Twenty Years and Counting:  
An Examination of the Development of Equity and Inclusive 
Education Policy in Ontario (1990-2010)

by

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Abstract

Despite a long history of multicultural education initiatives in Ontario (Chan, 2007), Harper (1997) argued that “racially motivated violence, gender and sexual harassment, and cultural and class conflict that continue to occur in Ontario schools” demonstrate the need for new and better ways to respond to student diversity (p. 203). The Ontario Ministry of Education responded to these inadequacies by mandating that school boards develop equity and inclusive education policies, as specified in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools. Still, a considerable and observable gap exists between the goals of policy and the realities of practice in many Ontario schools. A necessary starting point in analyzing this gap is to examine the development of equity education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

Relying on document analysis and policy analysis as the sole methods of data collection, I documented the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic context from which PPM No. 119 (2009) developed in order to understand what groups of stakeholders were included in the development of PPM No. 119 (2009) and whose values the policy document ultimately represents.

Collected documents that represent both the federal and provincial level of policymaking and a variety of regional stakeholders and policy actors illustrated that, despite a shift to focus on equity, conceptions of liberal multiculturalism continue to influence education policy in Ontario. Authoritative decision makers at the Ontario Ministry of Education ultimately trumped the recommendations made by a variety of stakeholder groups and policy actors during the process of policy decision-making.
I concluded that the process of equity education policy development must become a more inclusive process, reflecting the identities, values, and experiences of school administrators, teachers, and students. If the goals of equity in education remain framed within the discourse of liberal multiculturalism and the hierarchical process of policymaking is not deconstructed, the goal of equity may continue to evade Ontario’s education system.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

For almost four decades, multiculturalism in Canada has shaped and perpetuated a national identity and sense of community premised on liberal values including but not limited to respect, tolerance, and individualism. Multiculturalism as an ideology, policy, and practice infiltrates many social institutions in Canada. Ontario’s education system is no exception. As many scholars correctly point out, the values, meanings, and experiences associated with diversity and difference are constantly being negotiated, shifting across time and space and “educational policies and programs have reflected these changes” (Joshee, 2004, p. 127). Models of multicultural education predicated on celebrating difference in the 1970s and antiracist education aimed at critiquing difference in the 1980s have failed to prevent individual or institutional prejudice and discrimination. The Ontario Ministry of Education responded to these inadequacies by mandating that school boards draft equity and inclusive education policies, as specified in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009c).

According to the institutional perspective presented by Meyer (1977), education is not merely a system of socialization or knowledge transfer; rather, education is more accurately conceptualized as a highly developed institution, “a network of rules creating public classifications of persons and knowledge” (p. 55). The education system is responsible for sorting and classifying what constitutes legitimate bodies of knowledge. Even more, the education system is responsible for the categorization of people, dictating
what positions in society they will occupy and the particular bodies of knowledge to
which they will have access. Education is also

a central element in the table of organization of society, constructing
competencies and helping create professions and professionals. Such an
institution clearly has an impact on society over and above the immediate
socializing experience it offers the young. (p. 55)

Education is one of many social institutions in the Canadian context that shape
categories of gender, race, and class. As an institution, the education system is
responsible for the production of social difference and inequality “through such things as
curriculum materials, interactions between students and teachers, methods of student
assessment, and through directing different groups of students to academic or applied
educational streams” (Zawilski & Levine-Rasky, 2005, p. 147). Despite attempts at more
equitable and inclusive models of multicultural education in Ontario, schools remain
dominant sites for the perpetuation of race, gender, sex, and class-based inequalities
(Barakett & Naseem, 2009). Harper (1997) argued that “racially motivated violence,
gender and sexual harassment, and cultural and class conflict that continue to occur in
Ontario schools” demonstrate the need for new and better ways to respond to student
diversity (p. 203). More recently, James (2007) argued that “the practice of multicultural
education – its policies, programs, curricula, and pedagogies – in Canada has proven to
be insufficient when it comes to addressing the diverse needs, concerns, issues, interests,
and aspirations of marginalized students” (p. 17). I believe that an exploration of the
development of equity education policy in Ontario is a necessary starting point in this
endeavour.

Lewin’s (1947) model of force field analysis is used throughout this study.

Elaborated on in Chapter Two, force field analysis takes into account the role of different
forces in creating or inhibiting social change and is used to understand the specific forces that were most significant in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Lewin defined forces as “groups, subgroups, members, barriers, channels of communication” that are active in the social field, whose strength and relative position determine the possibility for social change within that field (1947, p. 14). This study applied the term force, as presented by Lewin (1947), in the purpose, research questions, and methodology that guided this study.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to examine the development of policy as documented in *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools (PPM No. 119)*. The central aim of this research study was to describe the broad context within which PPM No. 119 (2009) was developed by identifying the macro level forces that led to its creation; this included a focus on ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces, and how these forces related to and shaped one another. This study sought to identify the stakeholders, and the ideas they hold regarding equity and inclusion, that were most instrumental in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as presented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

**Research Questions**

The following research questions were used to guide the study, providing greater clarity and focus:

1. What ideological conceptions of equity and inclusion were embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009)?
2. Who were the different stakeholders who acted as the driving forces or as the restraining forces in the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009)?

3. What elements of the socio-cultural context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

4. What factors in the political context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

5. What legal frameworks have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

6. What factors in the economic context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

**Context**

Policy analysis involves connecting a technical analysis of specific policies to the context within which they were developed. This area of research surveyed the contextual landscape from which equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario have developed. This context focused on five forces: ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic. It is necessary to provide a brief account of these different forces and their impact on policy development.

The concept of ideology refers to the body of ideas that form the basis of social practices and representations, reflecting the needs and aspirations of individuals or groups in society. Liberalism forms the dominant ideological context in Canada. Based on the primacy of individual rights, liberalism underpins and is simultaneously at odds with multiculturalism as a political ideology.
The socio-cultural context focuses on the constellation of people in society and how they interpret and respond to their surroundings through social and cultural practices. The role of cultural forces, such as attitudes, values, belief systems, shared histories, language, religion, and daily practices, in shaping the behaviour of individuals and the functioning of social institutions in society is examined. Shifting Canadian demographics, specifically the impact of increased diversity in society as an impetus for the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, is explored. Multiculturalism has created a multitude of cultural contexts, each producing different attitudes, values, and beliefs towards equity and inclusive education policy.

The institution of democracy is the broad political context in Canada that shapes the organized or ad hoc activities of the state. The political context includes the role of political actors, most notably politicians, often organized according to political party affiliations. The institutions where political actors engage with one another and society, including federal parliament, provincial legislatures, and regional associations are also considered.

Legal frameworks are an integral part of the context from which specific public policies are developed. Legal frameworks, through the creation of laws, statutes, and regulations, have a strong role in dictating the options available to policy makers. Federal legislation such as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982 and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988, as well as provincial laws such as the Education Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code are analyzed to understand their role in shaping the legal context from which equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario developed.
The economic context refers not only to the institution of capitalism, but also the general state of the economy and the economic ideologies that influence government action, as factors that shape the number and types of policy options available to policymakers. The role of capitalist interests in the political process in Canada will not go unstated. The financial contributions of stakeholders afford them a valuable resource for influencing the policymaking process.

This area of research is guided by the above five elements, an aggregate of which forms a context that shaped the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario.

Rationale for Study

On October 8, 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau changed the face of Canadian political discourse for decades to come. Announcing Canada’s first official policy on multiculturalism, known as Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Framework in the House of Commons, Trudeau stated:

For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other...A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help to break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies.

(Trudeau, 1971, House of Commons Debates)

Multiculturalism in Canada has been constructed as a social reality, political discourse, state policy, and a cornerstone of national identity (Esses & Gardner, 1996; Henry & Tator, 1999). This powerful discourse has infiltrated a variety of social institutions, including Ontario’s education system. There is a growing need to understand the relationship between federal legislation and the way in which it was adopted by provincial authorities at the Ontario Ministry of Education.
Canada is a unique case for analysis of education policy. The constitution prevents strong federal involvement in the provincial or territorial education systems in Canada. Provincial and territorial governments enjoy most of the power in shaping the education system in Canada. Despite no direct federal involvement in education, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada “fulfills a coordinating role in education policy and performs some tasks that are comparable to those of a federal department of education...a huge difference is that CMEC lacks enforcement authority” (Vergari, 2010, p. 548). However, the adoption of education policy ultimately lies in the hands of regional authorities. Vergari (2010) argued that “subnational commitment is essential for the success of both national education policy and federal education policy” (pp. 550-551). Therefore, I believe that it is necessary to analyze the degree of provincial commitment in Ontario to the development of equity and inclusive education policy.

Ontario has a long history of multicultural initiatives in educational settings (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Harper, 1997; Joshee, 2004). Dated models based on the assimilation of difference gave way to insisting on difference in the classroom. Later, liberal models devoted to the celebration of difference replaced culturally essentialist initiatives. Finally, there was a move towards critical models of multicultural education that sought to deconstruct differences in the education system. Despite a number of well-intentioned models of multicultural education, schools remain dominant sites for the perpetuation of prejudice, discrimination, and systemic social inequalities (Harper, 1997).

This reality contrasts sharply with the values that many Canadians attach to our publicly funded education system, constructed as a cornerstone of democracy in Canada. Canadians share a belief in the value of public education and the importance of educating
youth to prepare them for active, critical, and engaged citizenship. However, some groups of students, most notably “recent immigrants, children from low-income families, Aboriginal students, boys, and students with special needs” are at risk for lower levels of educational opportunity and achievement (OME, 2009f, p. 1). Despite a policy aimed at remedying this situation, a considerable and observable gap exists between the goals of policy and the realities of practice in many Ontario schools (Dei, 2003; Ghosh, 2002). One way to analyze this gap is to examine the development of policy.

**Definition of Terms**

**Multicultural education.** Despite an array of diverse approaches to multicultural education, there exists a degree of commonality. Banks (2009) defined multicultural education as “an approach to school reform designed to actualize educational equity for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social-class, and linguistic groups. It also promotes democracy and social justice” (p. 13).

**Equity and inclusive education.** For the purposes of clarity, this analysis adopts the terminology used in Ontario Ministry of Education literature and policy documents. Equity and inclusive education aim to “understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students’ prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society” (OME, 2009a, p. 6). Furthermore, PPM No. 119 (2009) defined inclusive education as a system that “is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students” (OME, 2009c, p. 9). In such an education system, “students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected” (p. 9).

**Policy.** Downey’s working definition of policy (1988) is used to guide this
research study. Downey understood policy to be a powerful tool of governance:

an authoritative determination, by a governing authority, of a society’s intents and priorities and an authoritative allocation of resources to those intents and priorities; an authoritative guideline to institutions governed by the authority (and persons who work in them) as to what their intents are to be and how they are to set out to achieve them. (p. 10)

Diversity. The term diversity takes on a variety of different meanings in different contexts. This analysis adopts its use in Ministry of Education literature and policy documents. According to PPM No. 119 (2009), diversity refers to, “the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society” (OME, 2009c, p. 9). Included in the Ministry’s definition of diversity are dimensions such as, but not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Equity. Equity is defined according to its use in Ministry of Education literature and policy documents, as “a condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people” (OME, 2009c, p. 9). In the context of educational opportunity, Egbo (2009) argued that, “equality of treatment leads to injustice since equitable treatment means that the differences in peoples’ needs are not taken into account during the distribution of social rewards” (p. 17). Therefore, equity necessarily requires the recognition of individual difference and its implications for student learning and achievement.

Overview of the Research Study

The introductory Chapter One has presented the purpose and research questions that guide this study, issued a problem statement that provides a brief rationale for the
study, defined terms related to the macro-level contextual forces that are the focus of investigation, and provided definitions from Ontario Ministry of Education documents related to equity and inclusive education policy that are used throughout this study.

Chapter Two is a review of the literature that frames this study. I explore the history of multiculturalism in Canada, present policy trends related to the development of public policy in Canada, review models of multicultural education in Ontario, describe the trends that characterize the development of education policy in Ontario, and discuss the existence and ramifications of democratic racism in Canada. Chapter Three provides an overview of the methodological approaches that inform and guide the collection and analysis of data. In this section, I provide a description of the qualitative approach to research that I used to structure the methodology of this study; specifically, the method of document analysis, coupled with policy analysis, is presented. Chapter Three also provides a broad snapshot of the primary sources of data collection, including the collection of documents that represent policymaking at the federal and provincial levels. Chapter Four presents the findings that surfaced from this research, and offers an analysis of the various documents that were collected to describe the macro-level context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario. I provide an analysis of the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces as well as identify the ideas, actors, and institutions that were most influential in shaping these contextual forces. The ideological evolution and underpinnings of equity in education, the stakeholders involved in creating the ideological focus on equity that was embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009), and the political processes that led to the release of PPM No. 119 (2009) are each thematically explored in Chapter Five. In this concluding chapter, I
present a thematic and theoretical analysis that connects the findings of the study to the literature that I used to frame this study. I then present a series of implications for policy, practice, theory, methodology, and further research.
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

The current chapter provides a review of the literature pertaining to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and a presentation of the theoretical frameworks that guide this research study. The first section begins with a framework for defining the five levels of meanings associated with multiculturalism, followed by a brief survey of federal multicultural policies and programs from the 1970s to the 1990s. Next, this review provides a snapshot of public policy in Canada during the 21st century, characterized as a period of tumult. I focus particularly on the issue of globalization, responsible for shaping the political terrain in Canada. The internationalization of multicultural education is explored. Note that multicultural education is not unique to Canada. Although often referred to by a different name, multicultural education, intercultural education, or anti-racist education programs are taking shape in countries around the world. The historical development of multicultural education in Ontario is also presented. Although a variety of models have been developed and implemented, prejudice and discrimination continue to be common in Ontario’s schools (Harper, 1997). The practice of multiculturalism is frequently dictated by policy initiatives; therefore, I discuss education policy trends and specific policies related to equity and inclusion. Finally, I describe the existence of democratic racism that infiltrates Canada’s institutions, including Ontario’s education system.
In the second section of this chapter, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that guide this study; I discuss force field analysis pioneered by Lewin (1947) and elaborate on the stages of the policymaking cycle described by Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl (2009).

**Defining Multiculturalism: The Five Levels of Meaning of Multiculturalism**

Fleras and Elliott (1999) provided a framework for defining the different levels of meaning associated with multiculturalism, including multiculturalism as *fact, ideology, policy, practice*, and *critical discourse*. As a *fact*, multiculturalism describes the ethnic, racial, linguistic, and religious diversity that characterizes Canadian society. As an *ideology*, multiculturalism is constructed as a social value, prescribing a course of thought and action. In the Canadian context, multiculturalism as an ideology is premised on liberal values of freedom, tolerance, respect, and individualism. Multiculturalism as *policy* is the institutionalization of multiculturalism as a state directed project. The formulation of multiculturalism as policy places emphasis on the role of the state, as “governments throughout the world have embarked on official strategies for controlling immigration, managing ethnic relations, accommodating differences, and integrating ethnocultural minorities into the mainstream” (Fleras & Elliott, 1999, p. 299). As *practice*, multiculturalism is used to promote and achieve specific goals articulated by specific stakeholders. Multiculturalism as practice highlights the role of:

> Politicians and bureaucrats look upon multiculturalism as a resource with economic and political potential to be exploited at national or international levels for practical gain...reinforc[ing] its status as a renewable resource in the ongoing reconstruction of Canadian identity. (p. 305)

Multiculturalism as *critical discourse* moves beyond accepted liberal democratic theorizing to a critical questioning of how identities are created and what aspects of identity society legitimates. Critical multiculturalism seeks to challenge the authority of
the dominant culture responsible for the perpetuation of racism, sexism, patriarchy, classism, and (dis)ability as deeply entrenched forms of discrimination in Canadian society.

The focus of this analysis is multiculturalism as ideology, policy, and practice. I pay specific attention to the ideological conceptions of equity and inclusion embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009). I now outline a brief history of the ideologies embedded in the policy and practice of multiculturalism in Canada.

A Brief History of Multiculturalism in Canada

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism of 1963 (B and B Commission) was charged with the task of drafting “recommendations on how to develop Canada as a nation on the basis of an equal partnership of the British and French charter groups, while taking into account the role of other ethnic groups” (Esses & Gardner, 1996, p. 147). However, it soon became apparent that the emphasis on two languages and two cultures was provoking outrage and resentment from various ethnic minority groups who feared their contributions to Canadian society were not recognized or appreciated by the state. In response to these concerns, the Commission released Book IV, entitled The Cultural Contribution of other Ethnic Groups. The various contributions to Canadian society made by ethnic minority groups were outlined and recommendations were made on how to safeguard these contributions (Breton & Reitz, 2005; Oliver, 2006).

On October 8, 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced Canada’s first official policy on multiculturalism known as Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Framework. In addressing Parliament, Trudeau stated:

There cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For although there
are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other... A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help to breakdown discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies.

(Trudeau, 1971, House of Commons Debates)

Since 1971, the primary objective of multicultural policy has been to shape a national identity, promoting national unity through the celebration of cultural differences. The focus of the policy was inclusion; incorporating, representing, and preserving minority cultures in the official symbolism of Canada in the hopes of eradicating prejudice and discrimination (Esses & Gardner, 1996; Fleras & Elliott, 1999). Efforts were directed at “consolidating human rights, strengthening Canadian identity, preventing discrimination, fostering citizenship involvement, reinforcing national unity, and promoting cultural diversity” (Fleras & Elliott, 1999, p. 302). To achieve these very lofty goals, the multiculturalism policy of 1971 articulated four government responsibilities. First, the government was to assist Canadian cultural groups in cultural preservation by providing financial resources. Second, the government was to assist members of all cultural groups in overcoming barriers to social participation. Third, the government aimed to promote equal encounters among all cultural groups to aid in national unity. Finally, the government was committed to assisting immigrants in acquiring one of Canada’s two official languages (Dewing, 2009; Oliver, 2006).

The entrenchment of multicultural policy through legislation characterized the 1980s. Both the inclusion of a multiculturalism clause in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the legalization of multiculturalism in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988 are two prominent examples of this trend (Henry et. al., 1999). According to Henry and Tator (1999), this period of institutionalization was highly significant because
“legislative action is the state’s primary tool to promote and achieve equality and justice for all, regardless of race and colour” (p. 88).

The late 1980s marked a shift from the conceptualization of multiculturalism as policy to a formulation of multiculturalism as practice (Fleras & Elliott, 1999). Throughout the period of neoliberal restructuring during the 1980s and 1990s, the articulation of multiculturalism as a business strategy was employed in Canada (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002). In 1986, at the Multiculturalism Means Business conference organized by the Progressive Conservative party in Toronto, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced a new vision of multiculturalism that was inextricably linked to business interests. Describing the importance of multiculturalism in the context of domestic and international trade relations, Mulroney stated:

> Our multicultural nature gives us an edge in selling to the world. Canadians who have cultural links to other parts of the globe, who have business contacts elsewhere are of utmost importance to our trade and investment strategy for economic renewal. We, as a nation, need to grasp the opportunity afforded to us by our multicultural identity, to cement our prosperity with trade and investment links the world over and with a renewed entrepreneurial spirit at home.

(as cited in Abu-Laban & Gabriel, p. 111)

According to Mitchell (1993), multiculturalism as a business has been employed in Canada to attract transnational capital and a new group of elite global citizens looking to invest in Canada. As part of this business strategy, Canada was constructed as a diverse state welcoming of all cultures, essentially, a hospitable investment environment. Multiculturalism is used to represent the racial harmony that characterizes inter-group relations in Canada. In this vein, potential investors are assured that Canada is open and safe for business.
Jean Chretien’s Liberal party, elected in 1993, further emphasized the importance of the multiculturalism as business strategy previously articulated by Mulroney. One of the first sweeping changes to be made by the Liberals was the 1993 disbanding of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. Multiculturalism was now subsumed under the much larger Department of Canadian Heritage, also responsible for official languages, arts and culture, media, national parks, historic sites, and amateur sports (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002; Dewing, 2009; Oliver, 2006). Funding for multiculturalism would also become a target of the neoliberal agenda, as evidenced by drastic cuts throughout the 1990s and into the 21st century. In the early 1990s, the federal government contributed $27 million to multiculturalism programming, in 1996 funding amounted to only $19.1 million and by 2004, the federal government contributed a meager $12.4 million to multiculturalism (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002; Oliver, 2006). This was especially disappointing in light of the fact that funding cultural programs was one of the main state initiatives to support the official policy of multiculturalism.

The 1990s witnessed increasing criticism of multicultural policy and programming. The rise of a backlash, a revenge of the mainstream, showed that multiculturalism was not universally accepted in Canada. The Citizens’ Forum on Canada’s Future released their report in 1991 that described a growing agitation towards multiculturalism policy among the Canadian public (Oliver, 2006). Many citizens considered the ethnic diversity of Canadian society a positive characteristic and, yet, opposition to the official multicultural policy was growing:

Many white Canadians saw multiculturalism as disempowering them, and as a threat to the unity, national identity and progress of Canada...[which] fed a backlash to the gains made by minorities, a backlash which was not framed as an
overt defence of *whiteness*, but rather...as a defence of national identity and unity. (Mackey, 1999, p. 142)

Many different forms of criticism were used to rationalize the backlash against multiculturalism in the 1990s. The neoliberal discourse was a platform for criticism that framed culture as a private affair belonging in the home or family. For these critics, it was not the state’s responsibility to fund cultural programming (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002). Another criticism was that multiculturalism was viewed as divisive rather than unifying (Bissoondath, 1994). Canada’s official policy of multiculturalism placed emphasis on difference, rather than on a common Canadian identity or culture. This led many critics of multiculturalism to conclude that it was erasing Canada’s history and culture, all the while trivializing the diverse cultures it claimed to respect and preserve (Granatstein, 1998).

Four decades of multiculturalism as official state policy in Canada have highlighted that, despite shifts in the values, meanings, and experiences associated with multiculturalism, the policy itself occupies a place of hegemony in Canadian political discourse. Multiculturalism in Canada is largely uncontested and remains a normative aspect of Canadian identity and society, despite slight shifts in its ideological foundation. Multiculturalism policy recognizes that as Canadians, “we have a core Canadian national culture as a whole way of life, and the multicultures exist as fragments of culture, only valued for the ways in which they contribute to this whole way of life and national culture” (Mackey, 1999, p. 67). In this way, symbolic multiculturalism creates normative categories of identity including, but not limited to, white, masculine, heterosexual, Christian, and English-speaking. It is not surprising then, that a growing number of scholars and activists consider the federal policy of multiculturalism inadequate “in
combating racism, addressing diversity, and creating equity in schools” (Joshee & Johnson, 2005, p. 54).

It is necessary to understand how multiculturalism, as an uncontested national policy and social movement, has influenced education policy in Ontario. Specifically, it is important to document what tenets of multiculturalism have been adopted in education policy and how these tenets are being socially reproduced vis-à-vis the education system. Before exploring the specifics of multiculturalism policy and programming in Ontario’s education system, I comment on the nature of public policy in Canada. The politics of difference in tandem with multiculturalism policy are frequently used to rationalize and support the special claims lobbied at government by interest groups in society.

Public Policy in Canada

In the Canadian context, Pal (2006) argued that the landscape of public policy management has entered a turbulent period. A growing number of macro-trends, together referred to as globalization, are causing this turbulence. Defined by Pal, globalization is resulting in “deeper and more intense economic and political interdependencies and challenges fundamental assumptions about sovereignty and the role of the nation-state” (p. 43). This new policy environment necessitates a rethinking of policy analysis and the way in which the policymaking cycle operates in the Canadian context.

The effects of globalization on Canadian political culture are certainly not homogenous and are the subject of great debate within the literature. A few notable trends, with significance for analyzing equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, are briefly explored. Pal argued that over the past few decades, Canadian political culture has shifted to reflect a postmodern condition, emphasizing a politics of difference. In the
Canadian context, no longer are citizens identifying themselves in strictly geographical terms, but according to group affiliations based on religion, ethnicity, gender, language, and religion. The politics of difference argues that these differences are “routinely and systematically oppressed. Indeed, it is this oppression that gives different groups special claims within the political system” (2006, p. 67).

Although the goal of multiculturalism policy has been to recognize and celebrate such difference, while simultaneously responding to these special claims, the equity agenda has yet to be satisfied. In the case of equity and inclusive education policy and practice, this gap is especially evident. The trend of globalization has played a major role in shaping a new form of political culture in Canada. In nations around the world, globalization is also influencing political culture, forcing nations to respond to the new reality brought about by increased political, economic, social, and cultural interconnectedness.

**Multicultural Education as a Global Trend**

Canada is not the only nation in the global system forced to respond to the new demands brought about by increasing cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity (Power, 2009). Not just in Canada is the trend of multicultural education taking shape, but in countries around the world, movements toward multicultural education are evident in both policy and practice. Castles (2009) argued that “multicultural education would not be an issue in a static world of closed-off nation-states. It has become important because populations are becoming increasingly mobile and diverse” (p. 49). Speaking to this trend is *The Routledge International Companion to Multicultural Education* that included an entire section devoted to research on the different forms of multicultural
education in countries around the world, including the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Japan, and a variety of European countries (Banks, 2009).

Despite an array of diverse approaches to multicultural education, a degree of commonality exists. Banks (2009) defined multicultural education as “an approach to school reform designed to actualize educational equity for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social-class, and linguistic groups. It also promotes democracy and social justice” (p. 13). Multicultural education programs share a common objective: the need to cultivate greater knowledge and understanding of other cultures and cultural identities including their religions, languages, histories, and value systems (Power, 2009). However, there is a growing need to reconceptualize the education system, and the way it reverberates with and responds to students from diverse backgrounds (Power, 2009). Only then will it be possible to achieve equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students. Having established that multicultural education is an international trend, I next explore its specificities in Ontario.

**Multicultural Education in Ontario**

The province of Ontario, in responding to pressure from diverse social groups, has been a guiding light in the development of multicultural education policy and programming (Ghosh, 2002). According to the historical analysis of multicultural education in Canada presented by Joshee (2004), multicultural education has evolved through several different stages: the ideal of assimilation (1867-1940), cultural diversity and citizenship (1940-1963), focus on identity (1963-1970s), social justice and education (1980s-mid 1990s), and social cohesion (late 1990s to the present). A similar
classification scheme is presented by Harper (1997) who identified five responses to difference in the education system: suppressing difference, insisting on difference, denying difference, inviting difference, and critiquing difference. I elaborate on these stages below.

Public education in Canada, from its inception in 1847, was concerned with cultural, linguistic, and religious assimilation to British ideals in order to prepare citizens for life in a liberal democracy. Joshee argued that during the assimilationist period “schools were meant to be a homogenizing force that would work with immigrant and native-born children and their families to create ‘good Canadian citizens’ in the image of British loyalists” (2004, p. 135).

The articulation of Canada’s federal policy on multiculturalism in 1971 sparked a new phase of multicultural education in Ontario that broke ties with assimilationist tendencies of the past. The Ontario Ministry of Education responded to federal initiatives with a formulation of multicultural education that invited and celebrated difference (Harper, 1997). Students were encouraged to celebrate their own cultural identity and that of others through a focus on literature, art, food, dance, clothing, and folk rhymes (Joshee & Johnson, 2005). This model of multicultural education rested on the assumption that exposure to difference would promote harmonious inter-group relations characterized by respect and tolerance for difference. However, exposing students to cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity did not necessarily result in the reversal of discriminatory attitudes and behaviours (Harper, 1997). Anti-racist approaches to multicultural education that focused on critiquing rather than celebrating diversity emerged in the 1980s (Harper, 1997). Anti-racism education emphasized the role of
social institutions, specifically schools, in reproducing race, gender, sex, and class-based inequalities. Dei’s (1996) seminal work in anti-racism education defined this approach as:

an action-oriented strategy for institutional, systemic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression. Anti-racism explicitly names the issues of race and social difference as issues of power and equity rather than as matters of cultural and ethnic variety. (p. 25)

The ultimate goal of anti-racism education is empowerment leading to social change. Anti-racism education aims to “rupture the status quo through the social and personal commitment to political activism” (p. 26). The Ontario Ministry of Education released PPM No. 119 (1993) during this period. The current system reflected a European perspective in terms of curricular content as well as teaching and learning practices. The policy acknowledged the limitations of this system in responding to the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Harper concluded that despite a host of different models of multicultural education in Ontario, prejudiced attitudes and discrimination based on race, class, gender, religion, sexual identity, and physical or mental ability continue to confront students.

More recently, James (2007) argued that “the practice of multicultural education – its policies, programs, curricula, and pedagogies – in Canada has proven to be insufficient when it comes to addressing the diverse needs, concerns, issues, interests, and aspirations of marginalized students” (p. 17). According to Ghosh and Abdi (2004), schools are implicated in the maintenance of racism, sexism, and classism as forms of discrimination that are closely related to dropout rates, crime, and illiteracy. Agyepong (2010) observed that “Black/African-Canadians, Aboriginal/First Nations and Portuguese-Canadian students…are streamed to special education and non-academic programs… these students
have the highest dropout rates in comparison to the general student population” (p. 76). James and Taylor (2010) drew attention to the construction of at risk students and the educators and administrators who bear responsibility in this process, “who through racial profiling, disciplinary actions (e.g. suspensions), disrespect, and lack of consideration of their particular circumstances contributed to them coming ‘at risk’ students and over time, ‘at risk’ youth, thereby thwarting their educational needs, interests, aspirations and outcomes” (p. 125). Furthermore, James (2007) urged that the task of labeling students as at risk is far more complex than may initially appear. Students who are labeled as at risk are not passive agents implicated in their own marginalization; rather, these students “negotiate school by resisting it – by resisting the assimilating, homogenizing, and alienating educational processes of its curriculum and the pedagogical approaches of its teachers” (p. 31). James (2007) concluded that “for many marginalized students, ‘multicultural’ Canada has not provided an educational system in which they can affirm their identities, influence the curriculum, and obtain an education that enables them to realize their educational and occupational goals” (p. 31). Greater research in the field of equity and inclusive education policy is necessary to understand the inadequacy of these policies and their inability to affect educational practices that remain discriminatory in nature.

**Education Policy in Ontario**

Education policy development in Ontario is a complex process. A review of the literature concerning education policy in Ontario revealed two tensions. In the Canadian context, education is formally a provincial responsibility, and yet the federal government has and continues to assume responsibilities in areas of national interest; “both
multiculturalism and citizenship fall into this category, and the federal government has intervened in these fields using a variety of strategies” (Joshee, 2004, p. 128). The inclusion of issues such as cultural diversity and citizenship in the education agenda across Canada and throughout its history can be viewed as “part of the ongoing task of nation-building” (p. 128). Federal legislation, especially in the area of multiculturalism and citizenship has shaped the types of options available to policymakers at the provincial and territorial level. One of the greatest shortcomings of the federal policy on multiculturalism has been its slow and uneven implementation in education policy and practice, formally a provincial responsibility (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). Responses from provincial ministries of education to the federal policy on multiculturalism range from enthusiasm to cautious adaptation to outright rejection and inaction (Egbo, 2009). The provincial ministries of education in Ontario and British Columbia have been frontrunners with respect to the development of multicultural education. Over the past 30 years in these provinces, culturally responsive curriculum guidelines as well as race relations and equity policies have been developed. (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). In Nova Scotia, a policy of intercultural education has slowly taken shape since the 1950s (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). The province of Quebec provides an interesting case study, where, despite policies of intercultural education “the francophone element must override all others for the good of French Quebec in an overwhelmingly Anglophone North America” (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004, p. 120). The importance of the French language within Quebec outweighs concerns over cultural pluralism as the rationale behind the development of intercultural education. In general terms, equity and inclusive education policy has had
only a minor impact on Ontario’s education system despite the hegemony of multiculturalism in Canadian political discourse.

A second tension related to education policy development in Ontario is that which exists between the Ontario Ministry of Education and regional school boards. The formal task of developing education policy falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial authorities; implementing these policies and the more complex task of drafting locally developed policies are the responsibility of regional school boards. Needless to say, “the relationship between provincial or territorial ministries and school districts is as often characterized by tension as it is by harmony. Policy implementation is consequently anything but seamless” (Joshee, 2004, p. 128). Few policies have been developed in the area of equity and inclusion. Moreover, developed policies have had only minor impacts on educational practices in Ontario schools. According to Agyepong (2010), these equity and anti-racism policies continue to suffer setbacks because “the school system has not found a systemic way to enforce anti-racism and equity policies” (p. 78). Even more so, a noticeable retrenchment with respect to equity policies is taking place at the Ministry of Education, as issues related to equity have been subsumed under the banner of school safety, discipline, harassment, and bullying (Agyepong, 2010). It is important to understand and expose the way in which these two tensions shape the development of education policy in Ontario.

The development of past equity education policies in Ontario exemplified both of these trends. The roots of social equity policies in the education system date back to the mid-1970s when increased racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity among the student population led the Toronto and York school boards to adopt the first education policies
on multiculturalism and race relations (Chan, 2007). My analysis of *PPM No. 119: Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Development and Implementation* (1993) demonstrated that the policy was limited in both scope and implementation. Although by 1995 over 40 school boards had such policies in place and an additional 25 boards were in the process of drafting their policies, more than half of the 83 school boards in Ontario had no such policy in place or plans to create one (Chan, 2007). In light of these results, it is evident that “by and large the policy has been toothless” (Dei, 2003, p. 3).

Revised and updated in 2009, *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119: Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools* is the focus of this research study. According to the Ministry of Education, to date, only 43 school boards report having an equity policy in place and only 12 school boards report having policies related to religious accommodation (OME, 2009f). This study aims to provide information for the Ontario Ministry of Education, school boards, education staff, students, and community members as to how equity and inclusion education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) has developed. The initial version of PPM No. 119 (1993) had very limited results. I contend that there still is value in understanding how these shortcomings influenced the development of the 2009 iteration of the policy. The Ministry of Education believes that, despite previous shortcomings, “we need to strive to achieve a truly equitable and inclusive publicly funded education system, in keeping with our values of human rights and social justice” (OME, 2009f, p. 1). One can hypothesize that equity and inclusion are salient issues in
education policy as evidenced by continued efforts aimed at institutionalizing, through policy, equitable and inclusive educational practices.

This review of literature has emphasized that equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario has, with few exceptions, largely failed as an impetus for the development and implementation of multicultural education programs that successfully combat prejudice and discrimination in schools and classrooms. Many scholars are therefore left to conclude that schools remain important agents perpetuating institutionalized discrimination.

**The School as a Social Institution Perpetuating Democratic Racism**

The inadequacy of liberal democratic theories of multiculturalism as a means to eliminate the existence of racism and other forms of discrimination is apparent (Henry et al., 1999). Nearly four decades of multicultural policy and programming in Canada have led to the uncomfortable reality of democratic racism. This form of racism is subtle; but despite its disguise, continues to infiltrate all aspects of Canadian society, Ontario’s education system included (Henry & Tator, 1999; Henry et al., 1999). Although covert and often invisible, democratic racism is far reaching and firmly entrenched:

> reflected in the system of cultural production and representation, and in the codes of behaviour and norms of the dominant culture. It is embedded in the values and meanings, policies, and practices of powerful institutions in Canadian society. It is woven into the racialized rhetoric, images, texts, and central narratives created by those who hold power. Perhaps most significantly, racism is supported by the law and political doctrines of the state. (Henry & Tator, 1999, p. 90)

Schools play an important role in reinforcing forms of discrimination in so far as they fail to recognize social differences and the impact that these differences have on identity formation, student learning, and achievement (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). A review of the academic literature in the field of diversity and education reveals it is necessary to
consider not only the definitional meaning of diversity, but how differences are socially constructed. Ghosh (2002) among other scholars argued that concepts such as race, ethnicity, class, and gender are socially constructed aspects of an individual’s identity. More importantly, the construction of diversity is a political project in so far as it “serve[s] to separate certain groups from others, whose identities are defined by the group in power, in order to safeguard their position of privilege… they veil domination and exclusion, these classifications are symbolic of some form of underlying power struggle” (p. 7). Broadly speaking, the construction of difference inevitably results in a process of social stratification, where differential power relationships exist between dominant and subordinate groups based on the socially constructed categories of diversity discussed above (Ghosh, 2002).

A growing body of literature points to the education system, generally, and the school, more specifically, as sites for the reproduction of social inequalities (Apple, 2001; Dei, 1996; Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). Current social inequality within schools and the larger community suggests that previous policies related to equity and inclusion were ineffective in combating prejudice and discrimination. It is therefore pertinent to locate the gap between policy and practice. An important objective of this research study is to uncover the political rhetoric surrounding PPM No. 119 (2009). This study is necessary in so far as it will differentiate between the lofty aims of education policy and the uneasy reality that schools are markers of asymmetrical power relations perpetuating social inequality. This study analyzes the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) in an attempt to determine not only the content of the policy, but the process through which policy content was determined. What groups of stakeholders were
included in the development of PPM No. 119, and whose values does the policy document represent?

**Theoretical Framework**

In order to analyze issues identified in the literature review, a single conceptual or theoretical framework is insufficient; therefore, this research study utilized two theoretical frameworks. First, a framework that takes into account the role of different social forces in creating or inhibiting social change is used to understand the specific forces that were most significant in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Lewin’s (1947) force field analysis is used for this purpose. Second, the concept of the policymaking cycle provides a framework for understanding the policymaking process and the different stages involved in developing public policy. The policymaking cycle framework (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009) is used to provide sequence and clarity in analyzing public policy, creating a comprehensive understanding of the policymaking process. Finally, the concept of the policy subsystem (Howlett et al., 2009) is presented and employed throughout this study to theoretically capture the interplay of ideas, actors, and institutions in the development of public policy. I expand on each framework below.

**Force field analysis.** Lewin’s (1947) model of force field analysis serves as a theoretical framework guiding this analysis. Broadly speaking, Lewin’s model of force field analysis provides a framework for identifying and understanding the numerous variables at play when social change takes place. An implicit assumption in Lewin’s pioneering work was that society is never without change; it is the type and amount of change that vary and should be the focus of analysis. Therefore, periods of social stability
and social change must be analyzed in conjunction with one another. According to Lewin, “change and constancy are relative concepts” defined in relation to one another (p. 13). Lewin understood social organizations to be systems in which the present situation was not a static pattern but a dynamic equilibrium of forces working in opposite directions. Social issues or situations are held in balance by the interaction of two opposing sets of forces – those seeking to promote change (driving forces) and those attempting to maintain the status quo (restraining forces).

Force field analysis is a theoretical tool that allows for the representation of the different entities or forces in a social field. Lewin defined entities as, “groups, subgroups, members, barriers, channels of communication” that are active in the social field, whose strength and relative position determine the possibility for social change within that field (1947, p. 14). Analysis of social change must begin with the social field and the dynamic forces at play within the field. Social change results when the driving forces exceed the restraining forces, causing a shift in the social equilibrium; therefore, the social context, and the forces operating within the social context must be the focus of analyses of social change.

Lewin believed that social change “from the present level to the desired one” could be understood as a three-step model (1947, p. 32). Successful social change depends upon, first, unfreezing the current condition, which requires combating individual resistance to change and group conformity to the status quo. It is at this juncture that social change can take place. Achieving permanence of desired social change requires refreezing the status quo, dependent upon the creation of forces or a new social dynamic that reinforces the social change.
Although frequently used as a framework of analysis in social psychology and group dynamics, force field analysis can serve as a useful theoretical tool in the field of policy studies. Ellis, Reid, and Scheider (1995) adopted Lewin’s model of force field analysis to gain a better understanding of the dynamic forces that influenced the adoption of local tobacco control laws and statutes. The authors detailed the processes involved in reducing the restraining forces and increasing the driving forces that allowed for the successful development of tobacco control policies in a low-income, African American community in the state of California. Lan and Lee (1997) used force-field analysis to understand the implications that conflicting laws and policies posed for women in Singapore when choosing whether or not to seek work outside of the home. The use of force field analysis allowed the authors to identify specific national laws and policies that encouraged women to seek work outside the home and compare them with laws and policies that prevented women from seeking work outside of the home.

The policy process can be conceptualized and analyzed through an application of Lewin’s three-step model of social change, providing a lens through which to understand the dynamics of policy development. This study documented the broad context in which PPM No. 119 (2009) was developed; therefore, force field analysis was used to identify the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces that were most instrumental in its development. In the policy process, forces such as idea sets, stakeholders, and institutional arrangements can be represented as driving forces in the development of specific policies, or restraining forces in the maintenance of the status quo. This framework is used to assess the relative strength of various stakeholder groups and policy actors, their ideas, as well as the political and economic institutions within
which they operate, in order to identify the actors who were most instrumental in determining the ideological conceptions of equity and inclusion that were embedded within PPM No. 119 (2009).

**The policy cycle.** The evolution of public policy analysis has witnessed a turn towards the use of multi-disciplinarian approaches. Simply put, public policy analysis must be multi-disciplinary in scope, requiring policy analysts to borrow theories and concepts from other disciplines. Attention must be paid to “the concepts and concerns of policy science, and history and issues present in the substantive area of policy, or the ‘policy field’, under examination” (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009, p. 19). In this study, public policy analysis involved a consideration of concepts from policy science, equally situated in the context of equity and inclusive education policy.

This research study adopted the definition of policymaking expressed by Howlett et al. (2009). The authors defined public policymaking as fundamentally concerned with “constrained actors attempting to match policy goals with policy means in a process that can be characterized as applied problem solving” (p. 4). The policy cycle model was used to simplify the complex, muddled world of public policy analysis. The authors envisioned public policymaking as a process, “a set of interrelated stages through which policy issues and deliberations flow in a more or less sequential fashion from ‘inputs’ (problems) to ‘outputs’ (policies)” (p. 10). Early research in the field of policy studies by pioneer Harold Laswell presented the policy cycle as a way to simplify policymaking by breaking it down into stages. Laswell (1971) presented a model of the policy cycle that included 7 stages: (1) intelligence, (2) promotion, (3) prescription, (4) invocation, (5) application, (6) termination, and (7) appraisal (as quoted by Howlett et al., 2009).
Building on the work of other policy theorists, Howlett et al. (2009) constructed a policy cycle with five stages. First, *agenda-setting* involves “the recognition of some subject as a problem requiring further government attention” (p. 93). Agenda-setting does not ensure that a particular policy will be developed; rather, it recognizes that an issue has been “singled out for the government’s consideration from among the mass of problems existing in a society at a given time” (p. 93). Second, *policy formulation* involves proposing possible solutions to a given problem that has been acknowledged by government and placed on the formal agenda. Policy formulation requires “exploring the various options or alternative courses of action available for addressing a problem” (p. 110). Third, *policy decision-making* occurs when “one or more, or none, of the many options that have been debated and examined during the previous two stages of the policy cycle are approved as an official course of action” (p. 159). The process of decision-making is often viewed as the most political stage in the process. The decision-making stage formalizes who is included and who is excluded and determines whether a policy will alter or maintain the status-quo once implemented. Fourth, *policy implementation* marks the point at which the proposed course of action is put into practice. Policy implementation involves “the effort, knowledge, and resources devoted to translating policy decisions into action” (p. 160). Finally, *policy evaluation* is a determination of how a public policy operates in practice, investigating to what extent objectives were served by means and identifying intended versus unintended outcomes. Policy evaluation is a process of learning in so far as once “a policy has been evaluated, the problem and solutions it involves may be completely reconceptualized, in which case the cycle may
swing back to agenda-setting or some other stage of the cycle, or the status quo may be maintained” (p. 178).

This research study focused on tracing the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009); therefore, only the first three stages of the policy cycle were considered. Agenda-setting, policy formulation, and policy decision-making are the three stages in the policy cycle that describe the process of policy development. A specific focus on these three stages allowed me to focus on those issues that are directly related to policy development. Choosing to focus on only the first three stages created boundaries as to what will be included in this study. Policy implementation and evaluation were excluded from this study due to limitations related to scope. Tracing the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) through the policy cycle framework facilitated greater understanding of a complex process by allowing for an investigation of any one of the stages alone or in terms of its relationship to another stage. More importantly, the policy cycle framework “helps clarify the different, though interactive, roles played in the process by policy actors, institutions, and ideas” (Howlett et al., 2009, p. 12).

To conceptualize the role of various stakeholders and policy actors, it is important to note that there are many policy actors involved in each stage of the policy cycle. Preliminary and final stages in the policy cycle involve a wider range of policy actors, contrasted with the very few policy actors that are involved in the actual decision-making stage of the policy cycle. At the agenda-setting stage any policy actor can be involved. This very broad range of policy actors is termed the policy universe. During policy formulation, a smaller subset of the policy universe is involved in the actual development
of possible courses of action. The decision-making stage involves the smallest number of policy actors in so far as only “authoritative government decision-makers” are involved (p. 13). Moving towards implementation, the number of policy actors involved once again broadens. The stage of evaluation widens even further to include any policy actor from the policy universe.

Howlett et al. (2009) utilized the term policy subsystem to theoretically capture the interplay of ideas, actors, and the social institutions that structure the actions of policy makers in the policy process. The policy subsystem highlights the role that “both individual and organized actors” play in the development of policy, while simultaneously recognizing that the actions of stakeholders are tempered by the “political, economic, and social structures that surround them” (p. 50). The content of particular policies is, therefore, strongly shaped by “the ideas actors hold and their expectations of appropriate government and policy action” (p. 50). The policy subsystem perspective as a political theory allowed this research study to conceive the policymaking cycle as a political process and not solely an economic process. The theory of the policy subsystem simplifies the task of surveying the broad contextual factors that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

It is important to note that within any given policy subsystem there is a certain degree of uniformity that develops overtime. The policy regime acknowledges the “persistence of fundamental policy concepts over fairly long periods of time” (Howlett et al., 2009, p. 86). The policy regime captures the way in which ideas, actors, and institutions tend to adhere to long term institutionalized patterns of interaction accounting for and maintaining a certain degree of consistency in the policymaking cycle. The
policy subsystem and the policy regime are used to rationalize a focus on the role of actors, ideas, and institutions as important contextual factors shaping the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

It is necessary to provide some brief but concrete descriptions of policy actors, institutions, and ideas. However, it is important to note that the boundaries delineated by these definitions are indeed artificial classifications at best, due in large part to the fact that policy actors, institutions, and ideas mutually define one another. It is therefore necessary to recognize that these categories are not separated by clearly drawn lines, but rather blur into and shape one another.

Policy actors can be understood as individual stakeholders or organized groups. Howlett et al. (2009) identified ten different categories of policy actors present in most liberal democratic capitalist societies. These include: elected politicians; the general public, exercising their power through the act of voting; the bureaucracy, composed of a variety of civil servants responsible for carrying out the many responsibilities of government; political parties, who exert more of an indirect influence over public policy from the executive level of government and the legislature; interest groups, who possess knowledge of particular policy issues as well as the resources to fund political campaigns; think-tanks and other research organizations engaged in research aimed at influencing public policy; the mass media, reporting on social problems and advocating alternative solutions; and academic policy experts.

Howlett et al. (2009) defined an institution in a very narrow sense, referring to the “actual structures or organizations of the state, society, and the international system...while not monolithic, omnipresent, or immutable, institutions can only rarely be
avoided, modified, or replaced without a considerable degree of effort” (p. 52). In Canada, the meta-institutions of capitalism and democracy are powerful, with an important role to play in shaping the policymaking process.

**Summary**

This review of the literature articulated the importance of understanding the multitude of ways in which multiculturalism, as an uncontested national policy and social movement, has influenced education policy in Ontario. Specifically, it is necessary to document what tenets of multiculturalism have been adopted in education policy and how these tenets are being socially reproduced vis-à-vis the education system. Equity and inclusive education policy have not been a priority, and various policies mandated by the Ministry of Education have not been met with success in many of Ontario’s district boards and local schools. Despite a variety of well-intentioned models of multicultural education, the education system plays a vital role in the perpetuation of democratic racism, where schools remain dominant sites for the perpetuation of race, gender, sex, and class-based inequalities. The review of the literature has made clear the obvious disconnect between the lofty aims of equity and inclusive education policy and the lived experiences of students. Therefore, this study aims to provide a greater understanding of the inadequacy of federal policies of multiculturalism and past education policies related to equity in affecting educational practices that remain discriminatory and inegalitarian in nature. A focus of this study was an examination of the content of equity education policy, and, more importantly, an exploration of the processes through which policy content was determined. It is important to document what groups of stakeholders were
included in the development of PPM No. 119, and whose values the policy document represents.

The two theoretical frameworks used to scaffold this study were presented. First, force field analysis, articulated by Lewin (1947), is a framework that takes into account the role of different social forces in creating or inhibiting social change, and is used to understand the specific forces that were most significant in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Second, the framework of the policymaking cycle, presented by Howlett et al. (2009), provided an understanding of the policymaking process and the different stages involved in developing public policy. Finally, the theory of the policy subsystem was employed throughout this study to theoretically capture the interplay of stakeholders and policy actors, the ideas they hold regarding equity and inclusion, and the institutions that structure their activities.
Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the methodological approaches that I carried out in the process of data collection and analysis. A qualitative approach to research structured this study. In this chapter, I present document analysis and policy analysis as the methods used in this study, provide a broad snapshot of the primary sources of data collection, including the collection of documents that represent policymaking at the federal and provincial levels, detail the general approaches that guided the process of data analysis, and suggest the use of crystallization as a way to establish trustworthiness.

The Interpretivist Perspective

I used the interpretivist paradigm to guide this research study. Willis (2007) defined interpretivism as an epistemological position based on the assumption that individuals construct their own social reality and bodies of knowledge. Individuals build their understanding of the world, creating a reality that is socially constructed through their lived experiences (Willis, 2007). A second premise of the interpretivist paradigm is the notion that human action is inherently meaningful. Gaining an understanding of a particular human action necessarily requires gaining an understanding of the meaning behind that particular human action. Interpretivists argue that there is a “certain amount of intentional content that indicates the kind of action it is and/or that what an action means can be grasped only in terms of the system of meanings to which it belongs” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 191).
The ultimate goal of interpretivist research is to gain a deep understanding of particular phenomena situated in a particular context. From the interpretivist perspective, the purpose of research is to uncover the unique context within which data are collected to aid in valid analysis. The conclusions reached through interpretive research are not generalizable to other contexts. The identification of universal truths or grand narratives is not a focus, nor a goal. In fact, interpretivism denies the existence of an objective, knowable reality that is independent of the individual. Rather, research is shaped by the worldviews of the researcher. Research itself is a form of and vehicle for social construction. According to Willis, “the ‘reality’ it tells us about therefore is also socially constructed” (2007, p. 96).

**The Qualitative Approach**

This area of research was situated within the interpretivist paradigm and therefore lends itself well to the use of a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is an interpretive process aimed at making sense of events in the social world. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explained, qualitative research involves “an interpretive approach to the world...study[ing] things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3).

First, I am concerned with understanding the specific context in which equity and inclusive education policies have developed; therefore, a qualitative research approach was used to understand how macro-level contextual factors have influenced different stages in the policy process. Second, I sought to identify the ideas, actors, and institutions that were most influential in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). A qualitative
methodology highlighted the role of specific stakeholder groups and policy actors, the ideas they hold, and the institutions that structure their behaviour in shaping the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Finally, I paid particular attention to the ideological conceptions of equity and inclusion that were embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009) and the process through which policy content was determined. Uncovering stakeholders’ perceptions of equity and inclusion, expressed through their ideas and actions and as described in documents, is an objective best served, I believe, through the use of qualitative methodology.

Document analysis coupled with policy analysis was used to accomplish the objectives stated above.

**Document Analysis**

This research study relied on the collection of documents as the primary method of data collection. Broad ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic changes most often have significant impact at the government level, as wide macro-level system changes often require that documents and policies change accordingly. Although often neglected in methodological research, unobtrusive research methods, of which document analysis is but one example, are increasingly recognized as a “particularly interesting and innovative strategy for collecting and assessing data” (Berg, 2001, p. 189). Berg argued that such methods “provide access to aspects of social settings and their inhabitants that are simply unreachable through any other means” (p. 189). The collection of documents involves an assessment of human traces “intentionally or inadvertently left behind” allowing the researcher to understand “what people do, how
they behave and structure their daily lives, and even how humans are affected by certain ideological stances” (p. 189).

The accessibility of a large quantity of inexpensive data and the virtual nonreactive nature of public archival material to the presence of the researcher are but two examples of the many advantages associated with document analysis. Public archival material tends to be written and filed in more or less standard formats, making locating and cataloging pieces of data much easier. Hodder (2000) provided a rationale for the appropriateness of document analysis that extends beyond the mere accessibility of documents, noting that, “the information provided may differ from and may not be available in spoken form...texts endure and thus give historical insight” (p. 704). The stakeholders responsible for the development of past education policies on equity and inclusion in Ontario, on which a great deal of current policy is based, are not always available or capable of providing comprehensive commentary on these policies’ development. The use of document analysis is of great importance for qualitative research that seeks to “explore multiple and conflicting voices, differing and interacting interpretations” (Hodder, 2000, p. 705). Document analysis afforded a description of the numerous stakeholders and policy actors involved in the policymaking process as well as the conflicting ideas regarding equity and inclusivity they held, as expressed in various policies and documents.

I was particularly concerned with public archival material that is “prepared for the expressed purpose of examination by others...typically prepared for some audience” (Berg, 2001, p. 191). Berg outlined three types of public archival material: commercial media accounts, produced for mass consumption including newspapers, books,
television, film, or maps; *actuarial records*, produced for limited audiences, attesting to
some sort of transaction, including birth, death, and marriage certificates, land and deed
information, and demographic or residential records; and *official documentary records*,
generally produced for a limited audience, eventually becoming public sources of
information. Describing the importance of official documentary records, Berg explained
that, “schools, social agencies, hospitals, retail establishments, and other organizations
have reputations for creating an abundance of written records, files, and
communications...often convey[ing] important and useful information that a researcher
can use effectively as data” (p. 194). My research considered many different types and
sources of documents; however, the collection of official documentary records, was
especially relevant to my work.

I was primarily concerned with official documents; therefore, I used the
classification system of documents presented by McMillan and Schumacher (2010). The
authors argued that two types of official documents exist. First, *informal documents*,
such as memos, drafts, or proposals, “provide an internal perspective of the
organization...describe functions and values and how various people define the
organization” (p. 361). Second, *documents of external communication*, such as
newsletters, school board publications, and public statements, represent “the official
perspective on a topic, issue, or process” (p. 361). Policy documents are typically
characterized as documents of external communication while the responses to formal
policies by various stakeholders are more aptly characterized as informal documents. I
used both types of texts in a complementary fashion to provide a comprehensive
understanding of the inherent power struggles that characterize the development of policy.

Policy Analysis

For a more nuanced analysis of education policy documents, I used Pal’s (1987) framework of policy analysis. Pal defined policy analysis as “the disciplined application of intellect to policy problems” (p. 19). I engaged with policy analysis in a very narrow scope, focusing only on description. In the context of this study, the purpose of policy analysis is “to know, to understand, and to describe policy making...[gaining] knowledge of how the system works” (Downey, 1988, p. 41). I was not concerned with informing the policy process, providing recommendations as to how it should work, or presenting alternatives to existing policies – aims that are outside the present scope of this study.

The model of policy analysis offered by Pal (1987) provided three broad and six specific dimensions for analyzing a particular policy. This study was concerned with providing a descriptive analysis of the development of equity and inclusive education policy; therefore, I selected Pal’s (1987) framework because it included a focus on content, historical, and process analysis, in addition to the more common evaluative styled analysis. In order to identify relevant actors, ideas, and institutions that shaped the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, the descriptive styled policy analysis presented by Pal (1987) was used to ensure that the macro-level contextual forces were thoroughly described according to collected documents.

Policy analysis takes many different shapes. Any particular analytical style represents a specific focus that dictates the “questions asked, assumptions made, and portraits drawn of policy” (Pal, 1987, p. 27). Pal outlined three styles of policy analysis:
descriptive, including content analysis and historical analysis; process; and evaluation, including logical, empirical, and ethical evaluations. Each of these styles provides a different lens for the analysis of policy issues. The synergy of some of these types of policy analysis provided a multi-perspective analytical model for this research. I discuss this model in a detailed manner below.

First, content analysis involved “an empirical description of the content of an existing public policy, in terms of its intentions, problem definition, goals, and instruments” (p. 28). The general focus of this phase of policy analysis is to gain an understanding of what the policy really is. The focus of this stage is typically current policy. This phase is certainly one of the most important in so far as it sets the stage for subsequent phases of analysis. Second, from the historical perspective, policy is often viewed as a more or less stable pattern, reflecting state behaviour over time. Historical analysis focused on providing an overview of events, orientations, behaviours, and practices that contributed to the present shape of the policy. Historical analysis is predicated on the assumption that “current public policies can only be fully understood by examining their evolution, preferably from their inception in modern times” (p. 29). Third, process analysis detailed the “immediate political process, decisions, debates, conflicts and compromises” of the policymaking process (p. 30). This stage of policy analysis is concerned with uncovering the process through which the content of a particular policy was determined. Process analysis reveals “the cleverly-sewn patchwork quilt of compromises and concessions” that underpins the policymaking process (p. 32). Fourth, logical evaluation is an assessment of the internal consistency of a policy. Logical evaluation involves an assessment of policy based on one or more of the
following dimensions: “internal consistency of the policy’s multiple goals...consistency between goals and policy instruments, or ends and means. . .the difference between intended and likely unintended consequences” (p. 32). Fifth, *empirical evaluation* involves a review of the efficiency and efficacy of the policy. Pal argued that, “in the abstract it is possible that society could solve almost any problem if it were prepared to devote all its resources to the solution” (p. 35). However, because societies and governments operate within a finite resource base, it is necessary to critically question whether or not a policy’s objectives could be achieved with fewer resources. Last, *ethical evaluation* involves “assessing policies in terms of pre-existing value systems, of right and wrong” (p. 36). The goal of ethical evaluation is to ensure that the policy does not violate any of the moral principles governing society.

It is necessary to note that I did not undertake an evaluative styled analysis, including logical, empirical, and ethical evaluations as part of this study. The purpose of this research study was to document that context from which PPM No. 119 (2009) developed; therefore, the process and effects associated with the implementation of PPM No. 119 (2009) were situated outside the scope of this study. The exclusion of an evaluative styled analysis from this research study helped me to identify a focus on policy development; I drew boundaries around those elements that were included during data collection and data analysis, distinguishing them from those elements that were situated outside the scope of this study.

**Data Collection**

A wide range of documents were collected for possible analysis. This section provides an overview of the process of data collection; included is a description of the
general approaches, the timeline, sampling strategy, and details of the collection site. I also discuss the government agencies, professional associations, and stakeholder groups from which documents were collected. Finally, I comment on the relevance of collected documents in answering the posed research questions. It should be noted that, because this study did not involve collecting data from human participants, I neither required nor sought ethical approval.

**Process of data collection.** Data collection began on November 24, 2010. First, I established a system for storing and organizing collected documents. I used Visual Understanding Environment (VUE) software, focused on creating flexible tools for managing and integrating digital resources in support of teaching, learning, and research, to construct a matrix consisting of nodes and pathways between each node. I attached all collected documents, whether formal or informal publications, URLs, images, or text blocks to nodes in VUE matrices. It was necessary to create a separate matrix for each of the contextual forces under investigation: ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic. To address the specific details of each contextual force, I created connecting nodes identifying the ideas, actors, and institutions that shaped that specific contextual force. It is important to note that the five contextual forces identified in the research questions, and the creation of matrices based on these contextual forces were a heuristic categorization only, based on themes identified in the literature.

For each session of collection, I chose one of the five contextual forces as a general focus. During each session, I then attempted to identify relevant ideas, actors, and institutions related to each contextual force. For the purpose of sorting and categorizing collected documents, I classified actors as people or groups of people,
including committees, politicians, action teams, and advocacy groups. I categorized specific reports, publications, legislation, and policy statements as ideas that were expressed by particular groups. The broad ideologies responsible for shaping a particular contextual force were often identified from policy statements and legislation.

I maintained a data collection journal throughout the research process. Dates of collection, names of specific documents that were found during each session of collection, personal commentary related to the experience of collecting data, and possible steps to begin with during the next session of collection, were included in the journal. In tandem with the matrices, the journal allowed for the informal analysis of collected data throughout the collection process.

**Sampling strategy.** The collection of documents was an open-ended endeavour in so far as all proposed sources of documents or sites of document collection did not prove useful. Snowballing was used as a sampling method. The collection of specific documents provided other possible sources or sites for the collection of documents. The reference section of documents proved useful in guiding data collection. Successive documents were collected because they were referenced in preceding documents during the process of collection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

**Collection site.** The Internet served as the primary collection site. Publications from government agencies are widely available on the Internet in digital formats. More specifically, many stakeholder groups identified in the socio-cultural context had an online presence. Many of these stakeholder groups operated and maintained websites that included information such as the group’s history, position statements, recent activities, publications, and contact information. In other situations, the Internet was used
only to identify a particular organization, their position statement, and their publications. At this juncture, I contacted the organization to order copies of their publications. Publications were ordered from the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC) and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

Federal government publications and other documents from national organizations were collected to understand the broad context within which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario. Legislative documents collected from the federal government included the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988*. Publications were collected from other federal government departments including Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage. Statistics Canada proved to be a rich source of demographic information. I collected: two reports detailing ethnocultural diversification based on data from the 2001 census; a report compiled with statistics related to diversity in Canada based on the 2006 census data for comparison; and a 2010 projections report, also based on 2006 census data. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) partnered with Statistics Canada to create the Canadian Education Statistics Council (CESC) from which a 2001 report surveying children and youth at risk was also collected. The CESC is also responsible for the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program (PCEIP) who published *Education Indicators in Canada*. These reports from 2003, 2005, and 2007 were collected.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) operates the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Based on 2009 data, PISA released the report *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education*. The
province of Ontario was highlighted in this report in a chapter entitled *Ontario, Canada: Reform to Support High Achievement in a Diverse Context*. I collected numerous publications from the *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives* (CCPA). Included in these various publications was the quarterly journal *Our Schools/Our Selves*. The Spring 2010 edition titled *Anti-Racism in Education: Missing in Action* was collected. Other publications I collected from the CCPA addressed educational issues including commercialization in schools, the achievement agenda, and inequitable funding formulas in Ontario schools. A documented presented to the Royal Commission on Learning from the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC) was collected.

I collected documents from the Ontario provincial government to construct an understanding of the political processes that led to the development of PPM No. 119 (2009). The official records from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for April 8, 2009 were collected to document the announcement of Ontario’s equity and inclusive education strategy. I also collected reports from policy actors at the provincial level to explore the role of historical events in contributing to the development of equity education policy, including Stephen Lewis’ 1992 report on race relations in Ontario and the report from the Royal Commission on Learning, *For the Love of Learning* (1994).

Documents collected from the Ontario Ministry of Education were important in helping me examine the ideological context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed. Four memoranda issued by the Ministry of Education throughout the process of policy development were collected. Policy directives released by the Ministry were collected, including *PPM No. 119 Development and Implementation of School Board Policies on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity* (1993), *PPM No. 119*
Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools (2009), PPM No. 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention (2009), and PPM No. 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour (2009).

Prior to the formal release of PPM No. 119 (2009), the Ministry released two publications: Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation. Documents collected from the Ministry of Education were not strictly limited to equity and inclusive education. A variety of publications related to the safe schools initiative, positive school climate, and discipline, prepared for administrators, teachers, students, and parents was also collected.

I collected pertinent legislation in the province of Ontario, including the Education Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code was collected. Both Bill 212: Progressive Discipline and School Safety, 2007 and Bill 157: Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act, 2010 were collected. The 2009-2010 annual report from the Ontario Human Rights Commission as well as their consultation papers on school discipline and safe schools legislation were collected.

Finally, I collected a variety of documents from stakeholders, interest groups, and policy actors at the national, provincial, and regional levels. A variety of documents, mainly brief press releases and resources were collected from professional education associations including the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF), the Ontario Principals’ Council (OPC), the Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario (CPCO), the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA), the Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees Association (OCSTA), and the Ontario Education
Services Corporation (OESC). The Additional Qualification course guideline for the *Inclusive Classroom Specialist* was collected from the OCT. The OTF partnered with the OME to create the Safe@School project from which statements were collected. The OESC created a variety of documents to support the development of equity and inclusive education policies in district school boards. Included on their website were templates for drafting equity and inclusive education policy statements. The OESC, in partnership with the Ministry of Education also organized and hosted conferences for school board authorities. The agendas for these symposia were collected.

Position statements were collected from the Antiracist Multicultural Education Network of Ontario (AMENO), a prominent interest group advocating for antiracist and multicultural education. Two reports concerning urban/suburban schooling realities were collected from People for Education, an education advocacy interest group in Ontario. Position statements and school climate surveys were collected from Egale Canada. Media coverage, including news stories and press releases, was also collected from LifeSiteNews and Xtra Media. To consider the role of Catholic education groups, I collected position statements from the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario.

**Relevancy of collected data.** In total, I collected over 100 documents, and many of these documents were large publications of 25 pages or more. Many of the documents that were collected proved relevant in answering the research questions and documenting the context from which equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario developed. However, due to the vast amount of collected data, the task of synthesizing data was important and therefore not all of the collected documents were included in this study. Often documents produced for a national audience or those detailing the state of
education across Canada had smaller amounts of relevant data. In contrast, documents produced by stakeholder groups or policy actors in Ontario were produced for a local audience and were more frequently and directly connected to the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Approximately 69 documents are presented in the following chapter as part of the analysis (for a comprehensive list, see Appendix 1). The documents presented in Appendix 1 are categorized according to the contextual forces where they were first introduced in the following chapter. However, because many of the collected documents were referenced in subsequent sections, Appendix 1 also includes a list of secondary forces for which a particular document bears relevancy.

**Data Analysis**

I broadly define data analysis as the process of giving meaning to findings obtained from data collection. Berg (2001) explained that although data analysis is often the most difficult stage in the research process, it is often the most creative. This creative component means “it is impossible to establish a complete step-by-step operational procedure that will consistently result in qualitative analysis” (p. 102). Nonetheless, it is necessary to set a logical research course; establishing a flexible research design, identifying the priorities for data analysis, and clarifying the assumptions that guide data analysis are necessary steps in this process. The following section presents the general theoretical approach and the specific strategies that guided data analysis.

After the initial phase of data collection, relevant documents that had been attached to the VUE matrices were printed. At this juncture, a process of sorting and categorization took place. Specific documents were labeled using a variety of different
codes: ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic. Coloured tags were used to flag documents and reference particular ideas, actors, and institutions.

This research study adopted the interpretivist approach to data analysis. Berg (2001) argued that this orientation allows the researcher “to treat social action and human activity as text” (p. 239). The interpretive approach was used to “organize or reduce data in order to uncover patterns of human activity, action, and meaning” (p. 239). This area of research blended the analysis of *manifest content*, “those elements that are physically present” and *latent content*, “an interpretive reading of the symbolism underlying the physical data” (p. 242). Policy documents, including PPM No. 119 (2009) are often produced to be intentionally vague. Their interpretation rests ultimately in the hands of local authorities. Both types of content analysis were used to uncover the intended purpose of the documents as stated by the authorities that created them, as well as the different interpretations of the documents made by local authorities.

Broadly speaking, content analysis revolved around two interrelated processes: specifying what units of analysis are counted, and the application of rules for identifying and categorizing these units (Berg, 2001). This study used three units of analysis: *theme*, a string of words or simple sentences; *characters* were used to identify a person or group of people who were significant to the analysis; and *concept*, aided in the identification of words that have been grouped together to form ideas. The three units of analysis - theme, character, and concept - aided in the identification of relevant ideas, actors, and institutions in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. These three units of analysis were used for the purpose of coding during analysis. First, I identified various themes from the documents, including multiculturalism, equity,
inclusion, respect, diversity, accountability, safe schools, school climate, excellence, community. The second stage of analysis involved identifying the actors or stakeholders involved in the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Second, I identified particular actors or groups of actors who were involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, including socio-cultural stakeholder groups and policy actors. Categorization, the process of combining pieces of data with the same code into different groups, was used to uncover specific themes that emerged from the collected data. The overall aim of this study was to identify patterns or themes in order to uncover the ideological conceptions of equity and inclusive embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009) and the process through which this content was determined.

The process of locating patterns in collected data is an interpretive process that allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of social processes, in this case policy development. Successful interpretation of material culture requires the document analyst to move “between past and present or between different examples of material culture, making analogies between them” (Hodder, 2000, p. 710). In his account of the interpretation of material culture, Hodder outlined three analytical stages one must navigate in the complex process of textual analysis. First, the researcher must provide a contextual survey, carefully interpreting the boundaries of context. Context must be established before different documents can be compared to indicate “whether the different examples are comparable, whether the apparent similarities are real” (p. 711). This step was accomplished through the collection and analysis of federal government documents, legislative documents, and policy statements issued by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Second, the researcher is charged with the task of recognizing, identifying,
and interpreting the similarities and differences from collected documents already situated in a comparable context. This stage of evaluation is based on the assumption that “within the context similar events or things had similar meaning” (p. 711). Once I collected and analyzed broad federal and provincial documents, only then could I analyze the viewpoints of stakeholders for the ways in which they align with and support government documents or express an alternative viewpoint. Finally, having identified patterned similarities and differences in a comparable context, only then can I make implications for theory. Subtle interpretation requires a multitude of associations to be drawn from the thick descriptions that have been produced from the collection and analysis of various documents. I present this final interpretative step in the final chapter, Chapter 5.

To aid in the process of coding and pattern or theme detection, I considered it important to consider the role of symbols and numbers in public policy. According to Stone (2002), “symbolic representation is the essence of problem definition in politics” (p. 137). Symbols are political devices of influence and control that “capture the imagination...shapes our perceptions and suspends skepticism” (p. 137). Stone explained that four aspects of symbolic representation are frequently utilized in public policy: narrative stories, stories of how the world works, “often unspoken, widely shared, and so much taken for granted that we are not even aware of them”; synecdoches, basic figures of speech that represent the whole, important symbolic devices because “we often make policies based on examples believed to be representative of a larger universe”; and metaphors, the identification of a likeness between two things (pp. 137-138). The fourth, the underlying purpose behind the use of symbolic representation in public policy is
ambiguity “the capacity to have multiple meanings” wherein the role of ambiguity is that of “enabling coalition and compromise” (p. 138). The use of ambiguity was especially evident in legislation and policy documents, words and phrases were often intentionally vague and open to a great deal of interpretation. Many of the themes that I identified carried with them a great deal of ambiguity.

Stone (2002) also argued that numbers are frequently used in public policy, since one way to define a policy problem is to measure it. Numbers and figures are used in public policy “to show that a problem is big, growing, or both” (p. 163). Stone asserted that use of numbers, whether as metaphors, symbols, or for purposes of counting is a politically loaded project:

Numbers in politics are measures of human activities, made by human beings, and intended to influence human behavior. They are subject to conscious and unconscious manipulation by the people being measured, the people making the measurements, and the people who interpret and use measures made by others. (p. 177)

Numbers and figures were used in many of the documents collected to show that a given trend or problem was significant and often increasing. However, it is necessary to recognize that many of the statistics cited in collected documents were used to represent the interests of the stakeholder group that produced the document. Stone’s (2002) claim that that use of numbers, whether as metaphors, symbols, or for purposes of counting, as being politically loaded became increasingly clear when considering the role of documents produced by Statistics Canada and the OECD. These organizations are given license by the Canadian government to count, rank, and track groups of people and trends in Canadian society.
Establishing Trustworthiness

When interpreting and presenting qualitative data, the researcher needs to keep in mind that the ultimate purpose of a study is to inform the reader. Thus, clarity and validity of research findings are extremely important. The term trustworthiness is often used in qualitative research to refer to the overall quality of the research.

Guba and Lincoln (1981) proposed four criteria for establishing trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. First, credibility broadly refers to the level of confidence one has in the accuracy of research findings. To ensure research findings are credible, they must be approved by the participants; this process involves the use of member checks to make certain that the researcher has correctly interpreted and presented the perceptions, ideas, views, or actions of the participants. Second, transferability is the degree to which research findings will have applicability in other contexts. A presentation of thick and detailed research findings allows the audience to relate these findings to their own lived experiences. Third, dependability refers to the consistency of research findings. Despite the fact that qualitative research is often less concerned with the consistency of data as an indicator of its trustworthiness, any inconsistencies found within the study must be explained. Finally, confirmability measures the extent to which the findings of the research study are neutral. Qualitative research rejects the existence of an objective reality or knowledge; yet, it is necessary to demonstrate that the subjective claims of the researcher emerged directly from the data. It is necessary to show that the research findings do not merely represent the views, assumptions, interests, or motivations of the researcher.
In select qualitative research, the validation of findings using the process of crystallization has replaced triangulation (Richardson, 2000). This process acknowledges that there are more than three sides from which to understand the world and the findings of research. Richardson (2000) proposed the image of the crystal: “crystals grow, change, alter...Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract from within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions” (p. 934). The use of crystallization allows for the deconstruction of the traditional notion of validity, an inherent advantage that creates a more complex understanding of the research findings. According to Richardson, through the paradox process of crystallization, “we know more and doubt what we know...we know there is always more to know” (p. 934). This research study did not use multiple methods as the source of crystallization. Instead, the use of three elements of policy analysis and the scope of documents collected from federal, provincial, and regional levels provide multidimensions through which to assess the trustworthiness of this study.

First, Pal’s framework for policy analysis included three broad and six specific dimensions for analyzing a particular policy. This study focused on the descriptive and process styles of policy analysis. These two different styles provided a multidimensional approach through which the process of crystallization was used to validate the research findings. Second, the collection of documents produced by the federal government, documents representing the provincial level of policy development including provincial legislation and Ministry of Education policy directives, as well as the range of responses from stakeholder groups and policy actors helped me to construct an understanding of the contextual landscape from which PPM No. 119 (2009) developed. This wide array of
documents provided a multitude of dimensions from which to assess the trustworthiness of this study.

**Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the methodological approaches that inform the collection and analysis of data. First, I provided a description of the qualitative approach to research that was used to structure the methodology of this study and a rationale for its selection. Specifically, this chapter included a discussion of document analysis as the main method used in this study, in conjunction with policy analysis. Details related to the process of data collection were explored including the sampling strategy, collection site, and details surrounding the collection of documents from the federal and provincial government as well as stakeholder groups. I presented the broad approaches that guided the process of data analysis, informed by the work of Hodder (2000), including the types of content that were analyzed and the units of analysis that were used. Finally, I discussed the importance of establishing trustworthiness, achieved through the use of crystallization proposed by Richardson (2000).
Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Introduction

The process of synthesizing the vast amount of collected documents to detect patterns and themes is the purpose of research. This chapter describes the macro-level forces that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and presented in various collected documents. The ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces are the focus of this chapter; where collected documents permit, I identify the ideas, actors, and institutions responsible for shaping these contextual forces.

Prior to engaging in detailed analysis of collected data relating to each of the research questions, it is necessary to describe the general approaches that I used during data analysis. The overall goal during the process of data analysis was to gain an understanding of the different ways in which each of the five contextual forces related to and shaped one another. Understanding the connections between the five contextual forces and the ideas, actors, and institutions that shape these five forces allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the primary stakeholders in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and the ideas they hold regarding equity and inclusive education.

The Ideological Context

According to the literature, to understand the development of policy, the researcher must acknowledge the role of ideas in shaping the policy cycle; these ideas “range from the most particular and self-interested points of view to widely held belief
systems that endure through the ages” (Howlett et al., 2009, p. 48). The ideas that certain policy actors hold and pursue as well as the ideas embedded in past public policies influence the development of policy and are explored as part of the ideological context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario. This section examines the ideologies of liberalism and multiculturalism as presented in the literature, expressed in various documents collected from the federal government, and institutionalized in legislation in order to trace their influence in shaping the ideological contours of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. A comprehensive timeline of Canada’s Prime Ministers and legislation passed by their government is presented in Appendix 2. The ideologies that influence the development of education policy at the Ministry of Education are also explored, including the priorities for public education in Ontario, the safe schools initiative, and the equity and inclusive education policy documents.

**Liberalism and multiculturalism.** Liberalism is a powerful ideology shaping the context within which the cycle of policymaking occurs in Canada. The main tenet of liberalism is the enshrinement of basic rights for individuals based on the assumption that all individuals are equal. Howlett et al. claimed that, according to liberal theory, a good society “is one that guarantees individuals freedom to pursue their interests and realize their potential” (2009, p. 55). In countering the basic premise of liberalism, multiculturalists argued that “basic rights and fundamental freedoms – of religion, expression, thought, association, participation – are necessary but not sufficient ingredients for an inclusive polity” (Olssen, 2010, p. 124). The fundamental criticism of liberalism is that it is inegalitarian in its outcomes: “in applying the same standard to all
[liberalism] pays insufficient attention to cultural politics of difference that would include all in full citizenship...The liberal institutional order discriminates against groups who are not dominant” (p. 124).

In the Canadian context, the word multiculturalism became increasingly common following the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism report in 1969. The term gained even more currency following Trudeau’s announcement of the official multiculturalism policy in 1971, an important government policy for managing cultural pluralism and ethnic relations in Canada. Often, multiculturalism is conceptualized as a more desirable policy than cultural assimilationist policies; promoting a politics of recognition that acknowledges the identities and rights of cultural and ethnic minority groups.

**Liberal multiculturalism in Canada.** Canada’s first policy of official multiculturalism was rooted in the ideology of liberalism. Particular iterations of liberal multiculturalism were expressed in various collected documents. In the document titled *Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship*, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the federal department responsible for multiculturalism, expressed the federal government’s position on multiculturalism: “Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008).

The rhetoric of equality before the law, regardless of difference, is employed when discussing the rights of all Canadian citizens. Citizenship and Immigration Canada stated that:
All Canadians are guaranteed equality before the law and equality of opportunity regardless of their origins. Canada’s laws and policies recognize Canada’s diversity by race, cultural heritage, ethnicity, religion, ancestry and place of origin and guarantee to all men and women complete freedom of conscience, of thought, belief, opinion expression, association and peaceful assembly. All of these rights, our freedom and our dignity, are guaranteed through our Canadian citizenship, our Canadian Constitution, and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The liberal ideology of equal rights is presented as the ideological foundation of multiculturalism in Canada.

Canadian multiculturalism is also constructed as a vehicle for promoting acceptance of and respect for cultural differences. The document stated, “acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008). The hope, as expressed in this document, is that multiculturalism will promote respect for and tolerance of difference, uniting Canadians through their diversity to live safely, harmoniously, and prosperously with one another. Referring to attitudes of respect and tolerance for diversity that have been cultivated among many Canadians as a result of multiculturalism policy and programming, Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism stated that “we can count on the unwavering support of the majority of Canadians, who recognize that diversity enriches us, and who take a stand against racism in their daily lives, whether in the community or the workplace” (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005, p. iii).

The construction of difference that perpetuates social inequalities is maintained through Canadian institutions; yet, this is not acknowledged in liberal multiculturalism. Documents collected from various federal departments affirmed that current legislation
and existing institutions were sufficient for ensuring that the rights of all Canadians are respected and guaranteed. The federal government articulated that Canada has pre-existing legislation, policies, and programs related to anti-racism:

We already have solid achievements upon which we can build. We have laws and a Charter of Rights and Freedoms which is entrenched in our Constitution. We have policies and programs to enhance the multicultural nature of our society and to combat all forms of discrimination, and remove barriers to employment faced by minorities. (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005, p. iii)

Both documents reference the economic benefits associated with multiculturalism. Under the liberal leadership of Prime Minister Paul Martin, between December 2003 and February 2006, the Canadian government maintained its support for multiculturalism as an economic advantage in the global economy. In the foreword to the Action Plan, Martin stated, “our government made a commitment to be a steadfast advocate of inclusion and to strengthen Canada’s ability to combat racism. We want to create prosperous and dynamic communities that will be the powerhouses of the new economy” (2005, p. ii). Citizenship and Immigration Canada echoed this sentiment. Referring to the economic advantages associated with multiculturalism policy and programming, Citizenship and Immigration Canada said that: “Our diversity is a national asset. Recent advances in technology have made international communications more important than ever. Canadians who speak many languages and understand many cultures make it easier for Canada to participate” (2008).

Ideologies underpinning education in Ontario. At first glance, political and economic ideologies may seem distinct and separate from the philosophies that shape the practice of education in Ontario; and yet, it is difficult to refute that “what one believes to be in the best interests of society (or a particular slice of society) shapes one’s beliefs
about what should go on in schools” (Barlow & Robertson, 1994, p. 121). It is necessary to connect the broad ideologies presented above to educational philosophies; therefore, this section documents the ideologies that govern education in Ontario, as expressed in Ontario Ministry of Education documents.

*The core priorities of education in Ontario.* The Ontario Ministry of Education released *Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education* in the winter of 2008 outlining the three core priorities for public education in Ontario. The first priority was high levels of student achievement, promoted through a deepening and widening of literacy and numeracy initiatives for students. The second priority was the reduction of gaps in student achievement, based on the premise that “a quality education for all in publicly funded schools is a key feature of fostering social cohesion – an inclusive society where diversity is the hallmark, and where all cultures are embraced within a common set of values” (OME, 2008, p. 8). The last priority focused on increased public confidence in the publicly funded education, acknowledging the necessity of public confidence as “key to creating communities that value learning and support the investment and social commitment needed to maintain our publicly funded schools” (p. 10). The three core priorities for education in Ontario were embedded within the equity and inclusive education strategy document that is discussed below. The Strategy document stated that “an equitable, inclusive education system is fundamental to achieving these priorities...equity and excellence, therefore, go hand in hand” (OME, 2009g, p. 5-6).

*Safe schools.* Safe schools was a position frequently expressed in Ontario Ministry of Education documents, and can therefore be understood as one of the
ideologies influencing education policy in Ontario. In *Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario* (2010), the Ministry explained that the rationale for safe schools initiatives is the belief that “all students deserve a learning environment in which they are safe – and feel safe – and in which they feel welcomed, respected, and inspired to meet high expectations” (OME, 2010, p. 10). Explicitly connecting the safe schools initiative with equity and inclusion, is the Ministry’s description of a safe school culture as “an inclusive community where diversity is affirmed within a framework of common values, and where all members participate in decision making and cooperate to promote the well-being of all” (p. 11). The safe schools initiative reflected the Ministry’s commitment to “building and sustaining a positive school climate for all students in order to support their education so that all students reach their full potential” (OME, 2009e, p. 1).

Although safe schools legislation is explored in greater detail in the analysis of the legal context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed, it is necessary to briefly consider the ideological influence of *PPM No. 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour* (2009). This policy directive acknowledged that policies on progressive discipline connect with other initiatives such as equity and inclusive education to ensure that:

[S]chools are safe and welcoming environments for everyone and are effective in leading to systemic changes that will benefit all students and the broader community. This approach is valuable in addressing such issues as racism, intolerance based on religion or disability, homophobia, and gender-based violence. (p. 2)

The Ministry’s equity and inclusive education strategy provided a rationale that was closely aligned with the rationale for the safe schools initiative; both cited incidences of homophobia, gender-based violence, racism, and religious intolerance in Ontario’s
schools. My analysis of the safe schools initiative revealed that the ideas of equity and inclusion had gained currency within the Ministry of Education prior to the announcement of PPM No. 119 (2009).

**Equity and inclusive education.** In a press release from the Ontario Ministry of Education dated April 8, 2009, titled *Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success*, the Ministry expressed that “Ontario is taking important steps forward to reduce discrimination and embrace diversity in our schools to improve overall student achievement and reduce achievement gaps” (OME, April 8, 2009). The statement outlined three key documents that formed the foundation of the Ministry’s equity and inclusive education strategy. I present these three documents below.

*Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy.* The first document, released on April 6, 2009, formally expressed the Ministry’s vision with respect to equity policy and practice in Ontario’s education system. In its vision for achieving equity in Ontario schools, the Ministry stated that three goals, consistent with the three core priorities for public education, must be pursued: “shared and committed leadership by the ministry, boards, and schools” is necessary in establishing equitable and inclusive learning environments; “equity and inclusive education policies and practices” must engage and empower students, supporting their achievement; and accountability and transparency, “demonstrated through the use of clear measures of success...to maintain and enhance public confidence in the education system” (OME, 2009g, p. 12).

To provide greater clarity to guide the development and implementation of equity education policy, the Ministry presented a four-year implementation plan in the Strategy
document. This plan held the Ministry accountable for providing financial resources, policy documents, and guidelines for school board authorities in the first year to assist with the local development of equity policies. Subsequent years would require school boards to focus on implementing, monitoring, and reviewing equity education policies. The Ministry pledged its support in the second year of the equity strategy by assisting school boards in the implementation of equity policies through professional development opportunities focused on equity and inclusion.

PPM No. 119 (2009): Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools. The second document, released June 24, 2009, is the official policy statement issued from the Ministry of Education, which required that “all publicly funded school boards will review and/or develop, implement, and monitor an equity and inclusive education policy in accordance with the requirements set out in this memorandum and in the strategy” (OME, 2009c, p. 3). PPM No. 119 (2009) mandated that equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario focus on:

- respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education, and identifying and eliminating discriminatory biases, systemic barriers, and power dynamics that limit the students’ learning, growth, and contribution to society. These barriers and biases whether overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, need to be identified and addressed. (p. 2)

Acknowledging the historical and legislative context from which it developed, PPM No. 119 (2009) stated that “this memorandum therefore broadens the scope of the previous Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (1993) to take into account a broad range of equity factors...and expands on the principles of antiracism and ethnocultural equity” (p. 3).
Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation. The third document, released in 2009, provided guidelines and resources for school boards in developing, implementing, and monitoring equity education policies. Although three different areas of focus were identified in the document: policy development, implementation, and monitoring and reporting; I focus on policy development.

The document outlined seven guiding principles and eight areas of focus that would help guide the development of equity education policy in school boards across Ontario. According to these principles, equity and inclusive education is: a foundation of excellence, meets individual needs, identifies and eliminates barriers, promotes a sense of belonging, involves the broad community, builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives, and is demonstrated throughout the system (OME, 2009a, p. 13). The guideline document identified eight areas of focus that school boards must respond to when developing their own equity education policies: board policies, programs, guidelines, and practices; shared and committed leadership; school-community relationships; inclusive curriculum and assessment practices; religious accommodation; school climate and the prevention of discrimination and harassment; professional learning; and accountability and transparency.

Despite a more robust approach to issues of equity and inclusion compared to previous policies on race relations, the issue of (dis)ability, after its early mention in policy documents released from the Ministry of Education, becomes invisible in the remainder of the equity education policy documents. Although the Ministry of Education acknowledged differences in physical and mental ability as an aspect of diversity, the
equity education policy documents focus primarily on racial, ethnic, sex, and class based differences.

**Synopsis.** This section identified the broad ideologies influencing the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Liberal multiculturalism was identified from the literature and the particularities of its meaning and application were extracted from the collected documents that represent the federal level of policymaking. I analyzed Ontario Ministry of Education documents to trace the ideological foundations of various initiatives related to the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Finally, the equity and inclusive education documents from the Ministry of Education were presented in order to document the influence of federal policies of liberal multiculturalism on the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

**The Socio-Cultural Context**

Technical analysis of policy must always pay particular attention to the socio-cultural context in order to provide a rich picture of the multitude of factors that contributed to its development. Therefore, in this section I pay particular attention to changing demographics as a factor that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). The literature revealed the importance of actors in the development of policy, “who raise issues, assess options, decide on those options, and implement them” (Howlett et al., 2009, p. 48). Therefore, this section documents the variety of socio-cultural stakeholder groups who
were instrumental in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

**A demographic portrait of Canada.** I use three different publications issued by Statistics Canada between 2003 and 2010 to describe changing demographic trends related to ethnocultural diversity in Canada and Ontario: *Canada’s Ethnocultural Portrait: The Changing Mosaic* (2003); *Canada’s Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census*; and *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031*. I selectively present relevant information collected from these three documents focusing specifically on rates of immigration, characteristics of the visible minority population, and trends related to the school age population.

The report *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031* recognized the vast policy implications of increased diversity on various federal departments in Canada, and “commissioned Statistics Canada in 2004 to make regional projections of the population of visible minority groups, immigrant status, religion and the population with neither English nor French as its mother tongue” (Statistics Canada, 2010, p. 3). This report exposed the role of Statistics Canada in compiling data related to ethnocultural diversity in Canada in an attempt to understand the characteristics of this diversity and the far-reaching implications for public policy in Canada.

**Immigration trends.** The Statistics Canada report titled *Canada’s Ethnocultural Portrait: The Changing Mosaic* began:

An ethnocultural profile of Canada at the outset of the 21st Century shows a nation that has become increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. This portrait is diverse and varies from province to territory, city to city, and community to community. Immigration to Canada over the past 100 years has shaped Canada, with each new wave of immigrants adding to the nation’s ethnic and cultural composition. (Statistics Canada, 2003a, p. 5)
According to this statement, immigration is one of the most crucial components of population growth, and, therefore, an important factor when analyzing demographic trends in Canada. In 2001, 18.4% of the total population, or 5.4 million people reported that they were born outside of Canada. The 1990s witnessed the greatest intake of immigrants; Canada admitted approximately 2.2 million immigrants between 1991 and 2000. Even more important to note are the countries of origin of Canada’s increasing foreign-born population. According to the report, prior to the 1960s, “European nations such as the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, as well as the United States, were the primary sources of immigrants to Canada” (p. 6). However, since the 1960s, changes to immigration policies have resulted in shifting immigration patterns. As of 2001, immigrants to Canada most likely came from Asian countries. Of the 1.8 million immigrants who arrived to Canada between 1991 and 2001, 58% came from Asia; this compared with 47% of immigrants who arrived in the 1980s and only 33% of immigrants who arrived in the 1970s. According to the report Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031, this trend is likely to continue, such that, by 2031, 55% of the foreign-born population in Canada would come from Asia.

**Characteristics of the visible minority population.** Shifting immigration patterns, especially increased immigration from Asia, were largely responsible for the growth of the visible minority population in Canada. According to Statistics Canada:

> The foreign-born population from non-European countries stands out from the rest of the Canadian population in having a larger proportion of visible minority persons, individuals with neither English nor French as their mother tongue and persons having a non-Christian religion. (2010, p. 17)
The 2001 census observed that almost 4.0 million individuals identified themselves as a visible minority, accounting for 13.4% of the total population of Canada. This proportion had steadily increased over the past two decades:

In 1981, 1.1 million visible minorities accounted for 4.7% of the total population; by 1996, 3.2 million accounted for 11.2%. The visible minority population is growing much faster than the total population. Between 1996 and 2001, the total population increased 4%, while the visible minority population rose 25%. (Statistics Canada, 2003a, p. 10)

According to Canada’s Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census, the fast-paced growth of the visible minority population continued. By 2006, the visible minority population had surpassed 5.0 million individuals, accounting for 16.2% of the total population of Canada. The 2008 census report drew a link between immigration and the visible minority population, noting that, “the growth of the visible minority population was due largely to the increasing number of recent immigrants (landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year) who were from non-European countries” (Statistics Canada, 2008, p. 12).

The reports based on the 2001 and 2006 census data provide evidence that recent immigrants are more likely to settle in Canada’s urban centers, also known as census metropolitan areas (CMA). According to the 2003 report, 94% of immigrants who arrived in the 1990s lived in Canada’s CMAs; this trend continued according to the 2008 report that noted 95.9% of the visible minority population lived in a CMA. Speaking to this trend, the 2003 report noted that over the past 30 years, “there has been a dramatic change in the linguistic composition of immigrants entering Canada” (p. 21). According to 2001 census data, 79% of immigrants who came to Canada during the 1990s were allophones. A growing number of recent immigrants to Canada reported using a non-
official language at home; “in 2001, 61% of the immigrants who came in the 1990s used a non-official language as their primary home language” (Statistics Canada, 2003a, p. 9). Concurrent with this trend is a decrease in the proportion of immigrants whose first language is English. In the 1970s, 45% of immigrants spoke English as a first language, compared to only 18% of immigrants in the 1990s. These linguistic trends show that English language learners represent an increasing proportionality of students in Ontario schools.

The 2006 census provided valuable statistical portraits of ethnocultural diversity and visible minority populations in cities and provinces across Canada. As for the statistics for the province of Ontario, according to 2006 census data, the province is home to more than half of Canada’s total visible minority population, 2.7 million visible minorities accounting for 22.8% of the population. Ontario’s visible minority population grew rapidly, and “much of this growth can be traced to immigration, particularly among newcomers from India and the People’s Republic of China” (Statistics Canada, 2008, p. 20). Visible minorities continue to settle in Ontario’s urban areas, specifically the CMAs of Toronto and Ottawa-Gatineau. The CMA of Toronto is home to more visible minorities than any other CMA in Canada, both in aggregate numbers and as a proportion of the total population. The 2006 census found that 2.1 million individuals living in Toronto identified as a visible minority, accounting for 42.9% of the total population. The report stated that “Toronto took in 40.4% of all newcomers to Canada; 81.9% of these newcomers belonged to a visibly minority group” (p. 29). Statistically speaking, Toronto is the most attractive city for recent immigrants, surpassing “cities around the
world known for their cultural diversity such as New York, Miami, Sydney (Australia) and Los Angeles” (Statistics Canada, 2003b, p. 21).

**The school age population.** Of particular relevance in documenting the context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario are demographic trends related to the school-age population. The report *Canada’s Ethnocultural Portrait: The Changing Mosaic* observed that although many of the immigrants who arrived in the 1990s were of working age, 17% of recent immigrants were school-age children between the ages of five and 16. Immigrants constituted a higher proportion of the school-age population in the CMA of Toronto. According to the report, “about one in four of all children aged five to 16 in the city of Toronto were immigrants who arrived in the 1990s” (Statistics Canada, 2003a, p. 9). Data collected from the 2006 census reveal that 22.6% of the visible minority population in Canada is school-age, compared with only 17.9% of the total population of Canada that is school-age. According to Statistics Canada projections, “36% of the population under 15 years of age in 2031 would belong to a visible minority population, compared to 18% of persons aged 65 and over” (2010, p. 1).

Statistics Canada addressed the challenges associated with accommodating this increasingly diverse school age population and urged that:

> The addition of immigrant children into the educational system is an important issue for educators. Concentrations of new immigrant children present challenges to local school boards, as many newcomers come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence, the need for instruction in English or French as a second language is an integral part of school programs. (p. 9)

These demographic trends highlight the presence of more visible minority students in the education system continues to pose a challenge to Ministry of Education officials, local school boards authorities, and educators. The processes associated with ethnocultural
diversification in Ontario and Canada discussed above have far reaching implications for education policy in Canada, including the tensions experienced within and challenges faced by the public education system in Ontario.

**Socio-cultural stakeholder groups.** In order to analyze the socio-cultural forces affecting the development of equity and inclusive education policy, I believe it necessary to identify the major stakeholders and their contributions. The collection of position papers, public statements, and press releases allowed me to identify particular stakeholder groups through their mission statement and to trace their position on and involvement in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario.

**Anti-racist Multicultural Education Network of Ontario.** Founded in 1987, AMENO is a network of educators, community members, and parents, working together, to “eliminate broad-based and systemic biases, and to replace barriers with acceptance and inclusion for every individual” (AMENO, 2007, p. 2). AMENO’s mission is “to ensure equity and inclusion in the education of all students” (p. 2). AMENO collaborates with a variety of educational partners, bringing a great deal of experience to the negotiating table alongside the Ministry of Education:

> AMENO possesses a collective wisdom, institutional memory and a wealth of practical knowledge to share with the Minister, Ministry, school boards and educators. We look forward to future engagements and opportunities to share analysis and practical strategies for the betterment of education for all Ontarians. (p. 2)

Four different documents were collected from AMENO, that, taken in combination, illustrate AMENO’s early and continued involvement in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. The ideas and initiatives presented in each of these documents are explored below.
The first document, a position paper from AMENO, dated June 2007, expressed recommendations for the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Two of these recommendations surfaced in subsequent documents collected from AMENO. First, AMENO cited PPM No. 119 (1993) and the necessity of broadening its scope in terms of implementation and accountability. AMENO believed it was necessary to “encourage Boards to review their existing equity policies and to provide funds to support the implementation of these policies through appropriate staffing, professional development and training” (AMENO, 2007, p. 4). Second, AMENO urged a systemic approach to equity, highlighting the necessity of increased funding for school equity personnel, opportunities for professional learning, and the creation of accountability measures.

The second document, titled *Achieving Equity in Education Today*, highlighted the role of the *Equity Summit Group* (ESG) in liaising with school board equity personnel, the Minister of Education, and additional Ministry staff in the field of equity and inclusive education. The ESG “has been instrumental in providing AMENO with critical and relevant information on the status of equity, human rights and anti-racism in the school system” (Samuel, 2008, p. 2). Based on insights provided from the ESG, the document identified five challenges to the achievement of equity within the education system.

First, AMENO believed that there is a general lack of knowledge and understanding “of the inequalities that students and marginalized communities face within the educational systems...there is less of a willingness to talk about the inequalities as systemic barriers caused by ableism, ageism, classism, faith as an ism, homophobia,
racism or sexism” (p. 10). Second, AMENO recognized that struggles for the achievement of equity take place within structures of power that privilege “White Anglo-Saxon staff” (p. 10), structures that are often very resistant to change. Third, AMENO argued that a lack of clear and coherent equity language “causes a lot of confusion, misuse and again allows educators to pick and choose what they will accept as part of their responsibility to know” (p. 11). Fourth, AMENO pointed to the lack of designated roles for equity personnel, stating that, “equity personnel seemed to be ‘silooed’ within their role with limited opportunities to contribute an equity perspective and in some cases are discouraged from doing so” (p. 11). Finally, AMENO contended that that there is a lack of accountability, arguing that “there is no political will or pressure, which often puts equity up against competing priorities, and there are no incentives to develop long term sustainable, coordinated approaches” (p. 12). In light of these challenges, AMENO offered a variety of recommendations to the Ministry of Education to support the development of equity education policy, including: the development of an equity office at the Ministry of Education; broadening the scope of PPM No. 119 through clearly stated definitions, expectations, and guidelines; increased funding for equity staffing, professional development, and curricula resources for educators; and the establishment of accountability measures, requiring boards to set goals and report on results.

The third document constituted the minutes produced following a December 2008 meeting between AMENO and Ruth Flynn and Karen Mock, members of the Inclusive Education Branch at the Ministry of Education. The purpose of the meeting was to share with AMENO the progress that had been made at the Ministry of Education concerning
equity and inclusive education policy. Ruth Flynn, who spoke to the Ministry’s equity and inclusive education strategy, circulated two key documents:

The Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy outlines the general vision and ‘Promise of Diversity’, the scope, and a set of guiding principles. The guiding principles form the basis of the overall Action Plan. The Action Plan entitled: Realizing the Promise of Diversity, outlines Ministry, Board and School responsibilities to realize equity in Ontario schools. (AMENO, 2008, p. 1)

Ruth Flynn explained that accompanying documents would support the equity framework outlined above, including an expanded version of PPM No. 119, templates for practitioners, and funding for resource development.

The last document was produced for a meeting with the Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne on May 11, 2009, following the release of Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy. In the introduction to the document, AMENO commented on the significance of the strategy, and praised the “tremendous effort by the Ministry of Education and the leadership demonstrated by the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education in making this a reality” (AMENO, 2009, p. 1). AMENO offered appreciation for the many opportunities that they have had to engage as a stakeholder in the development of equity and inclusive education policy:

AMENO thanks the Ministry for including members of AMENO and the Equity Summit Group on the Minister’s Ad Hoc Equity Roundtable, and the opportunities provided to consult and provide feedback this past year. We also thank the Minister for being accessible to, and listening to AMENO since we met in 2007. (p. 1)

**Canadian Race Relations Foundation.** As part of the Japanese Redress Agreement, signed in 1988, the government of Canada committed to the creation of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF). As Canada’s leading organization dedicated to the elimination of systemic racism, the CRRF works to:
provide leadership in the building of a national framework for the struggle against racism in Canada. Advance understanding of the past and present causes and manifestations of racism. Provide independent national leadership and serve as a resource and facilitator in the pursuit of equity, healing, fairness and justice in Canada. Contribute to Canada’s voice in the international struggle against racism. (CRRF, n.d.)

With respect to their participation in the development of equity and inclusive education policy, the CRRF attended Connecting Communities: A Symposium for School and System Leaders hosted by the Ministry of Education on December 9, 2009. The CRRF participated in the symposium by:

display[ing] its educational and promotional materials and answer[ing] questions of many educators about its program and activities. In particular, school administrators were eager to hear about the CRRF Education and Training Program and showed interest in having CRRF Equity training in their schools. (CRRF, 2009)

**People for Education.** As a parent-led charity, People for Education works to support and improve public education in Ontario’s English, French, and Catholic schools by conducting and disseminating research. Their operating vision holds that:

> Public education has the capacity to transform and enrich children’s lives and is the foundation of a civil society. In a fully publicly funded education system, every child will have access to the education that meets his or her needs.

(People for Education, n.d.)

I focus on two issues of the report titled *Ontario’s Urban and Suburban Schools* (2008, 2009), that explored issues facing the publicly funded education system in Ontario cities.

The 2008 report opened with a list of seven guiding principles, two of which were directly related to equity and inclusive education policy. The first principle stated that, “curriculum, teaching and pedagogy that are culturally responsive to Ontario’s multiple diversities must be a key component of Ontario’s education policy” (People for Education, 2008, p. 1). The second principle stated that “instead of compartmentalizing
students as “at-risk,” Ontario’s education system must instead focus on ensuring equitable outcomes for all students” (p. 1). Broadly speaking, the report explored the harsh realities facing Ontario’s urban/suburban schools. Two aspects of this reality directly related to equity and inclusive education policy: equitable outcomes and anti-racism and equity policy.

With respect to equitable outcomes, the report stated that, “the public education system exists to ensure that every student has an equitable chance for success. But for many students, this is not the reality” (p. 14). Ontario’s urban/suburban schools, home to high numbers of students whose socio-economic background puts them at-risk, “continue to struggle to provide the programs, resources, teaching methods, curriculum and supports that would provide equitable outcomes for all students” (p. 15). In the second section on anti-racism and equity policy, the report discussed the ethnocultural equity and anti-racism policy issued by the Ministry of Education in 1993. The report lamented that many of the lofty aims of the policy were scrapped in 1995 before the policy was fully implemented; describing this process, the report stated that “the equity department was closed, the review of the curriculum was cancelled and, though the policy memoranda still exist on the books, boards are no longer held accountable for developing anti-racism ad equity policies” (p. 16). Although Ministry policies and initiatives related to equity seem to have disappeared, the reality of inequitable education access and outcomes has not as evidenced by disproportionate drop-out rates among racialized students. According to the report “there continue to be wide disparities among boards and schools in how they address issues of race, exclusion and inequity” (p. 17), which demonstrated the growing need for new equity policies.
The 2009 report was subtitled “a prescription for change, recommendations for new policy from a People for Education public think tank” and included many recommendations that relate to the development of equity policy in a very broad sense (People for Education, 2009, p. 1). At the provincial level, People for Education recommended “that the province develop a provincial equity and anti-racism framework that includes adequate support for local implementation” (p. 5). Related to the work of schools boards, People for Education recommended “that school boards, working within the context of a provincial equity framework, develop local equity, anti-racism and employment policies” (p. 6). Ontario schools need to engage with the broad community when developing equity policies and practices; therefore, People for Education advocated that, “provincial policy be developed and supported to ensure that parent and community outreach can be a focus for school councils and school communities” (p. 8).

**The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario.** The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) “is the association of the Catholic bishops in the Province of Ontario in the service of Catholics of Ontario” (ACBO, n.d.). According to their mandate, “the ACBO is involved in matters of conscience. It is, therefore, involved in providing information and instruction about the principles and moral positions of the Church on all aspects of life” (ACBO, n.d.). Describing their role as one of the many partners in the publicly funded Catholic education system in Ontario, the ACBO stated:

> it is our role to help to weave the thread of faith in our schools by offering guidance, as well as pastoral leadership and support, to our partners in Catholic education on a host of issues relating to the faith foundation of our schools. (Collins, 2011, p. 1)

The ACBO released a statement on October 4, 2010 that detailed their participation in the development of equity and inclusive education policy:
We have voiced our concerns to the Ministry and sought to help them formulate policies that respect the integrity of Catholic schools. We have collaborated with various partners in the Catholic educational community to ensure that Church’s teaching on these issues is well-known and understood. We have published letters to clarify these teachings and give guidance on instructional and pastoral programs and services. (ACBO, 2010, p. 1)

According to the document, Catholic school boards across Ontario have collaborated with one another to “develop a Catholic version template policy that could help each individual board respond to the Ministry’s directive” (p. 2). After reviewing the policy templates and Ontario’s equity and inclusive education strategy, the ACBO stated that they have “decided to endorse in principle the statements contained therein respecting the denominational rights of Catholic schools” (p. 2). The ACBO believed that “the proposed template will help ensure that our schools will remain faithful to Catholic teaching as they move forward with the Ministry’s directive” (p. 2).

**Egale Canada.** Founded in 1986, Egale Canada is “a national organization committed to advancing equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-identified people, and their families, across Canada” (Egale, 2005). Egale highlighted the intersectionality of discrimination that underpinned PPM No. 119 (2009), stating that:

> [W]e recognize the linkages between different forms of oppression, including oppression based on race, sex, class, religion, (dis)ability, age, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Respect for each individual’s full identity requires that our struggle for equality cannot be carried out in isolation from the struggle for equality of all disadvantaged communities. (Egale, 2005)

Egale is heavily involved in public education; the most important example of this involvement is the completion of the first phase of *Egale’s First National Climate Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools*. According to this survey:

three quarters of self-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students who participated feel unsafe at school...LGBTQ students are exposed to high levels of homophobic and transphobic bullying in
schools as well as that they encounter multiple obstacles preventing them from seeking advice or assistance from their educators or administrators. (Egale, 2009)

Connecting this survey to the development of equity and inclusive education policy, Egale’s press release stated that “the report’s recommendations include the implementation of anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia policies as well as school board support for Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs, which connect LGBTQ students and allies with the aim of creating safe and inclusive school environments” (2009).

**Synopsis.** This section sketched a demographic portrait of diversity in Canada, using three publications from Statistics Canada as the primary sources of data. These reports illustrated that cultural, linguistic, and religious diversification is a socio-cultural trend to which schools across Ontario must respond. I traced the role of various socio-cultural groups, as important stakeholders, in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, including AMENO, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, People for Education, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, and Egale Canada. I considered it necessary to communicate the values that these various socio-cultural stakeholder groups hold with respect to equity and inclusive education as expressed in various documents. The socio-cultural stakeholders identified in this analysis represent driving forces in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Their involvement in the process of agenda-setting was evident in so far as they emphasized the need for equity in Ontario’s education system. Moreover, the recommendations offered by many of these groups exemplify their involvement in the process of policy formulation.
The Political Context

In contrast to rationalist conceptions of public policymaking, the development of education policy is often described as “more disjointed, less rational and more political” (Taylor et al., 1997 as quoted in Delaney, 2002, p. 49). Therefore, the political processes that contributed to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) are the focus of this section. The role of professional educational associations including education leadership organizations, principals’ councils, and teachers’ associations is presented. Historical political processes including reports from Stephen Lewis and the Royal Commission on Learning are discussed before analyzing the role of Dalton McGuinty’s government and the Ministry of Education led by Kathleen Wynne in contributing to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

Professional education associations. In discussing the role of professional educational associations in the development of equity and inclusive education policy, I explore three broad categories of associations: those for education leadership, principals’ associations, and teachers’ associations. Collected documents provided evidence that very few of the professional education associations were directly involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy prior to the release of PPM No. 119 (2009). However, many of these associations were involved in the implementation of PPM No. 119 (2009) in supporting the development of board specific equity policies by the September 2010 deadline.

Education leadership associations. The Ontario Public Supervisory Officials’ Association (OPSOA) is the “professional organization representing 300 superintendents
and directors of education from the thirty-one English language Public District School Boards of Ontario” (OPSOA, 2008). OPSOA recognized education as a fundamental right and advocated for equal access to education and equality of educational outcomes for all students in Ontario. According to an OPSOA position paper titled *Road to Inclusivity: The Status of Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity in Ontario*, OPSOA members ensured that Ontario’s publicly funded schools “reflect the global community...embrace diversity, equity and inclusivity” (OPSOA, 2005, p. 1). In rising to this challenge, OPSOA members have:

- established offices and personnel to perform such duties as translations, interpretation, cultural liaisons, community development, reception and document appraisals of new students and data management. As well, conferences and committees may have been established to examine, address, and engage discourse on key issues such as anti-racism, poverty, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, hate crimes, equity in hiring, gender issues and accessibility. Numerous action projects (large, small, individual and independent) have been supported by supervisory officials on such issues as multiliteracies, ESL, inclusivity, race issues, gender, accessibility for disabled persons. (p. 2)

Identifying gaps across school boards with respect to the existence of equity policies, OPSOA urged that, “standards of practice need to be established and the appropriate resources provided to ensure all boards are in a position to effectively address diversity, equity and inclusivity issues” (p. 2).

*The Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA)* represents public school boards and public school authorities across Ontario and works to address the needs and interests of the public education system in Ontario. In this pursuit, the OPSBA collaborated with the Ontario government as “the credible voice of public education in Ontario...routinely called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions” (OPSBA, n.d.). OPSBA
President Catherine Fife acknowledged the association’s involvement during the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. In the Fall 2010 edition of *Education Today*, the professional magazine published by the OPSBA, Fife stated that, “our leadership on the provincial Equity and Inclusion Strategy was clearly highlighted at the spring provincial labour relations symposium hosted by the Ontario Education Services Corporation in June” (Fife, 2010, p. 2). According to Fife, “education is a key component to creating a safer and socially just province” (p. 2).

The education leadership associations that will be discussed below were more heavily involved in the implementation of equity education policy in Ontario. Following the release of Ministry of Education documents related to equity policy in 2009, the efforts of the education associations described below focused on providing district school boards with leadership, resources, and professional development to ensure the capacity required to meet the directives issued in PPM No. 119 (2009).

*The Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association (OCSTA)* represents the interests of 29 English Catholic school boards and five Catholic school authorities across Ontario, and has “safeguarded and promoted the interests of Catholic education in Ontario” (OCSTA, n.d.). As a political organization and a powerful lobby for Catholic education in Ontario, OCSTA members “monitor government activity, contribute to the decision-making process, liaise with all provincial political parties, and respond to issues affecting Catholic education” (OCSTA, n.d.). And yet, no documents were collected from OCSTA that detailed the organization’s involvement in equity education policy development. According to an article from *The Catholic Register*, written May 14, 2010, OCSTA, under the leadership of President Nancy Kirby, “will work towards
implementing the province’s equity and inclusive strategy which ‘represents the distinctive nature and mandate of our Catholic schools’” (Nonato, 2010).

The Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officials’ Association (OCSOA) represents superintendents and directors of education in the publicly funded Catholic education system. A promotional flyer announced OCSOA’s role as a partner with the Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario (CPCO) in hosting the one-day event CPCO/OCSOA Speaker Series 2010. The Speaker Series event focused on the role of leadership in equity and inclusive education:

these shared learning opportunities support Catholic school and system leaders in the implementation and development of various aspects of the Ontario Leadership Strategy and in the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy. The opportunity for networking with colleagues from across the province strengthens Catholic education. (CPCO, 2010a, p. 1)

The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) is a virtual organization that includes representatives from Ontario’s principals’ and supervisory officers’ associations, councils of directors of education, and the Ministry of Education. According to the document titled The Way Ahead 2010, the IEL, sought to connect educational leadership to initiatives that support student achievement; this focus included, “education leadership initiatives such as the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy” (IEL, 2010). This document illustrated that the IEL wanted to ensure that education leaders had the capacity and resources necessary to develop equity education policies for their respective boards by the September 2010 deadline mandated by PPM No. 119 (2009).

Principals’ associations. Two voluntary, professional associations are responsible for representing the interests of principals and vice-principals in publicly funded schools across Ontario: the Ontario Principals’ Council (OPC) and the Catholic
*Principals’ Council of Ontario (CPCO).* Based on the documents collected, these associations were primarily involved in the implementation of equity education policy in Ontario.

*The Ontario Principals’ Council (OPC)* aims to “provide our Members with the professional services and supports they need to provide exemplary leadership in public education” (OPC, n.d.a). Although the OPC has been involved with equity issues in education since October 2008, when they hosted the *Education Leadership Canada Symposium on Human Rights, Antiracism and Cultural Proficiency*, their involvement with PPM No. 119 (2009) was limited to implementation. The OPC is committed to “providing professional learning opportunities and resources to support principals and vice-principals in addressing issues of equity and inclusive education in their schools and school communities” (OPC, n.d.b). These resources, provided by the OPC Equity and Inclusive Education Team, are designed to “start and/or expand the conversations on equity and inclusive education and also to ignite action and results in terms of school improvement and student achievement” (OPC, n.d.b).

*The Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario (CPCO),* as an advocate for the Catholic education system across Ontario, considers themselves to be “the leading Catholic educational association in Canada, delivering high quality professional learning through the Catholic lens for Catholic school leaders” (CPCO, n.d.). Through a press release, the CPCO website merely acknowledged the equity and inclusive education strategy launched by the Ministry of Education. That press release stated that “our Catholic schools have always been guided by a deep and abiding sense of the worth and dignity of every individual” (CPCO, 2010b). The CPCO website did not address the
organization’s particular involvement in the development or implementation of the equity strategy.

**Teachers’ associations.** The Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF) represents the interests of all teachers in Ontario’s publicly funded schools, currently about 155,000 teachers. According to their mandate, the OTF “is the unifying voice safeguarding their profession, pensions and public education” (OTF, n.d.). Although no documents collected from the OTF referenced the organization’s involvement during the development of equity education policy in Ontario, the OTF has been very active with respect to the implementation of equity education policy in Ontario through the creation of resources for educators. In 2007, the OTF partnered with the Ministry of Education and the Centre Ontarien de Prévention des Aggressions (COPA) to create the Safe@School project. According to the Safe@School website, the project is “designed to foster positive systemic change for teachers, students, and the education system overall...designed for Ontario teachers to foster safe, strong and free schools and communities” (Ontario Teachers’ Federation & Centre Ontarien de Prevention des Aggressions, 2011c).

The Safe@School project is composed of two main initiatives: resources and professional learning modules. The equity and inclusive education resource section included resources devoted specifically to issues of racism, homophobia, and sexism. According to the Safe@School project:

addressing equity issues in the classroom can sometimes lead to discussions that may be difficult, painful and controversial. As you know, it is important to create a safe and healthy environment for such discussions and we have some ideas and examples of basic principles you may find helpful in this process. (Ontario Teachers’ Federation & Centre Ontarien de Prevention des Aggressions, 2011b)
The second initiative of the Safe@School project focused on professional learning modules for equity and inclusive education. The modules provided educational staff with an increased understanding of the social context of discrimination, the role of power and privilege in shaping identity, the need to cultivate respect for diversity, and exploring possibilities for change. The overall purpose of the professional learning modules was to provide educational staff with the concrete tools necessary to ensure that the goals of equity and inclusive education policy are translated into safe and equitable learning environments that will support the physical, mental, social, and academic well-being of all students (Ontario Teachers’ Federation & Centre Ontarien de Prevention des Aggressions, 2011b).

Established in 1997, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) is a self-regulated and self-governed professional education association that seeks to protect the public interest with respect to the publicly funded education system. The OCT is accountable to the general public in carrying out the following responsibilities:

Ensuring Ontario students are taught by skilled teachers who adhere to clear standards of practice and conduct...establishing standards of practice and conduct...issuing teaching certificates and may suspend or revoke them...accrediting teacher education programs and courses and ...providing for ongoing professional learning opportunities for members. (OCT, n.d.)

Although the OCT was not involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, the College has respond to PPM No. 119 (2009) with the creation of an Additional Qualification (AQ) course titled Inclusive Classroom Specialist. This AQ course aimed to provide educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to create more inclusive educational environments, meeting some of the requirements expressed in PPM No. 119 (2009). According to the course guideline, the theoretical
foundations of the Inclusive Classroom Specialist focused on inclusive practices, “exploring leadership from the perspective of equity and diversity”; inclusive learning communities, “understanding and demonstrating practical leadership knowledge and skills that support the development of inclusive communities”; and reflective practice, “understanding the role of, and engaging in, ongoing self reflection to deepen the self knowledge and self awareness that is foundational to leadership that honours diversity and equity” (OCT, 2009, p. 5).

The government of Ontario. This section details the political processes, within the provincial government, that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). I begin by documenting the historical context of the development of equity education policy in Ontario, including an examination of policy trends, a discussion of race relations in Ontario as documented in Stephen Lewis’ report to the Premier in 1992, and the findings from the Royal Commission on Learning. This provides a contextual background from which to consider more recent political processes, including the role of Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Ministry of Education led by Kathleen Wynne. For a comprehensive list of Ontario Premiers, Ministers of Education, and corresponding policy documents, see Appendix 3.

**Policy trends in Ontario education.** Education policy related to equity and inclusion has been subject to great fluctuations and inconsistencies as a result of political cycles, elections, and the different ideologies of successive governments. It is clear that the political cycle was a determining factor in the development of equity and inclusive education policy (Anderson & Ben Jaafar, 2006). The shift of political power from Bob
Rae’s NDP government to the Conservatives led by Mike Harris had dire consequences for the development and implementation of PPM No. 119 (1993). During this period, Dei noted a “gradual decline of anti-racism initiatives at government/ministerial levels in Ontario” (2003, p. 3).

*Stephen Lewis’ Report on Racism in Ontario to the Premier (Summer 1992).*

Federal policies on multiculturalism were especially influential in Ontario where, in 1977, the legislation of a provincial policy on multiculturalism “recognized the racially and ethnically diverse population of Ontario, and the citizenship entitlement of all people regardless of race and religion” (Chan, 2007, p. 139). Despite multiculturalism policy in Ontario, racial tensions rose throughout the 1990s, reaching a climax in May 1992 with the Yonge Street Riots. To ease the political tension during this period, the NDP government commissioned Stephen Lewis to report on the state of race relations in the province of Ontario. Part 3 of Lewis’ report focused on the public education system.

Lewis relayed the concerns expressed by many students:

> Where are the courses in Black history? Where are the visible minority teachers? Why are there so few role models? Why do our white guidance counselors know so little of different cultural backgrounds? Why are racist incidents and epithets tolerated? Why are there double standards of discipline? Why are the minority students streamed? Why do they discourage us from University? Where are we going to find jobs? What’s the use of having an education if there’s no employment? How long does it take to change the curriculum so that we’re a part of it? (1992)

Based on these concerns, Lewis’ report made a series of recommendations, including stronger monitoring of multicultural and anti-racist policies in Ontario school boards, a complete revision of the curriculum to reflect increased diversity in Ontario, and a review of admission requirements at Faculties of Education across Ontario to attract visible minority teacher candidates (Lewis, 1992). It is from this context that the
first version of PPM No. 119: Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Development and Implementation (1993) was issued by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

**Royal Commission On Learning: For the Love of Learning (1994).** In May, 1993, the Ontario government established the Royal Commission on Learning, charged with the task of “ensur[ing] that Ontario's youth are well-prepared for the challenges of the twenty-first century” (Royal Commission on Learning, 1994). After extensive public consultation, the Commission released their report in January, 1994 titled, *For the Love of Learning*. Volume 4 of the report titled *Making it Happen* devoted a chapter to *Equity Considerations*. Acknowledging Ontario’s widespread diversity, the chapter opened with the statement that “Ontario’s rich diversity is not limited to Toronto: people from many backgrounds have settled in communities large and small. Whether born here or elsewhere, Ontarians share one home but have different religions and languages, ethnocultural and racial backgrounds” (Royal Commission on Learning, 1994, volume 4, chapter 16). This section of the report presented the concerns that had been raised by minority communities, who urged that:

> the system needs to ensure that every school is welcoming to students of every faith, first language, ethnocultural background, or colour. Ontario must not only build inclusive schools and curricula but, because a student can be formally included but still marginalized, the province must also create schools and curricula that place the views, concerns and needs of all students and communities at the very centre of the teacher’s work. (Royal Commission on Learning, 1994, volume 4, chapter 16)

To achieve this lofty goal, the Commission made a series of recommendations, including the establishment of equity personnel, the provision of professional development for all education staff, the involvement of parents and community members
in the development and implementation of anti-racism and ethno-cultural equity policies,
and a review of the curriculum.

**Premier Dalton McGuinty’s government.** The provincial election of 2003 saw
Harris’ Progressive Conservative government defeated by Dalton McGuinty and the
Liberal party whose campaign platform included a renewed commitment to public
education. Upon taking office, the McGuinty government “set in motion a different
approach to education policy and improvement” beginning with a reversal of the many
policy initiatives that had been tabled by the Conservative regime, including legislation
related to school board governance, funding formulas, and labour disputes with teachers
(Anderson & Ben Jaafar, 2006, p. 26). Education policy under the Liberal government
was characterized by a willingness to:

> engage education professionals in defining the problems and solutions that need
to be addressed, to assume joint responsibility for student success, and to invest
significantly in developing the capacity of education professionals, schools and
school districts to achieve provincial goals. (Anderson & BenJaafar, 2006, p. 51)

The Liberal government’s commitment to public education was immediately realized
through funding increases to support student achievement. The Student Success initiative
is perhaps the most obvious example of this trend and saw the government commit $100
million in initial funding to support:

> academically at risk students, locally developed courses for workplace bound
students, increased funding to schools serving students whose family
circumstances are often linked to difficulty with academic success (e.g., low
income, limited English proficiency), and more funding for technology. (p. 37)

Commitment to student achievement was a core priority for public education in Ontario;
therefore, a new focus on issues related to equity and inclusion was necessary.
In a press release dated April 6, 2009, titled *Helping More Students Succeed*, the McGuinty government announced the launch of Ontario’s equity and inclusive education strategy. According to the press release, “by promoting inclusive education, the strategy will help schools better address barriers related to sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination, which may have an impact on student achievement” (OME, April 6, 2009).

It is important to discuss the influence of Kathleen Wynne, as Minister of Education, in the development of PPM No. 119 (2009). A member of provincial parliament since 2003, Wynne was appointed Minister of Education in 2006 until 2010. Wynne was and continues to be an advocate for equity issues and was referred to as the champion for public education by Premier Dalton McGuinty. In her role as Minister of Education, Wynne “led the government's efforts to reduce class sizes in the primary grades, to improve student achievement and to provide more opportunities for high school students to graduate and reach their full potential” (Kathleen Wynne MPP, Biography).

*The Legislative Assembly of Ontario.* On April 8, 2009, McGuinty’s Minister of Education, Wynne stood before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and announced Ontario’s equity and inclusive education strategy:

> It is with great pleasure that I rise today to talk about the Ministry of Education’s equity and inclusive education strategy called Realizing the Promise of Diversity. I’m very pleased to do this because I believe that this strategy will make a huge difference to students, to parents, to teachers, to administrators, to support staff and to school communities all over Ontario. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009)

Wynne acknowledged a variety of stakeholders who had made the development of the equity strategy a success. She commented on the critical roles filled by Dr. Avis Glaze
and Dr. Karen Mock who acted as senior policy advisors to the Minister. Within the
Ministry of Education, Wynne commended the work of Ruth Flynn, director of the
Inclusive Education Branch. Finally, Wynne recognized the role of community
stakeholders, and stated that, “I want to thank them for providing valuable feedback
during the consultation process as we build this province-wide strategy” (Legislative
Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009). Commenting on the rationale behind the strategy,
Wynne stated that:

Research tells us, and so do our hearts, that students who feel welcome and
accepted in their schools are more likely to excel academically. Unfortunately,
some students still face homophobia, racism, sexism and all the other types of
‘isms’ that are symbols of intolerance in our schools. So we are taking action.
(Legislative Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009)

Responding to the concerns expressed by various stakeholders, including the need for
policy guidelines, definitions related to equity and inclusion, professional development,
and accountability measures, Wynne stated that, “we are giving our school boards and
schools the support they need to better address barriers related to discrimination. I’m
confident that this will have a direct impact on student achievement” (Legislative
Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009). Wynne concluded her announcement with the
reminder that the equity strategy is another opportunity for Ontario to capitalize on its
diversity:

We are helping today’s students develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable and
caring citizens who can contribute to both a strong economy and a cohesive
society. Every Ontarian deserves to live in a strong community and have a bright
future. Our equity and inclusive education strategy will help to realize the
promise of diversity. Our strategy will help Ontario prosper. (Legislative
Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009)
The equity strategy received approval in the legislative assembly where official opposition parties pledged their support. New Democrat member, Rosario Marchese, was first to respond to Wynne’s announcement and stated:

I welcome the statement. Issues of diversity, equity and inclusivity are of a particular priority for New Democrats. When a government puts together a strategy for equity and inclusive education, we say, ‘Okay, good. God bless.’ We hope it will do whatever good the minister says it will do, because in our society and in our school system, I worry. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009)

Following Marchese, Progressive Conservative member Elizabeth Witmer addressed the legislative assembly and also pledged support for the equity strategy:

I’m very pleased to stand, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, to respond to the government’s equity and inclusive education strategy... We need to ensure that all of Ontario’s children, no matter what their background or what advantages they have or which challenges they have or where they come from or where they live – it’s just very important to ensure that they all have the same educational opportunities. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009).

Witmer also commented on the role of education partnerships as part of the equity strategy:

through Ontario’s education partners, this province can rise – and I know it will – to the challenge of realizing the promise of diversity. It will take time, hard work, focus and determination, but it can be done and I want to indicate to you that I am prepared to help, as are my colleagues. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, April 8, 2009).

The records from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario illustrated that a consensus had been established on the issue of equity in education between the political parties as evidenced by the Ministry’s equity strategy receiving support from the official political opposition.

The Ontario Ministry of Education. To construct an understanding of the political processes that took place at the Ministry of Education during the development of
equity and inclusive education policy, four memoranda were issued on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

The first memorandum, released March, 2008, announced the Ministry’s intention to create an equity and inclusive education strategy. The memorandum, addressed to directors of education, supervisory officers, and school authorities, announced the role of Dr. Avis Glaze as senior advisor to the Minister and Dr. Karen Mock as senior policy advisor on equity and diversity as chairs of the Ministry’s steering committee on the equity strategy. The memorandum carefully embedded equity within the Ministry’s three core priorities for public education, and articulated that, “a major component of our work as advisors on equity is to develop a strategy to provide equity of outcomes to all Ontario students...closing the achievement gaps for all students is a major focus for all school boards” (Glaze & Mock, 2008, p. 1). The memorandum conveyed that the foundation for equity in education already existed in many boards across the province:

> we want to recognize and build upon the work that already exists and to capture your vision of what is possible when we adopt a stance that seeks to take our diversity to new levels of understanding and inclusion...we do not have to re-invent the wheel. A lot of outstanding work has already been done. (Glaze & Mock, 2008, p. 2)

The purpose of the memorandum was to collect information on school board policies and initiatives related to equity. To achieve this goal, the Ministry sought to assemble “relevant policies and related supporting documents that can be shared widely to encourage the dissemination of promising practices” (Glaze & Mock, 2008, p. 2).

A second memorandum, released on February 18, 2009, by Joan Fullarton, regional manager at the Ministry of Education, stated that the Ministry of Education intended to issue a policy/program memorandum to provide schools boards with direction
when developing, implementing, and monitoring equity and inclusive education policies. Acknowledging the valuable input that the Ministry had received in the developmental phase of the equity strategy, the memorandum sought feedback on the proposed P/PM, announcing that, once again, “the Inclusive Education Branch is now seeking your input on the proposed P/PM and the Policy Development and Implementation Guideline that will accompany it” (Fullarton, 2009, p. 1).

The third memorandum, released November 3, 2009, from Ruth Flynn, director of the Ministry’s Inclusive Education Branch, announced a symposium that would be hosted by the Ministry of Education. In connection with the OPC and the CPCO the Ministry of Education would host Connecting Communities: A Symposium for School and System Leaders to Support the Implementation of Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy in December, 2009. The symposium was fully funded by the Ministry of Education with the intention of reaching different personnel across Ontario’s various schools boards. The announcement invited all school boards and encouraged them to “send a team of four representatives that should include the equity and inclusive education lead, a superintendent, an elementary principal and a secondary principal, to this exciting learning and networking opportunity” (Flynn, 2009, p. 1).

The final memorandum, issued April 8, 2010, by Ruth Flynn announced the release of the equity policy guidelines designed to assist school boards in developing, implementing, and monitoring equity education policies, as mandated by PPM No. 119 (2009), and consistent with the Ministry’s vision for equity outlined in the Strategy document. The document titled Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009) would “offer practical strategies and
advice along with examples and templates that boards can use to inform policy review, development, implementation and monitoring” (Flynn, 2010, p. 1).

**Synopsis.** This section presented the role of professional educational associations, as political actors, in shaping the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Many of these organizations were more involved in the process of implementation, as agents working to re-freeze the status quo following the release of PPM No. 119 (2009). The OPC and OPSOA were presented as driving forces in placing equity on the education policy agenda. The political processes that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy were the focus of this section, including historical developments such as Stephen Lewis’ report to Premier Rae in 1992 and the Royal Commission on Learning report in 1994. More recently, the roles of the Ontario provincial government under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Ministry of Education led by Kathleen Wynne were analyzed for their role in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

**The Legal Context**

Legal frameworks provide structure in society, dictating, to a certain degree, the acceptable parameters of social action that govern the behaviour of individuals and institutions. In order to analyze the legal forces affecting the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, I deemed it necessary to identify the major legal frameworks and pieces of legislation (both at the federal and provincial levels) that have shaped the options available to policy makers at the Ministry of Education.

**Federal legislation.** This section presents an analysis of federal legislation,
including the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982*, and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988*.

**The Constitution Act, 1867.** Signed on March 29th, 1867, the *Constitution Act* represented the highest level of law in the country. Part VI of the *Constitution Act, 1867* spoke to the distribution of legislative powers between the federal Parliament and provincial legislatures. Section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* mandated that education is a provincial responsibility: “In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education.” However, subsections one through four placed provisions on the provincial control over education by enshrining the right to denominational schooling, holding provincial education systems responsible for maintaining the right of access to denominational schools. These subsections were especially relevant in Ontario where the right to denominational schools is still upheld and often ferociously defended as a right that is constitutionally guaranteed. According to section 93, subsection 1, “Nothing in any such Law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union.” The *Constitution* provided the province of Ontario with the authority to respond to diversity in the education system through formal policy initiatives.

**The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982.** The *Constitution Act, 1982* was introduced in Canada as part of the process of patriating the British North America Act of 1867, formally changing its name to the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and bringing with it a series of new amendments.
The Constitution Act, 1982 was one of the most celebrated and controversial achievements of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982, is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) and the focus of this section. Two important clauses from the Charter are considered; section 15, outlining equality rights and section 27, the multiculturalism clause.

Section 15, subsection 1 of the Charter, the equal rights clause:
Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Section 15, subsection 1, empowered the courts to act on Canada’s multicultural reality and guaranteed equality and fairness under the law and across all levels of government. Although a significant development in Canadian multiculturalism discourse and equality rights legislation, the Charter provoked resentment and criticism. From the perspective of legal authorities and minority groups, the Charter was viewed as an inadequate piece of legislation for effectively addressing systemic racism and other forms of discrimination. Although the Charter prohibited discrimination, it did not require governments to actively promote equality and fairness under the law or through institutions.

Section 27 of the Charter, the multiculturalism clause legislated additional clout to multiculturalism policy in Canada. Section 27 is an interpretive clause, and stated that the Charter “shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.”

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988. Defined as “an Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada” the Canadian
Multiculturalism Act is the legal expression of Canada’s multicultural identity and heritage. The Act established the state’s position on multiculturalism and stipulated the process of its implementation. I briefly present the main tenets of the official policy of multiculturalism before providing comments related to its implementation.

Section 3 of the Act outlined the official policy of multiculturalism including the general objectives of the policy and the role of federal institutions in meeting these objectives. The Act provided greater clarity and purpose for multiculturalism in Canada. Subsection 1(a) of the Act declared that it is the official policy of the government of Canada to “recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage.” The official policy acknowledged the existence of systemic barriers barring the equal participation of all people or groups in Canadian society. To remedy this, subsection 1(c) of the Act required the government of Canada to “promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation.” Subsection 1(f) of the Act acknowledged the powerful role of institutions within Canada and required the government of Canada to “encourage and assist the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada’s multicultural character.” In this vein, the official policy of multiculturalism emphasized the goals of combating institutional prejudice and discrimination to ensure the full and equal participation of diverse minorities in the economic, political, social, and cultural life of Canada (Esses & Gardner, 1996).
The Act legislated a greater responsibility to federal institutions, now, legally obliged to reflect Canada’s cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity through the implementation of multiculturalism policies and programs. Section 3, subsection 2 spoke to the implementation of the Act within Canada’s federal institutions, legislatively that all federal institutions must reflect Canada’s multicultural reality. According to section 3, subsection 2(c) federal institutions must “promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of the members of Canadian society.” Section 3, subsection 2(f), stated that federal institutions must “generally, carry on their activities in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada.”

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act also prescribed a course of implementation. According to section 4, the coordination of multiculturalism in Canada is the responsibility of the Minister:

The Minister, in consultation with other ministers of the Crown, shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to the implementation of the multiculturalism policy of Canada and may provide advice and assistance in the development and implementation of programs and practices in support of the policy.

According to section 4, subsection 1(d), the Minister may:

encourage and assist the business community, labour organizations, voluntary and other private organizations, as well as public institutions, in ensuring full participation in Canadian society, including the social and economic aspects, of individuals of all origins and their communities, and in promoting respect and appreciation for the multicultural reality of Canada.

Provincial legislation. This section presents relevant provincial law in Ontario including the Education Act, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Education Act. The Education Act is the primary piece of legislation that
dictated education policies and practices in Ontario. The *Education Act* is a very detailed piece of legislation; therefore, I only draw attention to specific sections that bear relevance when examining the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. I begin by stating the purpose of education in Ontario, discuss the interpretation of the *Act*, and outline the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education. Finally, I discuss Part XIII of the *Education Act* pertaining to behaviour, discipline, and safety.

**Purpose of education.** The first section of the *Education Act* presented the purpose of education in Ontario. Section 0.1, subsection 1 acknowledged the importance of a strong public education system as “the foundation of a prosperous, caring and civil society.” Speaking to the purpose of education, subsection 2 stated that “the purpose of education is to provide students with the opportunity to realize their potential and develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, caring citizens who contribute to their society.” Subsection 3 formally recognized the necessity of partnerships in the education system. According to subsection 3:

> All partners in the education sector, including the Minister, the Ministry and the boards, have a role to play in enhancing student achievement and well-being, closing gaps in student achievement and maintaining confidence in the province’s publicly funded education systems.

Subsection 3 of the *Education Act* is clearly reflected in the three core priorities for public education as outlined by the Ministry of Education.

**Interpretation of the Education Act.** Section 1 of the *Education Act* related to its general interpretation; and subsection 4 recognized the supremacy of pre-existing constitutional rights. According to section 1, subsection 4 of the *Education Act*, “this Act does not adversely affect any right or privilege guaranteed by section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 or by section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and
Freedoms.” Section 93 of the Constitution enshrined denominational schooling rights, whereas section 23 of the Charter guaranteed minority language education rights to French-speaking communities outside of Quebec and to English-speaking communities within Quebec.

**Part I: The Ministry of Education and Training.** Part 1 of the Education Act legislated the scope of activities and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education and Training. With respect to equity, section 8, subsection 29 stated that the Minister may “require boards to develop and implement an ethnocultural equity and anti-racism policy, to submit the policy to the Minister for approval and to implement changes to the policy as directed by the Minister.” This legislation was introduced as part of an amendment to the Education Act under PPM No. 119 (1993).


First, in 2007, Bill 212: Progressive Discipline and School Safety was passed by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as an Act to amend Part XIII of the Education Act. The new position of the Ministry of Education was progressive discipline as opposed to zero tolerance policies. A report prepared for the Ontario Human Rights Commission expressed concern that zero tolerance policies were disproportionately affecting racialized students and students with disabilities. The executive summary of the report concluded that “there is a strong perception, which is supported by some independent
evidence, that the Act and school board policies are having a disproportionate impact on racial minority students, particularly Black students, and students with disabilities” (Bhattacharjee, 2003, p. i). In responding to the legislative changes mandated by Bill 212, the Ministry of Education released *PPM No. 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Students Behaviour* (2009) that required school boards to develop and implement progressive discipline policies. PPM No. 145 (2009) defined progressive discipline as:

a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behavior and to build upon strategies that promote and foster positive behaviours. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive. (OME, 2009e, p. 3)

On the same day the Ministry of Education released *PPM No. 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention* (2009) that charged school boards with the task of developing and implementing policies and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention. PPM No. 144 (2009) defined bullying as:

a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person’s body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. (OME, 2009d, p. 3)

PPM No. 144 (2009) acknowledged the existence of power struggles between students that underpin experiences of bullying:

students may attain or maintain power over others in the school through real or perceived differences. Some areas of difference may be size, strength, age, intelligence, economic status, social status, solidarity of peer group, religion, ethnicity, disability, need for special education, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, and race. (p. 3)
Second, in 2009, the Ontario Ministry of Education released the supporting document *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School: Reporting and Responding to Incidents*, which outlined the legislative changes expressed in *Bill 157: Keeping Our Kids Safe at School*. The new legislation, which took effect on February 1, 2010, required “all school staff to report, and those who work directly with students to respond to, incidents that happen in schools” (OME, 2009b, p. 1). Bill 212 and Bill 157 can both be understood as examples of legislation that reflect the Ministry’s safe schools initiative.

**The Ontario Human Rights Code.** The purpose of the *Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code)* was to prevent prejudice, discrimination, and harassment with respect to a variety of services in Ontario. Unlike the *Constitution* that binds governments, or the multiculturalism policy that mandates action from Canada’s federal institutions, the *Code* is applied to individuals as well as governments.

Formally recognizing the equality of all people and the existence of rights based on this equality as the foundation of public policy in Ontario, the Preamble to the *Ontario Human Rights Code* stated:

> And Whereas it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination that is contrary to law, and having as its aim the creation of a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community and the Province.

Part I of the Code, titled Freedom from Discrimination, outlined the goods and services that every person in Ontario has equal right to. Section 1 of the *Code* stated:

> “Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability.”
The role of legal actors. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, responsible for multiculturalism policy and programming in Canada, and the Minister of Education in Ontario are important legal actors that have been identified in this section. As authoritative government decision makers, who specialize in a specific policy area, these actors have a significant role in the policymaking cycle by determining the specific ideas contained in public policy. The Minister of Education, whose role as a policy actor in shaping the development of equity and inclusive education was discussed as part of the political context from which equity education policy developed, is ultimately responsible for and exerts the greatest degree of power over the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. The role of these actors is further examined in the following chapter. Therefore, this section pays particular attention to the role of the Ontario Human Rights Commission as a legal actor driving the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

The Ontario Human Rights Commission. As mandated in the Ontario Human Rights Code (section 31.6.2), the Ontario Human Rights Commission is required to submit an annual report of its activities. The 2009-2010 Annual Report from the Commission, entitled Educate Empower Act, outlined their efforts directed towards promoting partnerships in education. The Commission stated that the impetus for this work was drawn from the problems faced by students related to school discipline. The report expressed concern that zero tolerance discipline policies “did not take into account the individual circumstances of each student, and the students who needed support the most were at risk of being left behind” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2010, p. 7). The Commission cited the Ministry of Education’s equity and inclusive education
strategy as a major step forward, and urged that “school boards have to look at their practices to remove systemic barriers to education and hiring, and take steps to make sure they offer a positive school climate that fosters equity, inclusive education and diversity” (p. 7).

The Commission has been a very active stakeholder in the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. To assist local school boards in developing equity and inclusive education policies, the Commission has “provided human rights training to large groups of schools boards at events organized by the Ministry of Education, the Safe School Network, regional Equity and Inclusive Education Networks” (p. 7). The Commission also provided resources and documents that contained sample language boards can use and modify when drafting their own equity and inclusive education policies.

Broadly speaking, the Commission will “continue to provide support to key stakeholders like the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC), the Ministry of Education, Inclusive Education Branch and Regional Equity and Inclusive Education Networks” (p. 7). The Ontario Human Rights Commission was a presenter at the Inclusive Boards – Inclusive Schools symposium hosted by the OESC and the Ministry of Education in June 2010. The Commission’s presentation, titled Equity By the Numbers: Data Collection as a Support to Equity Strategy Implementation explained that systemic discrimination in the education system, which the equity and inclusive education strategy is designed to eliminate, can be identified by collecting and reviewing numerical data; assessing the organizational culture of schooling in Ontario; and examining policy, practice, and decision-making processes (Macedo, 2010).
**Synopsis.** This section focused on the legislative context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). I began at the federal level with a discussion of the Constitution Acts, 1867, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988. I then segued into provincial law, presenting relevant articles from the Ontario Education Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Of particular importance was the analysis of pre-existing education legislation and policy directives from the Ministry of Education that have had a pivotal role in shaping the contours of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Finally I presented the role of legal stakeholders in the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Particular attention was paid to the role of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, who, as a legal actor, drew attention to the existence of prejudice and discrimination in Ontario’s education system, placing the issue of equity on the policy agenda.

**The Economic Context**

Pal (1987) stated that “in the abstract it is possible that society could solve almost any problem if it were prepared to devote all its resources to the solution” (p. 35). However, societies and governments operate within a finite resource base and, so, the division of power and resources to solve social problems is a necessary reality that must be considered as bearing some degree of influence during the development of public policy. It is from this rationale that the economic context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed is explored. This section focuses on the economic ideology of neoliberalism, its adoption by the Harris’ Progressive Conservative government, and its embodiment in the *Common Sense Revolution*. Most importantly,
this section explores the influence of neoliberalism on education policy and practice throughout the 1990s, the legacy of which contributed to the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Finally, the role of the Ontario Education Services Corporation as an economic actor driving the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policy is explored.

**Neoliberalism and the Common Sense Revolution.** By the 1990s, Canada was faced with the same harsh realities of globalization affecting states around the world, as well as additional economic upheaval related to the introduction of the GST and signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) under Brian Mulroney’s Conservative government. The liberal consensus that had dominated Canada for the past four decades was beginning to fray.

In Ontario, the election of Mike Harris’ Progressive Conservative government in June 1995 would unravel the post-war liberal consensus. Harris’ platform, expressed in the manifesto the *Common Sense Revolution*, would bring neoliberal policies to Ontario. The neoliberal agenda had new and lofty aims:

- Its goal is dismantling the state and removing it as much as possible from the marketplace. Not surprisingly, then, the “Common Sense Revolution” proposed to reduce the deficit *and* lower taxes solely by cutting back dramatically on expenditures – the programs, services and activities – of the provincial government. (Jeffrey, 1999, p. 198)

The impacts of this new fiscally austere agenda were drastic and resulted in the transformation of existing policies and practices across the Canadian state, especially with respect to education policy and programming as evidenced by a shift towards more market-oriented approaches. The Ontario Conservative government’s platform “emphasized the reduction and rationalization of education expenditures, increased
government control of teachers’ working conditions and compensation, and quality control through increased accountability for local spending and student learning outcomes in relation to centrally prescribed goals and standards” (Anderson & Ben Jaafar, 2006, p. 51). This platform took shape through key pieces of legislation.

*Bill 104: Fewer School Boards Act* was passed in January 1997 and reduced the number of school boards in Ontario from 129 to 72. School board trustees were also targeted under the new Act and their salaries were capped at $5000 per year. Anderson and Ben Jaafar (2006) argued that “consolidation of school boards was supposed to reduce administrative costs and duplication of services” however, “it eroded community participation in the governance of schools” (p. 12).

Easily the most controversial piece of legislation was *Bill 160: The Education Quality Improvement Act* passed in December 1997. Bill 160 resulted in centralized control over education, transferring control over many education issues from school board authorities to the provincial government. Drastic changes to the provincial funding formula for education were introduced, such that, “property tax levies are now dictated by the government and the funds are collected, pooled, and redistributed on an equitable basis to English and French, public and Catholic school district boards” (p. 13). Bill 160 also centralized control over teachers’ working conditions:

- class size limits, teacher preparation time, administrative release time, and the length of the school year would be set by the province and not through local school board negotiations with teacher unions. These actions reduced the scope of collective bargaining over teacher working conditions. (p. 14)

*Bill 45: Equity in Education Tax Credit* allowed parents whose children were enrolled in private schools to claim an income tax credit of fifty percent of tuition up to a maximum of $3500 per child. Critics of the legislation argued that “the tax credit policy
robbed funding from an already cash starved public system and pointed out that the
government placed little accountability on private schools” (p. 21).

As a result of legislation introduced under the *Common Sense Revolution*, schools
across the province found themselves in an obvious conundrum, forced:

- to teach co-operation when competition is the skill with the greatest cachet;
- to teach love of learning when the utility of applied knowledge is all that is valued;
- to teach creativity when accomplishment is based on giving a standardized answer
to a standardized question. (Barlow and Robertson, 1994, preface, viii)

A series of new ideologies emerged in the publicly funded education system in Ontario as a result.

*Standardization.* The achievement agenda became an increasingly common idea influencing education policy and practice. According to Kuehn and Shaker, “a struggle dominates education, these days. It is struggle between demands for standardization and the reality of diversity” (2010, p. 21). Advocates of standardization argued that it would create a system that is more accountable to the public, ensured through the application of a standardized curriculum and measured through the use of large-scale, standardized testing.

Documents collected from PISA and the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program (PCEIP) are evidence of the pursuit to measure and rank student achievement through the use of standardized assessment models, a challenge Ontario is rising to.

According to a 2010 report released from the OECD, titled *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers: Lessons from PISA for the United States:*

Since 2000, Canada has become a world leader in its sustained strategy of professionally-driven reform of its education system. Not only do its students perform well, they perform despite their socio-economic status, first language or whether they are native Canadians or recent immigrants. (OECD, 2010, p. 65)
Citing Ontario as a case study, and the reforms towards standardization that were made since 2003, the report stated that “the Ontario strategy has achieved widespread positive results in increasing elementary literacy and numeracy, improving graduation rates, and reducing the number of low-performing schools” (p. 71).

Regardless, it is necessary to consider that the idea of standardization stands in direct opposition to the idea of diversity. Ontario’s classrooms are diverse spaces, and yet:

this diversity chafes against a system that is about “alignment” with external goals that are standard and measurable and dealt with as a contract – a contract that is out of the control of the people engaged in the process of learning – the teachers and the students. (Kuehn & Shaker, 2010, p. 22)

Kuehn and Shaker warned that, for advocates seeking an equitable and inclusive education system, there is an imminent need to critically assess how the goals of public education align with the current education discourse based on standardized curriculum and large scale testing as a method for measuring student achievement.

**Accountability.** Closely linked with the system of standardization described above, is the idea of accountability. As a public institution, Ontario’s education system is held accountable to the citizenry of Ontario. Accountability is ensured through a variety of organizations such as the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), both created under the Harris government. I focus on the EQAO, established to:

develop and manage the administration and marking of standardized tests of elementary and secondary school pupils keyed to provincial curriculum expectations, to develop systems for evaluating the quality and improvement of education, to collect information on assessing academic achievement, to report to the public and the education ministry on test results and on the quality of public school education, and to recommend improvements in the quality of education and public accountability of boards. (Anderson & Ben Jaafar, 2006, p. 10)
**Commercialism in Canadian schools.** As governments began to retrench funding and resources for education, there was an increased space for business to operate within. The report titled *Commercialism in Canadian Schools: Whose Calling the Shots?* stated that, “the classroom is an environment like no other. It offers marketers the opportunity to reach an audience required by law to be there, until the age of 16, five days a week, six hours a day, 10 months of the year” (Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 2006, p. 20). In a variety of categories including advertising in schools, corporate sponsorship, exclusivity contracts, incentive programs, user fees, and fundraising, the report concluded that private money is being entrenched in the public system, supporting government claims that public funding for education can be reduced. Although provincial and territorial ministries of education acknowledged that commercialism in schools is a pressing issue in education policy, “very few governments appear to have established policies or guidelines addressing: levels of commercial or corporate involvement in education; advertising; exclusive marketing; private donations; fundraising; or user fees” (p. 14). In fact, the Ontario Ministry of Education has left the decision solely in the hands of the school boards. As of 2004, the Ministry mandated that all school boards in Ontario are required to include school fundraising as part of their general revenue. Mandatory accounting of fundraising initiatives is resulting in the entrenchment of private funds in the public system, supporting the provincial government and education authorities in rationalizing the withdrawal of government financial support from a publicly funded education system.

**Capitalizing on diversity.** Since the 1980s, Canadian diversity has been constructed as a valuable and exploitable resource in the global economy. In January
1994, the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC), a non-profit coalition of national ethnocultural organizations, representing over 2,000 groups across Canada, prepared and presented a brief to the Royal Commission on Learning titled *Equality of Access and Equality of Outcome.* The report highlighted the importance of technology and heritage language programs in schools across Canada to assist students in learning to successfully navigate the new global economy. The CEC suggested the creation of a provincial strategy “which brings together the ethnocultural communities, the business and industry sectors, and the federal government to look at the importance of international/heritage languages for trade and telecommunication” (CEC, 1994, p. 7). The CEC stated that “appropriate telecommunication technology and systems will offer new opportunities for students who traditionally have been marginalized” (p. 4).

More recently, the rationale for equity and inclusive education policy is embodied in the title of the Strategy document, *Realizing the Promise of Diversity.* According to Ministry documents, the equity strategy would help to create a politically active and economically productive citizenry:

> equitable, inclusive education is also central to creating a cohesive society and a strong economy that will secure Ontario’s future prosperity...Today’s global, knowledge-based economy makes the ongoing work in our schools critical to our students’ success in life and to Ontario’s economic future. (OME, 2009g, pp. 5-6)

As was the case with multiculturalism, equity and inclusive education are viewed as having the potential to create economic advantages for the province of Ontario. Just as diversity and multiculturalism were commodified during the early 1990s, equity and inclusive education are conceptualized as a way to ensure social cohesion, economic advantage, and overall prosperity in Ontario.
The Schools We Need. The relevancy of the shift to neoliberal economic policies cannot be understated in influencing the development of equity and inclusive education policy years later. In January 2003, a report released from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto titled The Schools We Need: A New Blueprint for Ontario, described the economic policy trends in education under the Common Sense Revolution:

the government’s strategy for educational reform in Ontario over the past seven years has combined greater accountability, at all levels of the system, with fiscal restraint. The underlying assumption seems to be that with greater accountability and a new curriculum, teaching and learning would improve, even with fewer resources...increased efficiency would compensate for any reductions in funding and other resources. (Leithwood, Fullan, & Watson, 2003, p. 7)

Through an exploration of the unintended and negative consequences associated with this reform agenda, the report concluded that the policy trends and related assumptions under the neoliberal agenda were thoroughly problematic. Speaking on behalf of marginalized students across Ontario, the report stated that, “the school system is becoming a harsh environment for less advantaged and diverse student populations, particularly special needs and ESL students” (Leithwood et al., 2003, p. 7). The report cited high failure rates associated with the Grade 10 literacy test and increased drop-out rates for students in applied streams. It is within this context, that the rationale for greater equity and inclusion in the education system became abundantly clear.

The role of economic actors. This section presents the role of the Ontario Education Services Corporation as the primary economic actor involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).
The Ontario Education Services Corporation. The Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) was established in 2002 as a non-profit corporation, whose mission is to “provide outstanding services to all Boards at a reasonable cost...to provide high quality services to all 72 Ontario School Boards while saving Boards substantial dollars compared with alternative services” (OESC, n.d.).

With respect to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in school boards across the province, the OESC created and released template documents for school board authorities that “will meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009 to address the needs of diverse classrooms across the province” (OESC, 2010). Included in the various documents prepared by the OESC were “a template policy, a procedural guideline including specific actions for the board and its schools, and a procedural guideline specific to the requirements of Religious Accommodation” (OESC, 2010). The various resources and supporting documents created by the OESC were provided to school boards across Ontario at no additional cost to assist with the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policy.

The OESC was also actively involved in the process of implementing the equity and inclusive education strategy. The OESC partnered with the Ministry of Education and Curriculum Services Canada to create a variety of video resources, “to assist with understanding and implementing board policy and in engaging the community in ensuring that our schools are safe, caring and inclusive places for children to grow and learn” (OESC, 2010). Furthermore, the OESC, with the support of the Ministry of Education, organized and hosted two symposia for education leaders, focused on
“implementing the requirements of the Code, the Strategy and P/PM 119 through board policies and procedures” (OESC, 2010). The symposia were fully funded by the Ministry of Education with no registration fee and a travel bursary for participants, including “two trustees and the director or senior administrator responsible for this initiative” (OESC, 2010). The first symposium, hosted on June 17, 2010 was titled *Inclusive Boards – Inclusive Schools*, and billed as “a one day symposium for school board members and senior administrators focusing on the implementation of Board Policy as required by the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119” (OESC Symposium, 2010). The second symposium, hosted on January 26-27, 2011 was titled *Deepening the Understanding...Widening the Response: Equity and Inclusive Education Part II*, and was “intended to promote the flow of ideas, share good practice and make new connections to assist in the implementation of the equity and inclusive education strategy and the supporting policy and procedures required to be in place in all publicly funded boards in Ontario” (OESC Symposium, 2011). As an economic actor, the OESC has been involved in the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policy by providing resources to school boards and education authorities to limit the financial strain that PPM No. 119 (2009) might place on school boards.

**Synopsis.** In exploring the economic context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009), particular attention was paid to the role of economic ideologies in shaping education policy. A particular focus was the role of neoliberalism and the *Common Sense Revolution* under Mike Harris’ Progressive Conservative government between 1995 and 2003. Many of
the tenets associated with neoliberalism surfaced throughout documents collected from the federal and provincial government as well as the Ontario Ministry of Education. Few economic actors were directly involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy; therefore, the role of the Ontario Education Services Corporation was a secondary focus of this section.

**Summary.** The purpose of this chapter was to synthesize the data collected from various documents in order to document the macro-level contextual forces that have shaped the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). This chapter focused on the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces; and, where collected documents permit, identified the ideas, actors, and institutions responsible for shaping these contextual forces.

First, the ideological analysis illustrated the enduring nature of the ideology of liberal multiculturalism in public policy and its application as an ideological foundation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Second, a demographic portrait of diversity in Canada pointed to cultural, linguistic, and religious diversification as a socio-cultural trend to which schools across Ontario are forced to respond. The role of various socio-cultural groups as important stakeholders in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, was discussed, including AMENO, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, People for Education, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, and Egale Canada. Third, the political processes that led to the development of equity and inclusive education policy were presented, including historical developments as well as the role of the professional education associations, the Ontario provincial government under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Ministry of
Education led by Kathleen Wynne. Fourth, the legislative context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario was explored, including legislation from the federal and provincial government. Particularly relevant was education legislation and policy directives from the Ministry of Education that shaped the ideologies embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009). Finally, the economic context from which equity and inclusive education developed in Ontario paid particular attention to the role of neoliberalism and the *Common Sense Revolution* under Mike Harris’ Progressive Conservative government between 1995 and 2003. During this period, a series of new ideologies governing education policy and practice in Ontario emerged, including standardization, accountability, commercialization, and capitalizing on diversity.
Chapter 5

Discussion

Introduction

Qualitative research is conducted for a variety of reasons. This study has been primarily descriptive in its aims; the collection and analysis of documents has illuminated themes, patterns, and relationships in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). This study contributes to the field of educational policy studies by providing insights into the context and processes from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario. To begin, this chapter provides an overview of the study, including the purpose and research questions that guided this study as well as a summary of the methodological processes used in the collection and analysis of data. The primary focus of this chapter is a thematic and theoretical analysis that connects the findings of the study to the literature that was used to frame this study. The ideological evolution and underpinnings of equity in education, the stakeholders involved in creating the ideological focus on equity that was embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009), and the political processes that led to the release of PPM No. 119 (2009) are thematically explored in this chapter. Based on this discussion, a series of implications for policy, practice, theory, methodology, and further research are made. In so far as policy informs, and to some extent dictates, the boundaries of practice, these insights can also be applied to the field of multicultural education in Ontario to understand its historical development as well as its achievements and shortcomings through a policy lens. This chapter concludes with an afterword where I comment on my journey as researcher.
Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the development of policy as documented in *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools (PPM No. 119)*. The central aim of this research study was to describe the broad context within which PPM No. 119 (2009) was developed by identifying the macro level forces that led to its creation; this included a focus on ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces, and how these forces related to and shaped one another. This study sought to identify the stakeholders, and the ideas they hold regarding equity and inclusion, that were most instrumental in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as presented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

The following research questions were used to guide the study, providing greater clarity and focus:

1. What ideological conceptions of equity and inclusion were embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009)?
2. Who were the different stakeholders who acted as the driving forces or as the restraining forces in the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009)?
3. What elements of the socio-cultural context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?
4. What factors in the political context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?
5. What legal frameworks have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

6. What factors in the economic context have encouraged or inhibited the development of policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009) and why?

Broad ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic changes most often have significant impact at the government level, requiring that policies change accordingly; therefore, this study incorporated a qualitative approach in order to help me understand the impact of these broad macro-level changes on the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Furthermore, a qualitative approach allowed me to document the role of actors, ideas, and institutions, representing both driving and restraining forces, at different stages during the policymaking process.

Document analysis was the primary method I used to investigate the data. This study focused on the collection of official documents; both informal documents such as memoranda and position papers and external communication documents such as school board publications and policy directives from the Ministry of Education were collected. Documents represented both the national and provincial levels of policymaking. First, documents were collected from the federal government, including publications from the Department of Canadian Heritage, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Statistics Canada. Second, documents were collected at the provincial level, including publications, position statements, memoranda, and policy directives from the Ministry of Education, a variety of provincial education associations, and regional stakeholder groups. As well, legislative documents were collected from the federal and provincial level.
The process of analyzing collected documents was complex, involving the creation of matrices for each contextual force identified above to store and sort collected data. The overall goal during the process of data analysis was to gain an understanding of the stakeholders, and the ideas they hold regarding equity and inclusion, that were most instrumental in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). Two units of analysis were used during data analysis to identify relevant ideas, actors, and institutions in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. First, various themes, composed of words or simple sentences were identified in various documents including multiculturalism, equity, inclusion, respect, diversity, accountability, safe schools, school climate, excellence, and community. This process of coding allowed me to identify the ideological foundations that informed the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Using character as a second unit of analysis allowed me to identify a particular actor or group of actors involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009).

**Thematic Analysis**

*Multiculturalism.* The analysis illustrated that multiculturalism, as an ideology, is an important discourse in Canadian society that reaches many political and social institutions in its influence. Documents collected from government agencies such as the Department of Canadian Heritage and Citizenship and Immigration Canada as well as legislation such as the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* are evidence of the institutionalization of multiculturalism in Canada. The ideologies of liberal multiculturalism including respect, acceptance, and
inclusion were identified by Fleras and Elliott (1999) in the literature as a focus of multiculturalism policy and practice in Canada. These ideas served as the focus of Trudeau’s first official policy of multiculturalism and are also represented in official laws and policies such as the multiculturalism clause of the Charter and the Multiculturalism Act. According to the analysis, the Multiculturalism Act required the government of Canada to “encourage and assist the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada’s multicultural character.” Documents collected from Citizenship and Immigration Canada expressed the hope that multiculturalism will promote respect for and acceptance of difference, uniting Canadians through their diversity to create an inclusive community. These ideas are also being reproduced within the education system. Supporting the arguments made by Joshee (2004) and Ghosh and Abdi (2004), the analysis exhibited the influence of liberal multiculturalism as an ideology influencing the development of public policy broadly, and also education policy. Joshee (2004) emphasized the role of the federal government, which assumes responsibility in education for issues that fall under the umbrella of national interest; this includes policy and programming related to multicultural education. Ghosh and Abdi (2004) cautioned that this involvement has only resulted in the slow and uneven implementation of multiculturalism policy and programming in the education system.

The classification scheme presented by Fleras and Elliott (1999) in the review of literature described multiculturalism as a practice as well as a public policy. According to them, multiculturalism as a practice highlights the role of policy actors in constructing multiculturalism as a renewable resource with economic and political potential. The
analysis chronicled that the conceptualization of multiculturalism as a practice took shape across Canadian institutions from the 1980s forward, but also that this conceptualization served as the rationale for the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002) contended that during the neoliberal period, multiculturalism was constructed as a business strategy, an idea first articulated by Mulroney and subsequently employed by the Chretien government. Mitchell (1993) maintained that multiculturalism, when employed as a business strategy, would attract global investors and their capital to Canada, now constructed as a hospitable investment environment. The analysis provided more examples of this theme: documents collected from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage spoke to the direction of Canada in capitalizing on its diversity.

Multiculturalism as a practice, along with the construction of diversity as an avenue for political and economic prosperity, was adopted as the ideological rationale supporting the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Bureaucrats and policy advisors at the Ministry of Education constructed Ontario’s diversity as an exploitable resource. This construction served as the rationale for and driving force in the development of equity and inclusive education policy. According to PPM No. 119 (2009), “our schools need to help students develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, and caring citizens who can contribute to both a strong economy and a cohesive society” (OME, 2009c, p. 2). The conceptualization of diversity as a political and economic resource was also presented in Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (the Strategy document) and Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (the
Guidelines document). Equity and inclusive education are constructed as an opportunity to capitalize on diversity, a key element in creating a politically active and economically productive citizenry.

**Equity.** An important theme presented in the literature review was the shortcomings of the federal policy of multiculturalism as a mechanism for creating equity in Ontario’s education system. Numerous scholars have insisted upon the inadequacy of Canada’s federal policy on multiculturalism in combating prejudice and discrimination in school, evidenced by a Eurocentric curriculum, the streaming of at-risk students into applied settings, and increased dropout rates among racialized students (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Harper, 1997; James, 2007); hence the shift from multiculturalism to equity. Banks (2009) defined multicultural education as “an approach to school reform designed to actualize educational equity for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social-class, and linguistic groups” (p. 13). While liberal ideologies have influenced multiculturalism policy and programming, the theme of equity seems to have emerged as the ideological foundation of the policy and practice of multicultural education in Ontario.

The analysis distinguished between the ideology of liberal multiculturalism, and the more critical conception of equity. Equity is constructed as a more critical conception in comparison to the ideology of liberal multiculturalism by recognizing that prejudice and discrimination are systemic and political problems of unequal power relations. This has shifted the focus of education policy in Ontario: PPM No. 119 (2009) recognized the intersectionality of socially constructed forms of difference and the institutional barriers inherent in Ontario’s education system as a result. In this way, the focus on equity at the
Ministry of Education reflected the concerns and definitions offered by Banks (2009), who observed that the actualization of educational equity for students required an acknowledgement of a variety of diversities not simply those related to culture, ethnicity, or race. PM No. 119 (2009) recognized, “a wide range of human qualities within a group, organization, or society...not limited to ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status” (OME, 2009c, p. 9). The policy directive highlighted the importance of recognizing these aspects of diversity as the distinguishing factor between equality and equity. PPM No. 119 (2009) stated that “equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences” (PPM No. 119, 2009, p. 9).

Furthermore, PPM No. 119 (2009) acknowledged the intersecting factors of race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, gender, and class that create institutional biases and barriers to the achievement of equity for all students.

The documents collected from the Ministry of Education, including both PPM No. 119 (1993, 2009), the Strategy document, and the Guidelines document demonstrated that the Ministry of Education was attempting to move beyond a focus on multiculturalism and race relations to “a system-wide approach to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to help ensure that all students feel welcomed and accepted in school life” (OME, 2009c, p. 3). This system-wide approach and the acknowledgement of institutional barriers to equity offered by the Ministry of Education in PPM No. 119 (2009) were echoed by a variety of stakeholders during the agenda-setting and policy formulation stages. EGALE Canada urged the systemic approach to equity by highlighting the intersectionality of discrimination. AMENO also
recommended a systemic approach to creating equity in the education system through the establishment of an equity office staffed with equity personnel, opportunities for professional development, the creation of an equitable curriculum, and accountability measures, all supported by increased funding from the Ministry of Education. The systemic approach to equity was also evident in the Multiculturalism Act that officially accepted the existence of systemic barriers that prevent the equal participation of all people or groups in Canadian society, calling on the government of Canada to “promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation.” This vision of equity offers possible avenues for deconstructing the discourse of multiculturalism and dismantling the institutional structures that support democratic racism.

However, the analysis communicated that, according to various policy documents collected from the Ministry of Education, equity is constructed as a necessary condition to meet the three core priorities for public education in Ontario: high levels of student achievement, reduced gaps in achievement, and increased public confidence in the public education system. As stated in PPM No. 119 (2009), “an equitable, inclusive education system is fundamental to achieving these core priorities, and is recognized internationally as critical to delivering a high-quality education for all learners” (OME, 2009c, p. 1). Furthermore, the first of the eight guiding principles presented in PPM No. 119 (2009) stated that equity and inclusive education are a foundation of excellence. Documents collected from the Ministry of Education traced a definite connection between equity and
excellence, leaving one to question whether or not equity is constructed as a vehicle for achieving excellence in education and increased student achievement.

Sergiovanni, Kelleher, McCarthy, and Fowler (2009) described the four values that influence the development of education policy: equity, efficiency, choice, and excellence. These four values “exist in a constant state of tension, so that too much emphasis on any one hinders expression of each of the other three” (p. 7). The authors maintain that equity and excellence are competing values. According to Ghosh and Abdi (2004), “policy makers have created a false dichotomy between equity and equality, and have often aimed at achieving one at the expense of the other” (p. 49). This study provided empirical evidence of the inherent conflict between equity and excellence during the development of education policy.

**Democratic racism.** Henry and Tator (1999) and Henry et al. (1999) identified the existence of democratic racism in Canada as an invisible system of domination and exclusion that operates on the social construction of difference. This powerful system is culturally reproduced through behaviours, texts, and images across Canada’s institutions and is upheld through laws and policies related to multiculturalism. Despite shifting formulations over the past few decades, from a focus on cultural pluralism, respect for diversity, inclusion, and most recently equity, multiculturalism remains a normative aspect of Canadian identity, society, and public policy. Mackey (1999) explored the ramifications of symbolic multiculturalism in creating normative categories of identity including, but not limited to white, masculine, heterosexual, Christian, and English-speaking, that perpetuate democratic racism.
The findings revealed the role of liberal multiculturalism in influencing the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, despite a simultaneous shift to equity as the ideological foundation of education policy and systemic approaches to the realization of equity in the education system. The analysis documented that equity and inclusive education policy as embodied in PPM No. 119 (2009) included liberal conceptions of multiculturalism such as respect, acceptance, and inclusion. Alongside the rhetoric of equity, PPM No. 119 (2009) included a focus on respecting diversity and promoting inclusion and provided a definition of the practice of inclusive education based on the principles of “acceptance and inclusion of all students” (OME, 2009c, p. 9). The focus on equity in the policy documents collected from the Ministry of Education, most notably the Strategy document and PPM No. 119 (2009), is overshadowed by the continued presence of ideologies of liberal multiculturalism. In terms of the ideological underpinnings of the policy document, as well as the type of education practice it advocates, the analysis has pointed out that despite a shift in focus to equity, conceptions of liberal multiculturalism continue to influence the policy and practice of multicultural education in Ontario. This finding is consistent with the concern that the federal policy of multiculturalism is inadequate “in combating racism, addressing diversity, and creating equity in schools” (Joshee & Johnson, 2005, p. 54). Ghosh and Abdi (2004) asserted that for education policy to be successful in creating an equitable education system, policy directives must acknowledge the social construction of diversity and its impact on identity formation, student learning, and achievement. The authors argued that the achievement of equity in the education system requires adopting the pedagogical concept of empowerment, “creating conditions that allow for the transformation of students’
potential power to activity or empowerment. It suggests learning as a process of inquiry and discovery, where knowledge is regarded as something that can be personally acquired, not given as a fixed entity” (p. 78). However, if these goals remain framed within the discourse of liberal multiculturalism, the achievement of equity may continue to evade Ontario’s education system.

**Theoretical Analysis**

**Force field analysis.** The force field analysis framework was used in this study as a theoretical tool to understand various elements in the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic context, as both driving and restraining forces in the development of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). More specifically, in the policy process, macro-level contextual forces are shaped by idea sets, stakeholders, and institutional arrangements that can be represented as driving forces in the development of specific policies. Lewin (1947) articulated that social change resulted when the driving forces exceeded the restraining forces and could be understood through a three-step model involving unfreezing the current condition, where social change takes place, and refreezing the new social condition to reinforce the desired change. The analysis conceptualized social change as the issuance of PPM No. 119 (2009) and explored the various forces that contributed to unfreezing and refreezing the status quo. Applying Lewin’s three-step model of social change to the development of equity and inclusive education policy allowed me to conceptualize the macro-level contextual forces, as well as the ideas, actors, and institutions that shaped these forces through their role as agents in creating the conditions for unfreezing and refreezing the status quo during the process of policy development. Lewin’s framework for explaining
social change is used to conceptualize the role of multiculturalism legislation, Ministry of Education initiatives such as antiracism and ethnocultural equity, safe schools, and the Strategy document as factors that contributed to the unfreezing of the status quo.

The entrenchment of multiculturalism policy through legislation, evidenced by the inclusion of a multiculturalism clause in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the institutionalization of multiculturalism in the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, are examples of legislation that contributed to unfreezing the social condition contributing to the development of equity and inclusive education policy. During this period, for many racialized communities, “the need for dismantling racial barriers to opportunity or inclusion was more important than the celebration of their cultural differences” (Fleras & Elliott, p. 303). An earlier focus on cultural recognition and preservation was replaced with a commitment to equity and social justice, to be achieved through the removal of discriminatory institutional barriers preventing the realization of social participation of all, this included the education system. This new focus for multiculturalism in Canada was echoed two decades later in the Ministry’s equity and inclusive education initiative that will “identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to student achievement. These barriers – related to racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination – may prevent some students from reaching their full potential” (OME, April 8, 2009).

In 1993, the Ministry of Education released *PPM No. 119: Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Development and Implementation*. This policy acknowledged the limitations of the Ontario education system, which reflected a European perspective in terms of curricular content as well as teaching and
learning practices. According to the policy directive, the exclusion of Aboriginal and racial and ethnocultural minority groups’ values, experiences, and beliefs from the education system was a serious problem facing Ontario’s education system, and “constitutes a systemic barrier to success for students from those groups and often produces inequitable outcomes for them” (OME, 1993, p. 5). Chan (2007) and Dei (2003) argued that although the policy was only marginally successful, it did highlight issues of inequity in Ontario’s education system and, can therefore be conceptualized as one of the conditions that led to the unfreezing of the status quo, contributing to the development of PPM No. 119 (2009) nearly fifteen years later.

While the release of PPM No. 119 (1993) marked the point at which equity issues in education first appeared on the Ministry’s radar, the safe schools initiative at the Ministry of Education is understood as a continuation of this trend. According to the analysis, the ideas expressed in the safe schools initiative, embodied in Ministry of Education documents including Bill 212, PPM No. 144 (2009), and PPM No. 145 (2009), were remarkably consistent with the ideological foundation of equity and inclusive education policy as documented in PPM No. 119 (2009). The term inclusion appeared throughout many of the documents associated with the safe schools initiative from the Ministry of Education and was also explicitly embedded in equity education policy, appearing in the titles of all equity education documents produced by the Ministry of Education. Documents collected from the Ministry of Education evidenced the idea of inclusion as an integral aspect of creating a safe school climate, “everyone in the school community benefits from a school environment that is safe, accepting, and respectful” (OME, 2009g, p. 2). The Ministry focused on safe schools prior to its focus on equity
and inclusion. Because there is great consistency between the two initiatives, the safe
schools initiative is conceptualized as one of the factors that led to the unfreezing of the
status quo creating the ideological foundation for the development of equity and inclusive
education policy.

The Strategy document, released two months prior to the issuance of PPM No.
119 (2009), is also understood as one of the factors that led to the unfreezing of the status
quo. The Strategy document provided a rational for the development of equity and
inclusive education centered around the importance of inclusion stating that “student
achievement will improve when barriers to inclusion are identified and removed and
when all students are respected and see themselves reflected in their learning and their
environment” (OME, 2009g, p. 2). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education expressed
that “embracing diversity and moving beyond tolerance to acceptance and respect will
help us reach our goal of making Ontario’s education system the most inclusive in the
world” (OME, 2009g, p. 2), where the word inclusion meant that “students see
themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broad
environment” (OME, 2009g, p. 4). The release of the Strategy document was evidence
that issues of equity and inclusion in Ontario’s education system had become a point of
concern and something to which the Ministry would respond through the issuance of a
policy directive.

Refreezing the social condition following the release of the equity and inclusive
education policy directive helped to reinforce the ideas and initiatives presented in PPM
No. 119 (2009). The analysis identified the role of the Ministry of Education, the
Guidelines document, various professional education associations including the OTF and
the OCT, the Ontario Education Services Corporation, and the Ontario Human Rights Commission, who all provided resources to support the implementation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario.

Following the release of PPM No. 119 (2009), the Ministry of Education released the Guidelines document. According to the analysis, this document provided school boards with guidelines and resources when developing, implementing, and reviewing equity and inclusive education policy. Half of the total pages in the document provided commentary related to implementation and monitoring as well as appendices that provided school boards, schools, educators, and support staff with the resources necessary to ensure that equity and inclusive education policies were implemented across boards and within schools and classrooms.

The role of various professional educational associations, as agents involved in refreezing the status quo following the issuance of PPM No. 119 (2009), must not go understated. First, the OTF created the Safe@School project which provided educators with resources and professional development training to ensure that the principles of equity and inclusion were incorporated into schools and classrooms from curriculum to assessment and evaluation practices. Second, the OCT responded to PPM No. 119 (2009) with the Inclusive Classroom Specialist AQ also designed to provide educational leaders and teachers with the knowledge and skills to create inclusive education environments. Third, the Ontario Principals’ Council created a variety of resources related to equity inclusion to assist education leaders in ensuring that Ontario’s education system reflects the principles of equity and inclusion. Alongside organizations representing the interests of education leader and teachers, the Ontario Education
Services Corporation was an active driving force in refreezing the social condition to ensure the implementation of PPM No. 119 (2009). Through the creation of resources and policy templates as well as hosting symposia, the OESC has provided school boards across Ontario with the necessary support, at no additional cost, to develop and implement equity and inclusive education policies that are consistent with the vision expressed in the Strategy document and meet the requirements laid out in PPM No. 119 (2009). The Ontario Human Rights Commission pledged their support and commitment to ensuring the implementation of PPM No. 119 (2009) through continued collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the OESC, and regional equity and inclusive education networks.

One of the important themes that emerged from many of the collected documents, including recommendations made by stakeholder groups as well as referenced in Ministry of Education documents, was accountability. Stakeholder groups such as AMENO articulated that accountability was a necessary condition in equity and inclusive education policy established through the creation of specific goals and measured through accountability audits. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education articulated that accountability was one of the core priorities of the equity and inclusive education strategy, stating that “accountability and transparency will be demonstrated through the use of clear measures of success (based on established indicators) and through communication to the public of our progress towards achieving equity for all students” (OME, 2009g, p. 12). According to documents collected from various stakeholder groups and the Ministry of Education, the proposed system of accountability must also include members of the broad community. Recommendations from AMENO, People for
Education, and the *For Love of Learning* report from the Royal Commission on Learning specifically mentioned the importance of engaging with the broad community when developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policy. This recommendation was eventually included in the guiding principles of PPM No. 119 (2009), which stated that equity and inclusive education involves the broad community.

The theme of accountability and the establishment of accountability measures are important agents in refreezing the status quo following the issuance of PPM No. 119 (2009) to ensure its implementation.

**The policy cycle and the policy subsystem.** I used the policymaking cycle in this study to provide a framework for understanding the different stages involved in developing public policy. This allowed for an investigation into any one stage or in terms of its relationship to other stages. This study focused on the first three stages of the policymaking cycle: agenda-setting, where a wide range of policy actors are involved; policy formulation, where a smaller subset of policy actors is involved; and decision-making, where only a few authoritative government decision-makers are involved. This theoretical framework provided an understanding of the influence of various actors in each stage of the policy cycle during the development of equity and inclusive education policy. I now explore the findings from the analysis as they pertain to these stages of the policy cycle.

The analysis conveyed the role of many different actors and organizations that were involved in the process of agenda-setting by urging that equity and inclusive education was a pertinent issue in Ontario that required government attention. AMENO and People for Education, identified as important socio-cultural stakeholder groups, both
advocated for an equitable and inclusive education system in Ontario. As a network organization, AMENO sought to replace institutional barriers to equal education access and outcomes with an inclusive education community for all students. People for Education maintained that a publicly funded education system in Ontario must be culturally responsive in terms of curriculum and pedagogy to ensure equitable access and outcomes for all students. Furthermore, People for Education recognized that schools and classrooms across Ontario are currently unable to provide equity and inclusion.

The analysis of the political context from which equity and inclusive education policy developed in Ontario highlighted the role of numerous professional education associations in the development of PPM No. 119 (2009). While many of these organizations were involved in the implementation of equity and inclusive education policy, documents collected from OPSOA and OPC clearly show that these two organizations were involved in the stage of agenda-setting. Since 2005, OPSOA had advocated for equity and inclusion in Ontario’s education system by identifying key issues such as antiracism, poverty, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, hate crimes, and accessibility. In 2008, the OPC hosted the Education Leadership Canada Symposium on Human Rights, Antiracism and Cultural Proficiency.

The political processes that contributed to the development of equity and inclusive education policy included a consideration of the role of Stephen Lewis’ report on race relations and the report from the Royal Commission on Learning that highlighted the issue of equity in Ontario’s education system. Lewis’ report voiced the concerns of students who faced inequity and marginalization in the education system. The report from the Royal Commission on Learning, expressed the importance of equity in the
education system by committing a full chapter to equity considerations. The recommendations contained in these reports influenced the development of PPM No. 119 (1993); its limited success would place issues of equity in the education system back on the political agenda over a decade later.

Perhaps the most influential figure involved in placing the issue of equity on the government’s formal agenda was Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne. To understand the significance of Wynne’s contributions to the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario, I present the concept of the policy window from Kingdon (1984) to explain “the role played by policy entrepreneurs both inside and outside of government in constructing and utilizing agenda-setting opportunities – labeled policy windows – to bring issues onto government agendas” (Howlett et al., 2009, p. 103). Kingdon categorized four types of policy windows; particularly relevant for this study is the discretionary political window, which acknowledges “the behaviour of individual political actors leads to less predictable window openings” (p. 105). Despite a thorough discussion of the multitude of factors that led to the development of PPM No. 119 (2009), the policy window provides an account of the role of Kathleen Wynne as instrumental in placing the issue of equity on the government’s agenda and shaping the content of PPM No. 119 (2009) through her actions at the Ministry of Education.

As the policy cycle shifted from agenda-setting to policy formulation, a smaller subset of policy actors and organizations was involved in presenting possible solutions to the issue of equity and inclusion in Ontario’s education system. According to the analysis, AMENO, represented by the Equity Summit Group, and People for Education were the most prominent stakeholder groups involved in this process. Many of the
recommendations offered by AMENO and People for Education were subsequently reflected in PPM No. 119 (2009). AMENO’s recommendations included a general concern to broaden the scope of PPM No. 119 (1993) in so far as the realization of equity in education required a more systemic approach. This would be achieved, AMENO argued, through: the provision of professional development to educators; resources for education leaders responsible for drafting and implementing equity and inclusive education policy; and the establishment of accountability measures, including the hiring of equity personnel, and the use of equity audits necessitating boards to set goals and report on results. According to AMENO, the realization of this systemic approach to equity required that these recommendations be supported and funded by the Ministry of Education. People for Education, in their 2009 report, recommended that the province develop a provincial framework for equity, requiring school boards to respond with local policies. Moreover, the organization urged that schools engage with the broad community when developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies. Policy actors such as Stephen Lewis and the Royal Commission on Learning also offered recommendations for the development of equity and inclusive education policy, most notably, the monitoring of equity and inclusive policy by equity personnel and a review of the curriculum so as to reflect the diversities in Ontario schools. The recommendations presented by Lewis and the Royal Commission were made prior to the development of PPM No. 119 (2009), and therefore, likely had a greater influence on the development of the first iteration of PPM No. 119 (1993).

Finally, the analysis confirmed that the stage of decision-making involved only the authoritative government decision-makers, notably those policy actors and
bureaucrats at the Ministry of Education, including Education Minister Kathleen Wynne, her advisors Avis Glaze and Karen Mock, and members of the Inclusive Education Branch led by director Ruth Flynn. Documents collected from stakeholder groups as well as memoranda issued from the Ministry of Education demonstrated the involvement of different policy actors and stakeholder groups during the process of policy formulation, as evidenced by the Ministry’s call for input during early stages of policy development. Despite the illusion of an inclusive policymaking process, the release of the Strategy document, PPM No. 119 (2009), and the Guidelines document showed that the ultimate decision of what would be included and excluded from PPM No. 119 (2009) were ultimately the decision of Wynne’s policy advisors and the Inclusive Education Branch.

**Implications**

Research should provide implications for: a) *policy*, to inform the actions of policy makers during the stages of development and implementation; b) *practice*, to draw connections between the directives issued in policy statements and the realities faced by educators in the classroom; c) *theory*, to contribute to the academic literature in the field of education policy by providing real world insights into the process of policy development; d) *methodology*, to strengthen qualitative approaches to the collection and analysis of data in the field of education policy development and analysis; and/or, e) *further research*, to explore new research questions that have risen from the present study. The purpose of this section is to present a series of implications based on the themes, patterns, and relationships discussed above. I present implications that have emerged from this study in five broad areas: policy, practice, theory, methodology, and further research.
Policy. According to the literature review, Joshee (2004) argued that two tensions characterize the development of education policy in Canada. First, while education is formally a provincial responsibility, federal legislation in the area of multiculturalism has shaped the types of options available to education policymakers at the provincial and territorial level. Second, while the task of developing education policy falls under the jurisdiction of provincial ministries, the far more complex task of implementing policy is left to school boards. In support of the arguments presented in the literature by Egbo (2009) and Ghosh and Abdi (2004), the analysis confirmed that one of the greatest shortcomings of the federal policy on multiculturalism has been its slow and uneven implementation in education. Despite the hegemony of multiculturalism as a discourse in Canadian public policy and a number of well-intentioned models of multicultural education, schools continually fail to embody this ideology in a meaningful way and, therefore, remain dominant sites for the perpetuation of prejudice, discrimination, and systemic inequalities (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Harper, 1997; James, 2007).

This study has shed light on a third tension that characterizes the development and implementation of education policy, that is, the tension between school boards and schools. The policy approach mandated by PPM No. 119 (2009) required the creation of board-wide policies on equity and inclusion. Board-wide policies fail to account for the diversities among schools in a given district, diversities related to language, religion, culture, ethnicity, race, and socio-economic status among others. Such a policy approach to achieving equity in Ontario’s education system assumed a degree of uniformity in schools across a given district, an assumption that seems to inherently contradict the ideological foundation of equity that is embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009).
PPM No. 119 (2009), school board policies on equity and inclusion were required to include a focus on eight areas, including school-community relations, inclusive curriculum and assessment practices, and school climate. These three areas of focus relate directly to daily activities within a school, where the diversities among different schools within one board may not necessarily be reflected in board-wide equity policies. An equity education policy created by leaders at the district level cannot necessarily reflect the identities, values, and experiences of all students across a given school board. This study has illustrated that, for education policy to truly achieve equitable access and outcomes for all students, it must acknowledge the social construction of difference and its impact on student learning and achievement. It is therefore recommended that the process of policy development be more inclusive of actors at the school level, not just the district level. The values, beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of principals, educators, and support staff must be made more visible during the process of policy development. It is important that the concerns and recommendations expressed by these groups influence the stages of agenda-setting, policy formulation, and decision-making. Principals, equity personnel, and teachers must be given more power to influence the development and implementation of locally-responsive equity education policies that take into account the diversities experienced by students in a particular school. Equity policy must be more nuanced so as to reflect the diversities experienced at the school level; this requires a greater degree of local ownership during the process of policy development.

While this study reported that a variety of stakeholder groups were involved in the process of agenda-setting and policy formulation, the ultimate stage of policy development was tightly controlled by a small group of authoritative decision-makers at
the Ministry of Education. This analysis has illuminated the ways in which the process of policy development is a hierarchical exercise, an exercise of the power of the dominant groups in society. Despite recommendations that the broad community be engaged in the process of policy development, the Ministry controlled this process and mandated that authorities at the school board level were responsible for developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies. Even at the stage of agenda-setting and policy formulation, where a greater number of stakeholder groups were involved, students were rarely represented in these groups. The process of developing education policy in Ontario should in itself be a more inclusive process where the identities, values, beliefs, and experiences of the broader community, and in particular, students, are also reflected. The question remains to be answered as to whether a hierarchical process of policymaking can result in the realization of equity in Ontario’s education system.

**Practice.** This study focused on education policy; hence, the practice of multicultural education was outside the scope of this study. Despite this fact, it is still necessary to reflect on the findings of this research study and the implications for education practice. Harper (1997) and Joshee (2004) observed that a variety of different forms of multicultural education has been practiced in Ontario, and often that different forms of multicultural education are linked to particular policy directives. For example, socio-cultural changes such as increased immigration and ethnocultural diversification became more pronounced beginning in the 1980s and 1990s and resulted in shifts in education policy as evidenced by the release of PPM No. 119 (1993). Harper (1997) reported that this policy directive was linked to the rise of antiracism education during the 1990s. Education policy directives issued from the Ministry of Education aim to
influence the practice of education in Ontario. PPM No. 119 (2009), for example, sought to influence the practice of education in Ontario schools and classrooms through pedagogy, school culture, curriculum, and assessment practices that were equitable and inclusive. Although equity education policy has been legislated through PPM No. 119 (2009), Ontario’s education system perpetuates inequities and the existence of prejudice and discrimination (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; James, 2007). Further research is needed in the area of multicultural education to understand the delicate relationship between policy and practice, and how the principles of equity and inclusion embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009) can be more effectively translated into practice. It is therefore recommended that multicultural education be redefined to ensure that “all students are empowered (through the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values) to participate with confidence as informed citizens” (Ghosh, 2002, p. 15). This transformation of multicultural education will involve deeper shifts than can be provided through policy change, but necessarily begins with a more inclusive approach to policy development. The renewed practice of multicultural education must involve a redefinition of all aspects of education including curriculum, school climate, assessment and evaluation, teacher-student relationships, administrative concerns, and the politics of education to reflect the views, beliefs, and experiences of those who have traditionally and historically been marginalized by Ontario’s education system. Redefining multicultural education necessarily involves a reconceptualization of multicultural education as an act of empowerment, “conceptualized from within, that is, from within the suggestions of students, parents and school staff” (p. 69).
It is equally important to offer a series of pragmatic recommendations to inform the practice of multicultural education. These recommendations focus on three categories: addressing personal bias, curriculum, and community engagement. First, teachers and administrators must “acknowledge and address personal biases which are influenced and sustained by liberal ideology; as these biases inhibit the creation of a truly inclusive space for racialized students in the classroom” (Moreno, 2010, p. 69). Self-reflection is a key element in the “unraveling of embedded prejudices and internalized racism” (Moreo, 2010, p. 69). More specifically, traditional teacher-centered pedagogical approaches must be deconstructed: “It is essential to remove oppressive hierarchies in the classroom in order to have a dedicated commitment to racial and cultural inclusivity in education” (Moreno, 2010, p. 70). Second, a complete revision of the curriculum has previously been identified as an important step in redefining multicultural education. Issues of representation are of paramount concern in the practice of multicultural education; an inclusive curriculum would require that “the dominant curriculum be reconstructed so that it represents the interests of all children” (Agyepong, 2010, p. 79). Third, for the practice of multicultural education to achieve more equitable outcomes, curriculum and pedagogy must be representative of the local community. Educators and administrators must find ways to engage with students, caregivers, and community members in the practice of multicultural education:

Teachers trained in anti-racism education should be able to recognize students, parents and community workers and caregivers as genuine partners in the production and dissemination of school and social knowledge. Local community knowledge is an important pedagogical tool and source of cultural information which educators can tap for the benefit of their students and the schools. (Agyepong, 2010, p. 80)
A redefined multicultural education aimed at empowerment, in conjunction with the pragmatic recommendations for practice, offers the potential for the achievement of equity in Ontario’s education system.

**Theory.** This study has brought to light the range of actors and stakeholder groups who were involved in the development of equity and inclusive education policy, through an examination of the ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic context from which policy developed. The theoretical framework of the policymaking cycle presented by Howlett et al. (2009) guided this study by segmenting the complex process of policymaking into five different stages. Although this study was limited insofar as it explored only the first three stages in this cycle, it made clear the extent to which the policymaking cycle, as a theoretical framework, pays too little attention to the concept of power and the ways in which power influences the development of policy. This study found that policy directives must acknowledge the social construction of difference and its impact on student learning and achievement as well as the accompanying power relationships that this construction creates and reinforces. Just as the construction of difference is a political project that reinforces the power of dominant groups in society, so too is the development and implementation of public policy. Theoretical frameworks, such as the policymaking cycle, that attempt to explain the development of public policy must provide an account of the power struggles that are inherent in the process of policymaking.

It is necessary to move from the policy cycle framework to specific theories that inform each stage in the cycle. In conjunction with other theories, the policy subsystem was a theory that informed some of the stages of the policymaking cycle; explored here is
the theory of the policy subsystem as applied to the stage of agenda-setting as well as incrementalism and the decision accretion model as applied to the stage decision-making.

The stage of agenda-setting involves the movement of an issue from the informal public agenda to the formal state agenda. The nature of the policy subsystem is critical in this process, contingent upon the complex relationships between policy actors, the ideas they hold, and the institutions within which they operate. According to the theory of agenda-setting presented by Kingdon (1995) as quoted in Howlett et al. (2009):

[T]he nature of the actors initiating policy discussions and whether the structures within which they operate allow new ideas to come forward are the most important determinants of the movement of public problems from the informal agenda to the state’s institutional agenda. (p. 108)

This study illustrated that a competitive subsystem at the agenda-setting stage, including a variety of socio-cultural stakeholders and the presence of new ideas surrounding equity were instrumental in ensuring that equity and inclusive education were placed on the government’s agenda and would move forward for consideration during the stage of policy formulation.

Public policy decision-making is often described as the most political stage of the policymaking cycle. Early theories of decision-making distinguished between rationalism and incrementalism. The incremental model was pioneered by Lindblom during the 1950s and 1960s. According to this model, decision-making involved small degrees of change; “decisions thus arrived at are usually only marginally different from those that exist. In other words, the changes from the status-quo in decision-making are incremental.” (Howlett, et al., 2009, p. 147) As described in the analysis, the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario was characterized as an incremental process. For example, the analysis discussed the continued presence of ideas
of liberal multiculturalism embedded in PPM No. 119 (2009) alongside more critical conceptions of equity. PPM No. 119 (2009) did not represent a drastic departure from previous education policies; rather, it was supposed to “broaden the scope of the previous Policy/Program Memorandum 119 (1993) to take into account a broad range of equity factors” (OME, 2009c, p. 3). Similar to the concept of incrementalism, more recently, the decision accretion model of decision-making was presented by Weiss (1980) as quoted in Howlett et al. (2009). According to the decision accretion model:

\[
\text{[M]any decisions, from the momentus to the inane, are actually taken piecemeal, without any overall plan of attack or conscious deliberation, but rather appear more like a pearl in an oyster, having been accreted in multiple layers over a relatively lengthy period of time through the actions of multiple decision-makers. (p. 153)}
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This model of decision-making provided insights into the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. The actions of many different decision-makers influenced the development of PPM No. 119 (2009), including decision-makers involved in the development of PPM No. 119 (1993), and decision-makers at the Ministry of Education including Kathleen Wynne, advisors Avis Glaze and Karen Mock, and members of the Inclusive Education Branch led by director Ruth Flynn. PPM No. 119 (2009) is conceptualized as an expansion of the ideas that underpinned and principles that guided PPM No. 119 (1993). These theoretical approaches to decision-making, as less rational, and more incremental, adequately account for the role of past legislation from the federal and provincial government as well as the Ministry of Education, the numerous, sometimes disjointed groups of stakeholders, and the socio-cultural demographic trends that led to the development of PPM No. 119 (2009).
As a theoretical framework, force field analysis conceptualized the role of various policy actors, their ideas, and the institutions that drive or restrain their behaviour, as creating the conditions for social change, in this case, the development of equity and inclusive education policy. This study applied the theory of force field analysis to the study of education policy in order to understand the dynamic macro-level processes that influence policy development. Force field analysis supported the conceptualization of the policymaking cycle as not simply an economic process, but one that results from the complex interactions of ideological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic forces.

**Methodology.** The methodology chapter, chapter 3, of this study outlined the general approaches that were used to inform the collection and analysis of data in order to understand the development of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. This chapter was the most difficult to construct, and involved borrowing ideas, concepts, and approaches from a variety of different fields in social science and educational research. This study illuminated the need for greater research in the area of document analysis, particularly in the area of educational research. This study relied heavily on the work of Hodder (2000), whose focus on analyzing material culture was often very broad, and did not necessarily focus on textual interpretation and analysis. To strengthen the methodology used to guide this study, I combined Hodder’s approach to analyzing material culture with the account of unobtrusive research methods, of which document analysis is considered an example, presented by Berg (2001).

The body of literature from which the methodology section for this study was constructed provided a rationale for the use of document analysis, presented a classification scheme for different types of documents, and commented on broad
approaches to the analysis of collected documents. However, this same body of literature failed to provide insights or actual steps to be taken when analyzing written texts, policy statements, or educational materials. Document analysis, as an approach to qualitative research, is an area that is in need of greater exploration and expansion in order to provide insights and greater legitimacy to qualitative studies that aim to extract meaning from documents such as memorandums, position statements, curriculum, policies, and laws. These documents dictate appropriate and legitimate behaviour in society, and rather than be left invisible or taken for granted, these documents must be explored and critiqued in order to interpret, understand, and make sense of the codes of behaviour that structure the world around us.

**Further research.** The purpose of this research study has been to understand the development of equity and inclusive education policy by providing answers to questions such as what ideas underpin the equity and inclusive education policy and whose views does the equity policy ultimately represent or exclude. However, a series of new questions have been revealed by the findings in this study. The limitations of this research study should be taken into consideration for future research.

There is a need to explore the process of implementation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario as mandated by PPM No. 119 (2009), a topic that was located outside the scope of the present study. The persisting inadequacy of models of multicultural education and the lagging influence of federal legislation in the area of multiculturalism in addressing inequities in Ontario’s education system were presented in the literature by Joshee and Johnson (2005) as well as in the analysis. While PPM No. 119 (2009) included definitions, concepts, and goals that were consistent with the
achievement of equity in Ontario’s education system, the degree to which this policy directive can be translated into effective equity education policy statements at district school boards across Ontario must be studied. PPM No. 119 (2009) mandated that district school boards were required to develop and implement equity and inclusive education policies by September 2010. As this deadline has passed, it is necessary to explore the extent to which school boards have developed and implemented equity and inclusive education policy. Further research is needed to explore the content, development, and implementation of equity and inclusive education policies in school boards across Ontario. It is necessary to be cognizant of the limited results achieved through PPM No. 119 (1993). The process and mechanisms of accountability legislated through PPM No. 119 (2009) must be studied and measured to ensure that district school boards are in fact responding to the mandates expressed in PPM No. 119 (2009).

An important theme that emerged throughout this study was the connection between policy and practice. Further research is needed to explore the implementation of equity and inclusive education policies that have been developed at the district school board level in local schools throughout a given district. It is important to understand the relationship between the creation of school board policies, their implementation in schools across a given district, and the effects of these policies on the practice of equity in classrooms. Further research is necessary to gauge the impact of equity and inclusive education policy in creating truly equitable educational practices in Ontario schools and classrooms.

Once the process of implementation has been studied, a thorough policy analysis of PPM No. 119 (2009) should be conducted. Research is needed that will explore the
efficacy as well as the intended and unintended consequences of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. At this juncture, a policy analysis of PPM No. 119 (2009) will provide not simply a description of equity and inclusive education policy development, but prescriptions for policy development that may inform the process of education policymaking in Ontario. Broadly speaking, this objective can be achieved through further qualitative studies focused on the attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and actions of policy makers and implementers including Ministry authorities, school board officials, education administrators, and teachers as well as the groups affected by equity education policy, including students and parents.

Summary

This chapter connected the findings that emerged from the analysis to the themes and theoretical frameworks presented in the literature. After providing a brief overview of the study, this chapter explored the themes of multiculturalism and equity as the ideological foundation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario. Shifts in ideology were witnessed; a focus on multiculturalism, race relations, and cultural pluralism was replaced with critical conceptions of equity that acknowledged the social construction of diversity and the wide range institutional barriers to education that this identity construction produces. The analysis outlined the role of numerous socio-cultural stakeholder groups and policy actors as driving forces in the development of equity and inclusive education policy. Force field analysis and the three-step model of change were used to understand and conceptualize the specific role of these actors as agents of social change and their involvement in different stages of the policymaking cycle. Finally, the implications for theory, policy, practice, methodology, and further research were
presented. Common themes that emerged from this section included the need for equity and inclusive education policy development to be more inclusive of groups who are affected by equity policies, especially students; the need for further research to explore the connections between equity policy and the practice of inclusive and multicultural education in Ontario schools and classrooms; and the necessity of future studies to explore the process of implementation of equity and inclusive education policy in Ontario.

Afterword

Through the practice of reflective research, I have learned more about myself as a student, educator, and most importantly as a researcher than I ever imagined possible. I began this research journey in September 2010. My experiences as a teacher candidate in the city of Ottawa led to a nagging feeling of disenchantment with Ontario’s publicly funded education system in meeting the needs of diverse youth. As a teacher candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, I was introduced to education theories centered around equity in the classroom, social justice education, and experiential learning. My planning periods in the staffroom at the secondary school often involved a skimming of books on critical pedagogy from Freire and McLaren. And yet, despite all of this formal training, I still felt completely unprepared and unwilling to participate as an educator in Ontario’s publicly funded education system by standing at the front of a classroom to deliver a curriculum that was utterly disconnected from the lived experiences of students. It was these experiences that brought me to the Masters of Education program.
I spent the first year of the program hesitant in selecting a focus of study and a topic for my thesis. As a political studies graduate, I was interested in the politics of education and education policy. My experiences as a teacher candidate spurred questions and concerns as to how the education system responds to and supposedly meets the physical, emotional, and academic needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Combining these two areas led to a focus on multicultural education and finally to a focus on examining equity and inclusive education policy. While the task of developing a coherent and sufficiently focused purpose and research questions was at times frustrating, I succumbed to the ‘one must walk before one can run’ truism. I soon realized that my thesis was not going to create ripples of change that would impact education policy and practice in Ontario, and yet it might contribute to a body of literature and create opportunities for future research that might lead to change in the education system.

Although I was initially focused on a critical policy study of equity and inclusive education policy, I realized that before I could provide a critique of policy, I needed to understand it: what ideas were embedded in equity education policy, whose views the policy represented or excluded, and what processes led to its development?

The methodology that underpins this study was the most challenging dimension in my research journey. According to the literature, very few studies had examined the development of education policy from a strictly descriptive position. Because the processes of implementation and evaluation of policy were outside the scope of this study, it was not a policy analysis in the purest sense of the word. It was difficult to find literature that would guide the collection and analysis of various documents. Broadly speaking, document analysis seemed to be a somewhat neglected method in qualitative
educational research. The second greatest challenge was the process of synthesizing the vast amounts of collected data. I had spent months collecting hundreds of articles of paper and documents, I had navigated the task of sorting them, and had spent hours hunched over my laptop describing and analyzing them. All of this left me with an analysis chapter that was nearly 100 pages. Nixing irrelevant sections and combining commentary on various documents into one small paragraph was extremely difficult, perhaps in part because I had invested so much of myself into the writing process. Although the research journey has been a series of two steps forward, one step back, it is from these experiences that I will pursue further graduate studies in education.

My experience with research has illuminated the extent to which rigorous, critical scholarship holds the potential for social change. The experience of writing this thesis has allowed me to understand the role of policy in Ontario’s education system. Current education policies related to equity are inadequate in combating prejudice, discrimination, social inequality, and responding to student diversity in Ontario schools. We must find new ways to meet the needs of all students. In future research pursuits, I hope to engage in critical policy studies, challenging established policy-making models and traditional methods of policy analysis to discover alternative visions of policy development and analysis rooted in social democracy. The ultimate goal is to create an education system that is equitable and just; arguably, this struggle begins with policy. In this pursuit, I wish to investigate how students’ identities, including aspects such as gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sex, sexual identity, and physical and mental ability, structure their learning experience. Marginalized students are not passive agents implicated in their own exclusion from the education system. Investigating
students’ acts of struggle and resistance against the education system will provide insights into how disadvantage is experienced by students, how disadvantage is perpetuated by the education system, and how acts of resistance can be constructed as a foundation upon which to build an equitable and just education system.
References


## Appendix 1: List of Documents Analyzed According to Contextual Force

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<tr>
<th>Primary Forces</th>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Secondary Forces</th>
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<td><em>Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship</em></td>
<td>Citizenship and Immigration Canada</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>Department of Canadian Heritage</td>
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<td>Ontario Ministry of Education</td>
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<td><em>Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success</em></td>
<td>OME Press Release</td>
<td>April 8, 2009</td>
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<td><em>Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy</em></td>
<td>OME</td>
<td>April 6, 2009</td>
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<td><em>PPM No. 119 (2009): Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools</em></td>
<td>OME</td>
<td>June 24, 2009</td>
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<td>Mosaic, 2006 Census</td>
<td>Canada Statistics Canada</td>
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<td>Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031</td>
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<td>June, 2007</td>
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<td>Positions Paper</td>
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<td>Schools We Need in the 21st Century.</td>
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<td>A Statement From the Catholic Bishops on Policy Development Associated with Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy.</td>
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<td>October, 2010</td>
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<td>Statement from the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario</td>
<td>Tomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto</td>
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<td>About Egale Canada</td>
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<td>Survey shows students feel unsafe at school</td>
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<td>Welcome to OPSOA</td>
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<td>Road to Inclusivity: The Status of Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity in Ontario</td>
<td>OPSOA</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Legal, Socio-cultural</td>
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<td>The Schools We Need: A New Blueprint for Ontario</td>
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## Appendix 2: Prime Ministers of Canada

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## Appendix 3: Provincial Authorities Responsible for Education

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