizenship education experiences 4 years ago. To illustrate this point, participants might have given new meanings to the past events that they have experienced. In other words, what they have reported so far might not be what they would be able to know back then when they were experiencing the civic education. Therefore, the data might be largely

influenced by their increased ages and cognitive ability which are factors beyond the control of this study.

Despite the three limitations of the study, I am confident in the emergent themes I described in this thesis. After transcribing the interviews, I was introduced to the NVivo software that helped me to code inductively, which paved a solid foundation for establishing those emergent themes. Another strength of my approach I note is my own knowledge and experiences of Chinese citizenship education (since I received Chinese schooling). This enabled me to draw on my insider knowledge and experiences when interviewing, coding, analyzing, and interpreting.

IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was not to compare the Chinese and Canadian citizenship education. Rather, I hope that relevant parties including policymakers, educators, and researchers could notice the community of Chinese Canadian immigrant students and the dynamics of their educational and cultural experiences in China to better improve their Canadian civics courses experiences. There are several implications of my findings. First, this study allows me to have this valuable opportunity to listen to Chinese Canadian immigrant students' stories and gain a glimpse into their cross-cultural and cross-educational citizenship education experiences. Second, to Chinese immigrant students, this research helps the Canadian civic education academia to better hear their stories and address their needs. Thirdly, to our understanding of civic education, this research contributes to filling the gap in understanding Chinese Canadian immigrant students' cross-cultural civic education experiences. Finally, to the role of relevant parties in strengthening Canadian democracy, I provide constructive guidance for policymakers, educators, and researchers to effectively address diverse students' needs, interests, experiences, and aspirations while conducting educational discussions and formulating educational policies in Canada.

For Policymakers

For Chinese students who come from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, more inclusive educational policies and practices need to be implemented to satisfy the needs of Chinese immigrant students from different cultural and educational backgrounds.

Policymakers should notice the mismatch between the Chinese citizenship education and Canadian citizenship education, also the Chinese culture and the Canadian culture. A curricular reform is needed. Since language is the key to quicker integration into Canadian life, the first and foremost reform should aim for English language acquisition. It is notable that the ESL program is regarded as valuable in easing their linguistic transition, so policymakers might want to make it available to all immigrant students in need. Also, policymakers need to pay attention to what method of learning English were adopted in their previous Chinese classrooms and seek alternative pathways to help them master the language fully in shorter period. With better English acquisition, Chinese immigrant students will be able to understand the civics courses better. Also, language can be bettered learned through learning the Canadian culture. Given the vast cultural differences, Chinese immigrant students didn't feel easy to integrate into Canadian life immediately, it's essential that policymakers include the introduction of Canadian cultures in the overall curriculum to get them familiar with the Canadian culture and reduce the potential effects of cultural shock. Since Chinese immigrant students who became Canadian citizens and permanent resident show weaker civic identity, but stronger ethnic identity. One possible solution is to introduce Canadian cultural element into civics course. But I suggest policymakers reconsidering carefully about what the patriotism and nationalism ideology would be for overall curriculum in Canada and noticing the balance between how to include the patriotic and nationalistic ideology in Ontario civics education and pay respect to the diversity in immigrant students who have diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

As I stated earlier, with a more civic participation and critical thinking-oriented teaching in today's civics classrooms in Canada, policymakers shouldn't stop here but rather should notice the Chinese immigrant students' civic conceptions of good Chinese citizens once was formed in China. When the stress was on nurturing obedience in Chinese citizens as the prominent good Chinese citizen virtue, thus, the provincial curriculum should incorporate different good citizenships discussions and relevant study in civics classrooms to help more Chinese immigrant students to better understand the Canadian ones by comparing with the Chinese ones. With good citizenship in China teaching students to be obedient to the Chinese authorities and to be touching less on politics, critical thinking, thus, is not a requirement for training in Chinese education. No critical thinking training in overall Chinese education poses risks for Chinese students to analyze certain social issues and engage in critical classroom discussions in civics course. Policymakers must be

aware of how the lack of critical thinking training in their previous education produces enormous hurdles for these Chinese immigrant students to adapt to Canadian civic classrooms where it helps to develop critical thinking Canadian citizens. To address these problems, policymakers need to prepare civic education curriculum with more specific and step-by-step guidance such as how to develop critical thinking, how to raise different opinions and engage actively in classroom discussion so that educators could follow.

For School Practices

In school settings, likewise, educators including teacher who are in teacher education programs and in-service teachers should pay closer attention to how Canadian citizenship instruction is largely dependent on caring for dominant students' interests and needs, instead of diverse students' interests and needs. Since inclusion and multiculturalism were started to be valued in Canadian citizenship education in the 1980s (Broom, 2008; Osborne, 1996), this thesis indicates a reflection on how exactly multiculturalism was presented and implemented in schools and what improvement are needed for bringing Chinese immigrant students experiences in Canadian civics courses. Thus, when educators cultivate good citizenship, they should first consider the educational and cultural diversity in classrooms.

First, due to the influence of Chinese education, teachers should note that Chinese immigrant students who are going through language barrier need more language support. Teachers might want to know how students learn English in Chinese education, develop a set of strategies aimed at correcting their Chinese ways of learning English ahead of time to guide their efforts. Especially, some Chinese students might view being afraid of making mistakes as one of the biggest challenges of learning the English language. Under such circumstances, it is imperative that teachers should tell students making mistakes are okay since mistakes point out the direction for better improvement. What's equally important is to acknowledge that teachers' encouragement helps students to build confidence, teachers' trust can promote progress for students. If Chinese immigrant students have interest in Canadian culture, then these students might want to learn more about the language more through the culture. At the same time, educators need to respect their previous cultural and educational experiences and seek to understand what cultural aspects of

Canada that Chinese immigrant students are most interested in and introduce the relevant Canadian culture or history to them accordingly.

More importantly, noting that the Canadian classroom composition is becoming more and more diversified (Banks, 2014), educators should bring the voices of Chinese civic education experiences into the classroom, so that Chinese immigrant students are more engaged and motivated in learning Canadian citizenship. Also, such teaching practices including Chinese civic education experience benefit to the entire class, since other immigrant students would also want to share their previous education experience, and Canadian-born students can also gain a better understanding of what civic educations in other countries are like. Chinese students who received educational influences such as none of critical thinking training in Chinese education might need more guidance from educators who are well informed of this fact written and required in the expected reformed policy. Hopefully, it is possible to realize the multicultural ideology that Canada has always advocated.

Equally important, as part of the history in Canada, the systemic racial discrimination might still exist in some schools. Educators need to reflect on their teaching experiences and see if the model minority stereotype that they might have for Chinese students that has been introducing to their teaching and if they once not care enough about racial discrimination issues occurred in class and after class. Since the harmful effects of racial discrimination from either peers or teachers are irreversible. If teachers once paid enough attention to racial discrimination issues at schools, Chinese immigrant students (Ann and Emma) would have been able to avoid the detrimental consequences. School leaders are also ought to be responsible for proposing certain measures to help students recognize individual differences that are based on cultural or educational influences. I suggest school leaders organizing regular school events to raise students' awareness of certain stereotypes and racial discriminations that students or teachers tend to have towards immigrant students. And eventually, these school leaders contribute to build a caring and inclusive environment for all students.

Although the patriotism influence from Chinese civic education was powerful, hopefully at the end of the day, through the efforts of both policymakers and educators, Chinese immigrant students might build more sense of belonging and identification for Canada with the help of respectful and supportive schools.

Future Research

Since we noticed that each student's citizenship education experiences would be largely influenced by family, schools, social situations, and country, examining these influential factors that exert on their citizenship education experiences might be a direction for future research. Also, for researchers who are interested in the intercultural citizenship education, practical research can be conducted to examine if immigrant students from other educational and cultural backgrounds would report similar or different civic education experience in Canada. More interesting research worth pursuing further is to examine if Chinese students who experienced Chinese civic education and moved to other Asian countries or regions generate different conclusions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF ONTARIO CIVICS COURSE CURRICULUM

Three overall objectives in Ontario civics course curriculum are listed below (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 149)

A. Political Inquiry and Skill Development: This strand highlights the political inquiry process and the skills that students need in order to become active and informed citizens who participate purposefully in civic affairs and can influence public decision making. Students will develop their ability to use the political inquiry process and the concepts of political thinking when analysing issues, events, and developments of civic importance. They will apply this process and related skills in a variety of contexts throughout the course, thereby enhancing their ability to solve problems and to be critically thoughtful and collaborative citizens in the various communities to which they belong.

B. Civic Awareness: This strand focuses on the beliefs, values, rights, and responsibilities associated with democratic citizenship and governance. Students will develop their understanding of how people's values and beliefs influence both their civic actions and their positions on local, national, and/or global issues. Students will explore, in the context of various issues, the roles and responsibilities of the different levels and branches of government in Canada and will determine ways in which they themselves can responsibly and effectively participate in political and civic decision making, both in Canada and the world.

C. Civic Engagement and Action: In this strand, students will explore ways in which people in different communities express their beliefs and values, voice their positions on issues of civic importance, and contribute to the common good. In addition, students will assess whether the perspectives and contributions of different people are equally valued. Students will also explore the civic contributions of various non-governmental organizations and other groups. In this strand, students will have opportunities to express their own ideas and perspectives and to make informed judgements by planning a course of action relating to a civic issue, event, or development of personal interest.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Background Information

Civic Education Experience in China

Taking the course of ideology and morality or politics

- Did you take the course of ideology and morality in Chinese primary school or politics in junior high school as a compulsory course?
- Do you remember what you learned? What was the most unforgettable theme for that course/for those courses?
- What was the teaching approach like?
- What was the classroom climate like?
- Were you proud of China? When did you most feel proud of China? Where do you think that pride is from?
- What were the main ideas for personal responsibility?
- In terms of civic rights, what type of rights do you think a citizen has in China? Have you exercised your rights?
- What are good citizens like in China? What do good Chinese citizens do?
- Have you participated in Chinese civic life? Do you think you have a high level of civic engagement in China? If yes, how did you participate in Chinese civic life? Have you joined the party? Why did you join the party?
- Do you think you have critical thinking ability developed through this course?
- Can you possibly reflect on the important knowledge or skills for engaging in Chinese civic life? What knowledge and skills have you developed? If no, what do you feel you still need to develop?
- After the learning, how did you feel about the course overall? Did you like the course? If yes, what was your favorite part of attending this course, why?
- What do you perceive was the overall learning objective of the course?

Civic Education Experience in Canada

Taking the civics course

- What did you learn at that time? What was the impressive content?
- How did you learn?
What was the learning environment like?
- After the learning, how did you feel about the course overall? To what extent do you find the civics course is useful in easing your transition in Canadian life or facilitate an effective citizenry life?
- Have you had struggles for civic identity since you came here? Do you perceive yourself more as a Canadian after taking the course?
- What do you perceive was the overall learning objective of the course/What do you think this course is about?
- Are you proud of Canada? What made you have this feeling towards Canada?
- What civic rights and responsibilities do you think a citizen has in Canada? Have you exercised your rights or done your duties?
- What is your definition of a good citizen in Canada/What do good Canadian citizens do?

- Do you think you have the disposition to engage in Canadian life after taking the civics course? Why?
- Do you think you have critical thinking ability developed through this course? Why?
- What other knowledge and skills do you believe are essential for engaging in Canadian civic life? Do you think you have the knowledge and skills? If not, what do you feel you still need to learn?

Canadian School Experiences as Chinese Immigrant Students

- What was your experience when you transferred from a Chinese school to a Canadian one?
- What was it like to study in Canadian school? Do you find certain differences from Chinese education system from Canadian ones? What about differences between your parents' expectations in Chinese and Canadian homes? Do you and Canadian teenagers prefer the same pop culture?
- Were there any challenges for you when attending high school? If there were, what were the biggest struggles for you?
- Was English a huge worry for you during your transition period? What was the most difficult part about English learning?
- Do you find making Canadian friends easy upon your arrival in schools? If no, what are the reasons? Which type of friends do you get along with more, Chinese immigrants or Canadian ones? Have you made other Chinese immigrant friends?
- Have you heard of social bubbles called FOB and CBC? Is there a social bubble like this among immigrant students?
- Have you ever encountered discrimination in Canadian schools? Do you think your peers have a stereotype towards Chinese immigrants? If yes, did you think that discrimination impedes you from focusing on your academic study? How did you face that issue and solve that?
- Has your teacher mentioned about China in class?
- Do you find your transition an easy one, how long does it take for you to integrate into Canadian schools fully?
- Did Canadian civics course help ease your transition? (sense of belonging, civic awareness, conceptions of good citizens, active civic engagement, social justice)
- As Chinese immigrant students, do you think your sense of citizenship in China has helped you understand the citizenship in Canada better? If so, how?

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

Participants Consent Form

Principle Investigator: Xiaoling Luo, University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education

The purpose of the study is to gain information on understanding Chinese immigrant students' citizenship education experience in Ontario. By expressing some personal ideas about my experiences with civics course, I will contribute to an enlarged understanding of the subject from the perspective of a Chinese Canadian immigrant student.

My participation will consist of participating in an interview about my experiences with my civics course attended in high school. The time needed for this is approximately 2 hours. This will take place as a virtual meeting at a time convenient to me. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Follow-up interview may also be needed, which will take around 20 minutes.

My participation in this study entails no foreseeable risks. However, if I experience any discomfort, the researcher has assured me to minimize this discomfort. I may decide to stop the interview at any time.

I acknowledge the information I share will remain strictly confidential. My identity will be protected by using pseudonyms. The data will be used for the purpose of the researcher's master's thesis. I have been assured that the audio recordings and other data collected in a locked file cabinet accessible to only the researcher. All data will be destroyed seven years after the research findings have been published.

I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be destroyed.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the principal investigator. My ethical concerns may be addressed to the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research. There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Participant's name

Date:

Researcher's name

Date: