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**Quality of Experiences Acquired by Students During
Ontario's Community Involvement Activities**

(Spine title: Students' Community Involvement Activity Experiences In ON.)

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Jennifer Lynne Waringer

2

Faculty of Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

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entitled:

**Quality of Experiences Acquired by Students During
Ontario's Community Involvement Activities**

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Date: _____

Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

ABSTRACT

Quality of Experiences Acquired by Students During Ontario's Community

Involvement Activities.

This research study is an exploratory investigation of Ontario's *Community Involvement Activities* (CIA). CIA are included as graduation requirements created as the result of the comprehensive overhaul of Ontario's kindergarten (K) to grade 12 curriculum in the mid to late 1990s. At the time of the implementation of the CIA in 1999, there were teacher-organized volunteer programs operating in various Ontario secondary schools, but the Ministry had not previously demanded that any form of community service outside of normal instructional hours become a graduation requirement.

The goal of this exploratory study was to investigate the nature of the CIA, and the quality of students' CIA experiences, contributing to new research in the field of community-based learning. Despite the CIA having existed now for six years, it has not previously been researched or evaluated for its effectiveness. Via an Internet questionnaire, the study queried students from the first and second groups to successfully finish their CIA. This research explores the quality of students' experiences, covering areas of safety, students' attitudes and recommendations, and the educational value of the program.

The findings of the study suggest that students feel that their involvement in the CIA program has resulted in generally positive and educational experiences. Although it

is too early to determine if lifelong attitudes about community involvement have been affected by students' participation in the CIA program, preliminary results suggest that the majority of respondents reported feeling committed to volunteer in the future. However, the majority also reported that the activities did not enhance their education and that they were not the most rewarding experience of their education program as the Ministry had suggested. They also recommended major design changes to the program. Other issues such as safety, employment, and training of students by their sponsors were also raised. In addition to these interesting empirical results, this study suggests some areas for further research, and offers some tentative recommendations for improvement of the program.

Keywords

Volunteer, Community Involvement Activities, double cohort students, secondary school students, matriculation service add-on, community-based learning, constructivism, graduation requirement, education reforms, cooperative education courses, extracurricular, citizenship, work experience, and civic responsibility.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Meggie, in loving memory of my best friend. This was for you, Bubblebee, and Honey, my thunder on the tundra.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. J. Marshall Mangan for his guidance and expertise throughout this project. His dedication and enthusiasm for my project was inspiring. Thanks to Dr. R. Hansen who introduced me to this topic. I wish to recognize the helpful advice Dr. P. Allison provided me throughout my study. Thank you to my supervisory committee member, Dr. Robert Macmillan. My research would not have been possible without the excellent technical support from Instructor. J. Rutledge and his staff at Information Services located in the University of Western Ontario's (UWO) Faculty of Education. Many people were instrumental in my Internet questionnaire's distribution. Thank you to the staff at the Registrar's office at UWO: K. Wu, K. Chelchowski, C. Allison, R. Harris, and T. Regier. Thank you to Dr. K. Luton, Dr. M. Zinke-Allmang, and Dr. J. Staples for allowing me to survey their classes. I want to thank the following organizations for providing me with copyright permission to reproduce the various forms and activities associated with the Community Involvement Activities: The Ministry of Education, The Ontario's Secondary School Teacher's Federation, the University of Western Ontario (UWO), and the Thames Valley District School Board.

On a personal level, this research would not have been possible without the support of my mother Sarah, my sister Susan, Lloyd, Charlene, Janine, and Jamie. They have sacrificed a great deal to help me reach my goals. For two years they listened patiently to me talk about my research. Special thanks go to my friends: Isabelle, Angela, Kate, Jan, Ying, Yan Yan, Garrett, Shelley, and Pauline. They made my Master's program fun and memorable. Thank you to all of my family in Ontario and back home.

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List of Abbreviations

MOE	Ministry of Education
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
CIA	Community Involvement Activities
UWO	The University of Western Ontario
CBL	Community-based learning
SLP	Service-learning program
MCI	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
MCU	Ministry of Colleges and Universities
TVDSB	Thames Valley District School Board
Co-op	Cooperative Education courses
PC	Progressive Conservative Party
NDP	New Democratic Party
K	Kindergarten

Chapter 1 : Introduction

This thesis explores the quality of experiences that Ontario's secondary school students are acquiring during their 40 hours of mandatory community involvement. As stated in *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999*, all students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of unpaid *Community Involvement Activities* (CIA) before graduating from secondary school (MOET, 1999a, p. 9). Premier Mike Harris' Progressive Conservative (PC) Government (1995 to 2003) created the requirement as part of its new secondary 4-year education system. The reform of the secondary school program was part of the Government's commitment to develop an education system that realized "excellence in students' achievement" (Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) 1996, p. 1). The new curriculum is meant to be more accountable to the public it serves (p. 1). At the time of the implementation of the CIA program in 1999, there were teacher-organized volunteer programs operating in various Ontario secondary schools, but the Ministry had not previously demanded that any form of community service outside of normal instructional hours become a graduation requirement (MOET 1999a, p. 3).

1.00 Research questions

There are two main research questions for this thesis: What is the nature of the CIA program? What are the qualities of students' experiences acquired during their CIA? Sub-questions that will be explored include: How did the program evolve? As what type of program is it classified? On what educational theory is the CIA program based? How does the program compare to other work experience and service programs? The qualities of

student experiences that are being investigated here include: the success of its objectives; safety; volunteering attitudes; the educational value of the program; training issues; students' recommendations; the inspirational value of the program; skills developed; and other qualities.

1.01 Clarification of terminology

Before proceeding, it is important to clarify the terminology needed to understand the body of this study. Premier Mike Harris' Ministry of Education and Training referred to their extracurricular graduation requirement as "Community Involvement Activities." As a result, when it is appropriate to refer to individual activities, the title of "Community Involvement Activities (CIA)" is used. I believe that the complexity of planning, execution, and tracking of these activities warrants that they be given the title of "Program." Therefore, when this study refers to the overall program in its discussions, the title "Community Involvement Activities program (CIA program)" will be used. The two terms "community sponsor(s)" or "sponsor(s)" refer to the businesses, organizations, and community members who offer students volunteering opportunities to satisfy their CIA. A couple of references are very similar and require some clarification. In the text of this thesis all of the Ministry of Education's references are abbreviated to "Ministry". According to Gidney (1999), the traditional name of the Ministry was the "Department of Education", but in 1972 it was changed to the "Ministry of Education (MOE)." As of 1993 the formal title was changed to the "Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)" (p. 6). According to the Ministry, it is now called the "Ministry of Education" again, but the Ministry of Training, Colleges and University is often listed as co-authors on many

documents. I will use the abbreviated terminology throughout this document. There are many reasons why this name change occurred including a change in the elected government, and the shifting of responsibility of the government's Training portfolio. In addition to the Training portfolio, the MOE worked with the Ministry of Colleges and University in publishing. When I refer to the "*Ministry*" in the text, I am referring to the Ministry of Education (MOE) or the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) that was operating at the time of the specific publication in question.

1.02 Background

According to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), volunteering is important to a civic-minded province like Ontario because it builds citizenship and social responsibility in its citizens (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, MCI, 2002, p. 1). During the post-war decades, Ontario's Governments and the voluntary sector cooperated, and the voluntary sector grew with the help of government grants (Foster & Meinhard, 2000, p. 1). Today, these service organizations provide professional care, as part of our social welfare system, that the Government is not interested in or is unable to provide (p. 3). In 1995, the Mike Harris Government of Ontario won a landslide victory on a platform that advocated reliance on personal volunteering. Between 1995 and 2002, Premier Mike Harris' Progressive Conservative (PC) Government radically reformed the education system and reduced the scale and scope of the voluntary sector's funding (Foster & Meinhard, 2000, p. 3; Levin, 2000, p. 2). The Government's cutbacks forced the sector to seek more of its funding elsewhere (Foster & Meinhard, 2000, p. 3). This resulted in a significant increase in fund-raising activities by voluntary organizations, whose success

depends on the willingness of people to volunteer or to donate money (p. 1).

Mangan and Davidson-Harden (2003) state that the history of schooling in Ontario “has been driven by various social purposes, while the shape of public education has been constrained by larger social trends, including those of population growth and composition, economic cycles, and changing belief systems” (p. 1). Davidson-Harden and Allison (2003) referred to Premier Mike Harris’ PC Government’s reforms, which included the creation of the CIA program, as being “finance-driven” (p. 5). Despite the cutbacks, Ontario’s Government claimed to be recognizing its responsibility to provide a policy, legislative, and regulatory environment that facilitates and supports voluntary organizations and voluntary action (MCI, 2002, p. 2). Hart (2001) states that periods of economic restructuring, like the one that Ontario experienced while the PC Government was in office, are often associated with calls for educational reforms, aimed at producing smarter, more disciplined students and workers to keep up with global competition and to ensure social cohesion (p. 1). Ontario followed the lead of many other jurisdictions by including among its diploma requirements a course in civics, a course in career studies, and community service programs (Kelly & Laing, 2000, p. 2). Kelly and Laing (2000) suggested that all three of these curriculum topics are designed to provide specific preparation for student participation in society (p. 2). Many teachers and parents or guardians argue that important preparation for citizenship takes place within the social environment of the school and across the entire curriculum (Hart, 2001, p. 2).

Hargreaves and Earl (2001) suggest that many of Canada's jurisdictions regularly adopt imported policy solutions, and then go in search of domestic problems. They warn that much of their foundational research on the effects of educational change continues to reveal the damaging effects of such solutions (Hargreaves & Earl, 2001, p. 3). Boyd (1996) states that education programs should be individualized to the needs and concerns of a school and its community (p. 1). He also suggests that the roles and responsibilities of the families, schools, and community the program serves must be explored in light of the current social context (p. 1). I have concluded that perhaps the Harris Government studied American models of service programs when it created the CIA because at the time Ontario's teacher-operated service programs were not well known. According to Mangan and Davidson-Harden (2003), Ontario's past educational leaders, such as D. McArthur and J. G. Althouse, often turned to the United States for inspiration for their curriculum reforms (p. 4). An American program that was in operation at the time the CIA program was being created was "The Learn and Serve American School and Community-Based programs" (Foster & Meinhard, 2000, p. 5). In 1993, it was created with the object of involving school-aged youth in programs and classroom activities, intended to link meaningful service in the community with a structured learning experience, reflection activities, and links to organized curriculum (p. 5). I feel that the CIA program does not closely match these American programs because the Ontario program does not have reflection activities, classroom activities, or structured learning experiences, but they may share similar civic objectives. Another service program operating at the time the CIA program was being developed is called Round Square which I go into in more detail in section 3.01.03.02.

The Harris' Government pushed the Ministry to rush the CIA program into existence as part of the massive K to 12 curriculum reforms it introduced. As a result of this rush to implement the new curriculum, very little was written specifically on the CIA program. With little debate on which to base a discussion about the program's history, it is necessary to trace its development using categorical themes in the Ministry documents. Tracing the development of the program is important in understanding the politics and motivations involved in implementing the program. The categorical themes were derived from the Ministry's CIA objectives as listed later in this chapter. The main themes that affect the CIA program include citizenship, community involvement, parental involvement, the attitudes and skills vital for employment, volunteering or extracurricular activities, the obstacles to employment preparation of youth, and the Ministry's concept of general education. The CIA program is one of many work-related experience programs available to students, but it stands out from the others because it is the first extracurricular graduation requirement loosely linked to Ontario's Civics, and Guidance and Career education curriculum.

1.03 CIA program specifics

As stated in *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999*, all Ontario students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of unpaid CIA (volunteering) before graduating from secondary school (MOET, 1999d, p. 1; MOET, 1999a, p. 8). Implementation of this graduation requirement occurred with the new 4-year secondary program in the 1999/2000 school year. The 40 hours of volunteering is in addition to the 30 credits needed for a secondary school diploma (p. 5).

Prior to the CIA program, Ontario's Ministry had never stipulated any similar extracurricular graduation requirement: one that is loosely based on objectives described in the curriculum, but not organized by educators (Sherbourne, 2001, p. 36). The courses in which the CIA program is mentioned in the curriculum documents are: the grade 10 Civics course (CHV20) and the Guidance and Career education course; Learning strategies 1: Skills for success in secondary school; and grade 9: Exploration of opportunities (GLS10/GLE10) (Sherbourne, 2001, p. 36; MOET, 1999b, p. 16; MOET 1999c, p. 46).

The CIA program was implemented as part of the transition in diploma requirements from the *Ontario Schools Intermediate and Senior Divisions* (OSIS) to the *Ontario Secondary School Diploma* (OSSD). Students who started grade nine in 1999 were the first to work towards OSSDs. All students who started their education between 1984 and 1999 were given the opportunity to complete their diploma requirements under OSIS (MOET, 1999b, p. 10).

1.04 People involved in the CIA program

The first students to be required to do their CIA were the "Double cohort", which referred to students who entered grades 11 and 12 in September, 2001 and graduated together from secondary school in 2003 (MOET, 2001d, p. 1). The Double cohort and all subsequent students entering grade nine were required to complete the 40 hours at any time during their 4 years of secondary school.

There are several people and organizations responsible for this program. Students are responsible for fulfilling this requirement on their own time, for finding a person or organization to sponsor an activity, and for keeping a record of their activities on a form supplied by the school (MOET, 2003a, p. 1). Students are able to choose their own CIA, within guidelines that are provided by the school. The selection of activities is expected to be age-, maturity-, and ability-appropriate. Students plan and select their activities in consultation with a parent or guardian. Students under the age of 18 years, must also give their parent or guardian, and the sponsor organization copies of any information on the CIA program. A parent or guardian must sign all forms that are submitted to the school during the planning and reporting stages of the activities. Parents or guardians are encouraged to communicate with the community sponsor and the principal if any questions or concerns arise.

Principals provide students and parents or guardians with information outlining the program, and provide the forms used to record their activity information. Principals decide whether students have met the graduation requirements, and record the completed community involvement requirement on students' official transcript (MOET, 1999a, p. 10).

School boards must also support the principals who track and assess students' progress. The responsibility of the school board is to develop a list of eligible and ineligible activities. CIA may take place in a variety of settings, including businesses, not-for-profit organizations, public-sector institutions that include hospitals, and informal settings. School boards developed the forms on which students report their planned and completed activities. Boards must ensure that students and sponsors are adequately

covered by the board's insurance. Sponsors in the community have the important duty of ensuring that the activity, location, and environment must be safe for students. The sponsors must verify the date(s) and number of hours completed on the correct form.

1.05 Assessment features of the program

Students are first told about the CIA program requirement in Grade 7 and again in grade 8 (MOET, 1999a, p. 9). The first activity associated with the CIA program is the completion of an Annual Education Plan (AEP) form. On this form students are given their first opportunity to plan possible CIA they might undertake (p. 9).

The primary assessment tools used to determine if students have met the CIA program graduation requirement comprise two forms. The Ministry created two templates on which the school boards model their own forms. For example, Appendix I contains the forms provided to parents and students by both the Ministry and the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB). The forms are titled "Notification of Planned Community Involvement Activities" and "Completion of Community Involvement Activities" (MOET, 1999d, p. 3; Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), 1999a, p. 1). Documentation attesting to the completion of each activity is submitted on these forms to the principal by the student. This documentation must include, for each activity, the name of the person or organization receiving the service, the activity formed, the dates and hours, the signatures of the student and his/her parents or guardians, and a signed acknowledgment by the sponsor involved (MOET, 1999d, p. 3).

1.06 Program restrictions

Students can only volunteer outside of normal school hours such as lunch breaks, after school, on weekends or during holidays (TVDSB, 1999a, p. 1). Students may not fulfil the requirement through activities that are counted towards a credit (eg. cooperative education courses (Co-op), and work experiences) through paid work or by assuming duties normally performed by a paid employee (p. 1).

1.07 Eligible activities

The Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) has a list of eligible and ineligible activities. Eligible activities may not count towards a credit or take place during the student's regular classroom time. Eligible activities are approved for completion of the CIA requirement (TVDSB, 1999b, p. 2). In the community students are allowed to offer assistance to charitable organizations, service clubs, and other not-for-profit organizations. Students can canvass, participate in walk-a-thons, celebrity games, or environmental projects like clean-up, tree planting and recycling. Students can coach minor sports teams and assist at seniors' residences, hospitals, and nursing homes. They can help community projects like food banks, fairs, local parks, and recreational facilities. Students are allowed to help individual community members with tutoring, transcribing, shopping, yard work, and snow removal. Some activities can be completed at school such as peer helping, managing a sports team, scoring and timing at sports events, and organizing art shows (TVDSB, 1999b, p. 2).

1.08 Ineligible activities

Ineligible activities include any activity that is a requirement of a class or course in which students are enrolled and it cannot involve court-ordered programs for young offenders or probation (TVDSB, 1999b, p. 3). Activities that take place during the allotted instructional school day, with the exception of spare periods or lunch hours, are also ineligible. Activities are ineligible if students get paid, and they cannot do a job normally performed by a paid employee or do a job that requires the knowledge of a worker whose trade is regulated by Ontario's Government. Students cannot operate a vehicle, power tools, or scaffolding. They cannot administer medication or any type of medical procedure to other persons. They are not allowed to handle designated substances under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Students are not allowed to work at a bank, handle securities, jewelry, works of art, antiques, or other valuables. Home chores or personal recreational activities such as athletics, music, or drama are ineligible. There are some age restrictions that could make an activity ineligible. A student who is under the age of 16 must not work in the mining or logging industry. Students under the age of 15 must not work in a factory (TVDSB, 1999b, p. 3).

1.09 Ministry objectives on CIA

The Ministry holds the opinion that for many students, the CIA program is one of the most rewarding experiences in their secondary school program (MOET, 2000c, p. 1). In their rationale, the Ministry states several objectives for students during their CIA. The first objective is that students will develop an awareness and understanding of their civic responsibility (MOET, 1999a, p. 10). The second objective is that students will discover

what role they can play, and the contributions they can make in supporting and strengthening their communities. Another objective is that CIA will help students develop a greater sense of belonging within their communities. Students are to develop strong ties with their communities and foster valuable and long-term relationships. The CIA program is also meant to give them additional career-related experience outside the classroom (MOET, 2001a, p. 30). Students will obtain valuable unpaid work experience that may even lead to employment at a later date (Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF), 1999, p. 47). Finally, the person or organization sponsoring an activity should provide students with activity specific training, equipment, and preparation (MOET, 1999d, p. 6).

The Ministry states that CIA are to help students check out careers that might interest them, learn new skills and grow as people, get experience for their resume, feel more confident in their abilities, translate their interests into action, and get a feel for the workplace. They also suggest that students will learn to express themselves, to feel good, to connect with their community, to explore their world, and to get to know themselves better (OSSTF, 1999, p. 48).

1.10 Ministry's Rationale for CIA

The Ministry makes many claims concerning the benefits and characteristics of the Community Involvement Activities program (CIA program). For example, the Ministry states that the CIA program is the highlight and most rewarding activity of a student's education program (MOET, 2000i, p. 1). The Ministry does not cite any references on which it bases this claim. The rationale of this exploratory investigation is to examine the

quality of CIA experience by first surveying students, and then using the Ministry's objectives as a framework to discuss the results. Because the CIA program is relatively new in Ontario, very little research has been published here on the topic, so another goal of this study is to add to the research by examining the nature of the CIA program, and classifying it in order to better understand its pedagogy. s

1.11 Chapters' overview

Eight chapters make up the body of this study. Chapter 1 presents the program specifics and other important details of the CIA program. Chapter 2 traces the roots of the CIA program in the last 50 years of Ministry policy documents, commissioned reports and other sources providing a summary of background information using the themes that were incorporated into the program as a framework for a discussion. This chapter also highlights the CIA program's strengths and weaknesses by comparing it to a successful, well-established course. Chapter 3 addresses the pedagogy behind the CIA program. It classifies the program and suggests a possible educational theory on which it should be based. It also discusses the limited related scholarly research on my topic. Chapter 4 presents the study's research design and outlines the advantages and disadvantages of using an Internet questionnaire to collect data. Chapter 5 contains the results of this 2-year exploratory study. Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented. Chapter 6 is the discussion chapter in which the data are analyzed. Chapter 7 contains a summary of the study's conclusions, and future research ideas. This chapter also recommends several pedagogical reforms that would improve the CIA program. The suggested reforms include curriculum and design changes.

1.12 Chapter summary

The CIA program is a mandatory graduation requirement in which all Ontario's secondary school students must complete 40 hours of community service. This program is a fairly new program, only being implemented in 1999. The objectives listed in section 1.09 of this chapter are based on the Ministry's rationale for the CIA program. The objectives cover issues of civic responsibility, personal development and growth of students, and employment education. Despite the restrictions on their CIA, students have great latitude in planning their activities students. Many organizations are responsible for the CIA program, but the Ministry states that it is a school program.

There are two main research questions for this thesis: What is the nature of the CIA program? What are the qualities of students' experiences acquired during their CIA? Sub-questions that will be explored include: How did the program evolve? As what type of program is it classified? On what educational theory is the CIA program based? How does the program compare to other work experience and service programs?

Chapter 2: Themes in the evolution of the CIA

The concept of the CIA program as it was introduced in Ontario was not discussed extensively in Ministry policy documents, commissioned reports, or other sources prior to its implementation in September 1999. Without specific debates on which to base a discussion, it is necessary to trace the evolution of the program using categorical themes in the Ministry documents. Tracing the development of the program is vital in understanding the politics and motivations involved in implementing such a program as the CIA Program. The two main themes in Ministry policy documents, commissioned reports, and other sources that are common to most CIA are citizenship and employment.

The citizenship theme includes issues like developing an active and positive attitude towards citizenship; self and society; different types of citizenship; democracy and citizenship; volunteering and extracurricular activities; community involvement and the provision of resources; partners in education; roles and responsibilities of partners; importance of collaboration of partners in education; parental involvement; effect of parental involvement on CIA; perceptions of partners about youth and community involvement; the rationale and its lack of instructions; and alternative education. I discuss each of these themes briefly in this chapter.

2.00 Different types of literature examined

I used five different genres of literature to discuss CIA in this thesis. It is important to differentiate between these types of materials because some are written with more bias than others and some are not peer-reviewed. These different documents have been written for different readers. Some reference materials such as dictionaries were used for their factual clarification of definitions. Official Ministry policy documents make up the framework of this thesis because the CIA program is outlined in them. Most of the Ministry's objectives are phrased as rationales written for school boards, and other partners in education are ignored. Because the CIA program's pamphlets are written for parents or guardians and community sponsors, they outline concrete roles and responsibilities for everyone involved, but do not provide clear instructions on how to carry out these responsibilities. In addition to these policy documents, government-commissioned reports on various aspects of the education system were also used. Due to the speed of the CIA program's implementation, there was very limited literature specifically debating the program. Whenever possible, peer-reviewed, scholarly literature was used to balance the Ministry's documents. Press reports were also used to provide another source of information. Regardless of the intended audience and purpose of the different documents and literature, there were some common themes in the evolution of the CIA program.

2.01 Developing an active and positive attitude towards citizenship

Developing an active, positive attitude about citizenship in students is a prevalent theme in education research literature and policy documents over the last half century. The

Royal Commission on Education in Ontario (1950) states that the aim of education is to develop good citizenship, reflecting the concept that education is a process that continues beyond school (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 70). Neill (1960) recognized that the “educational benefits of practical civics cannot be overemphasized” (p. 55). In 1982, the Ministry released *The Renewal of Secondary Education in Ontario: Response to the Report of the Secondary Education Review Project (ROSE report)*, which stated that schools should prepare students to be active and compassionate citizens in a democratic society (MOE, 1982, p. 27). The CIA also have objectives for developing positive attitudes students will need to be “active and engaged citizens” (MOE, 2003a, p. 1).

2.02 Self and society

The concept of “Self and Society” relates to students’ personal connection to society. Premier Bob Rae’s NDP Government incorporated “Self and Society” into its *Common Curriculum* for grade 9 (MOET, 1995, p. 18). The *Common Curriculum* claimed to promote the integration of real-world relationships with the education system, and to equip all students with social skills, attitudes, and values needed to live and work in a diverse society (MOET, 1995, p. 11). Students were supposed to recognize their responsibilities as individuals, as members of Canadian society, and as members of the global community (MOET, 1995, p. 25). The grade 10 Civics curriculum released in 1999 has an expectation that students “articulate their personal sense of civic identity and purpose, and understand the diversity of beliefs and values of other citizens in Canadian society” (MOET, 1999c, p. 50). The CIA program’s objectives incorporate the “self and society” theme due to the expectation that students develop an awareness and

understanding of their civic responsibility (MOET, 1999a, p. 9).

2.03 Different types of citizenship

Premier Mike Harris' Progressive Conservative (PC) Government distinguished among three different types of citizenship and organized them in the curriculum into strands. The strands include informed, purposeful, and active citizenship (MOET, 1999c, p. 46). According to the Ministry, informed citizenship requires a citizen to understand key civics questions, concepts, structure, and processes (p. 46). This definition of citizenship is similar to the *Common Curriculum's* idea that students be able to "identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens of Canada, and demonstrate their commitment to Canadian citizenship" (MOET, 1995, p. 18). Active citizenship demands that students learn basic civic literacy skills and have opportunities to apply these skills meaningfully by participating actively in the civic affairs of their communities (MOET, 1999c, p. 46). This definition of active citizenship is echoed in the *Common Curriculum's* essential students' learning outcome number six which states that students should participate as responsible citizens in the life of the local, national and global community by contributing constructively first to the life of their classrooms, their schools, and their communities (MOET, 1995, p. 18). The definition of Purposeful Citizenship requires students to understand their roles as citizens, to discover their personal values and perspectives on citizenship (MOET, 1999c, p. 46). Purposeful citizenship would best describe the CIA program because of this strand's inclusion of the concept of self and society into the objectives for the program. However citizenship is defined, it is a major theme in the Ministry's policy, in its curriculum documents, and the CIA program.

2.04 Democracy and citizenship

Interwoven throughout the Harris Government's *New Foundation* curriculum there is an emphasis on the idea of democracy and "democratic citizenship and political decision-making processes" (MOET, 1999c, p. 46). Students' interaction with their communities and the resulting positive impact on students' interest in politics and civics is another important theme in the literature. Community interaction is expected to make students take a "vital interest in human rights, create respect for others in the community, reduce racism, prevent accidents, and help students develop interest in politics" (p. 4). This concept of Democratic Citizenship is an important theme in the Civics curriculum, and in the CIA program's objectives.

2.05 Volunteering and extracurricular activities

The CIA program is perceived as a volunteering activity by students and parents or guardians despite the fact it is mandatory. The Ministry refers to the CIA program as a graduation requirement, not as a volunteering program. Other service programs are mentioned in the Ontario curriculum, but references to volunteering are non-existent. Extracurricular activities are mentioned in several places in the literature. In the 1970s, student participation in extracurricular activities was described as "extracurricular pursuits", "projects involving various community agencies", and any activities that allowed students to "gain and share learning activities" (MOE, 1979, p. 4). Radwanski (1987) wrote a commissioned report for the Ministry of Education called *Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education, and the Issue of Dropouts* that recognized the need for all students

to have access to a “full-range of extracurricular activities” because these activities were “vital elements” in education (p. 201). Extracurricular activities like part-time jobs force students to interact with their communities, but Radwanski warned that work should not compete with school activities, but complement education (p. 177). Part-time work provides students at risk of dropping out of school a chance to join the work force, exposing them to the harsh realities and expectations of the work place (p. 176). The extracurricular nature of the CIA only slightly reduces the time students have for part-time jobs.

2.06 Community involvement and the provision of resources

In 1994, a commissioned report was published called *For the love of learning: Report of the Royal Commission on Learning*. Community involvement is often associated with the provision of resources, expertise, and services so schools can educate the greatest number of students (Royal Commission, 1994a, p. 7). The popularity of community involvement programs like these activities are grounded in the belief that as our economy becomes more complex, natural resources more limited, and social problems more acute, the importance of education increases, aimed at inducting our youth into a life of responsible citizenship (Waskiewicz, 2002, p. 124). Between 1979 and 1981, the growing costs of education required schools to develop interactions with their communities because it was recognized that it was unreasonable to expect schools to meet their responsibilities alone (Royal Commission, 1994a, p. 42). The community was viewed as a resource that could “help students explore the many dimensions of learning and living” (MOE, 1979, p. 4). The Harris’ Government expected community sponsors involved with the CIA program

to provide all of the resources, expertise in training, and services to students so they could complete their required 40 hours. Students' activities depend totally on the resources of the community sponsor because the program is an extracurricular program with very limited involvement of school staff.

2.07 Partners in education

The official discussions of community involvement do not consistently list the same people and organizations involved in education. In 1968, E. M. Hall and L. A. Dennis were co-chairmen of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, which produced a commissioned report called *Living and Learning*. It identified five key partners; students, schools, teachers, families, and the community (p. 652). The Royal Commission on Learning (1994) included members of local religious and ethnic communities, service providers (government and non-government), service clubs, charity organizations, and businesses (Milburn, 1996, p. 9). Premier Mike Harris' PC Government expanded the list of partners eligible to sponsor CIA to include public sector institutions like hospitals and individuals in the community. The documents provided to people and organizations involved in CIA include their roles and responsibilities, but they do not provide instructions to complete these responsibilities.

2.08 Roles and responsibilities of partners

A significant amount of community-involvement-related policy literature is devoted to identification of the roles and responsibilities of the partners involved in education. As it would be impossible to cover all the roles for each partner, so only the roles that differ

markedly from those mentioned above are mentioned here. The Royal Commission (1994) suggested that principals were able to create community alliances because they were ambassadors of their schools (p. 42). The *New Foundation* (1999) added a role for principals as the provider of information to parents or guardians, students, and community sponsors (MOET, 1999d, p. 2). The Royal Commission (1994) stated that school boards and teachers must identify the needs of students (p. 108). In contrast to this suggestion, teachers are assigned limited roles in the CIA program, and the school boards' duties focus on the provision of lists of eligible activities, writing forms used to track the program, and dealing with insurance. Overall, the responsibilities and roles of partners found in these precursor documents closely model those that found their way into the CIA program, with the exception of the amount of teacher involvement.

2.09 Importance of collaboration of partners in education

Collaboration among the partners in education is important for the success of CIA. The *Common Curriculum* recognizes the need for partnership and accountability in education by incorporating it into one of the ten essential learning outcomes (O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 319; p. 683). The Royal Commission on Learning (1994) took community involvement further and argued that "the entire learning process would be strengthened if schools became genuinely community-based institutions" (p. 7). The *Code of Conduct for Ontario Schools* linked community involvement with civics by demanding that students become responsible citizens who are aware of their rights (MOET, 2003b, p. 1).

The Harris Government said that it collaborated with various partners in education to create the *New Foundation* curriculum which contained the CIA program (MOET, 2000f, p. 1). Despite this statement, there is very little evidence that the Ministry has collaborated with community sponsors or students in the creation of the various activities. Parents or guardians were the group that were briefly included in the CIA program's design process by the Ministry. The lack of consultations with students and sponsors was a result of the speed of the implementation of the Harris Government's reforms, evidenced by the lack of debate on the CIA program before it was implemented. In 1995, the PC Government began the process of reforming Ontario's curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12. The Harris Government announced the 4-year high school program for students entering grade 9 in 1999. The "Excellence in Education" survey asked the partners in education questions that later were used to create reforms. The Ministry was still unsure of the structure the CIA program would take as late as 1996 (MOET, 1996, p. 11). The Ministry wanted input on whether to make the CIA program either 45 or 90 hours, compulsory or optional for all students, whether the students should receive a credit or not, and whether the work experience should become a graduation requirement (MOET, 1998, p. 8). Even the grades in which students would be expected to participate in a range of community experiences were also being discussed (p. 12). It was clear that in 1998, the specifics of the CIA program were still being finalized. The reformed grade 9 and 10 curriculum, which included the CIA program, was completed in the spring of 1999 (p. 2). The fast pace and limited scope of the consultations, writing and implementation of the CIA program's curriculum raises doubts about the quality of the program. The Ministry did

consultations with only a third of the partners in education involved in the activities.

2.10 Parental involvement

Of all of the partners in education involved, parents are mentioned most often. The Hall and Dennis report (1968), the ROSE report (1982), and the Royal Commission on Learning (1994) suggested that parental involvement in schools would create an environment that would better nurture students (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 14; MOE, 1982, p. 6; Royal Commission, 1994a, p. 39). Radwanski (1987) suggested using advertizing to get parents or guardians to encourage their children to graduate and for parents or guardians to take advantage of education opportunities like "early childhood education" (p. 198). Increasing the amount of contact between the school and parents or guardians was identified as the first step necessary to make education more inclusive (p. 196). This is significant for the development of the CIA program because parents or guardians are expected to play a major role in the planning of their children's activities.

2.11 Effect of parental involvement on the CIA

In the 1970s, the Ministry started providing credits at the completion of courses allowing parents or guardians and students more educational choices without rigid streaming. The CIA program also lacks rigid streaming as there are no educational restrictions on switching from one eligible activity type to another or from an easy activity to a more difficult one. Despite the lack of streaming, the Ministry warns students to chose their CIA carefully, taking into account their age, maturity, and ability (MOET, 1999d, p. 1). Students who choose an incompatible activity may have a negative experience and not

complete their hours. According to the Ministry, school staff will provide parents or guardians assistance in the completion of individual education plans (IEPs) for exceptional students to ensure students' success, but IEPs do not limit students' choice of activities (p. 1). These reforms in accreditation and streaming, which included roles for parents, allowed the implementation of programs like the CIA program.

2.12 Perceptions of partners about youth and community involvement

There was a concern found in the Education Ministry policy's documents, commission reports, and other sources that youth are disconnected or inactive in their communities, influenced the creation of service programs like the CIA program to solve this perceived problem. Canada's 1997 *National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (NSGVP) stated that youth volunteered 33% of the total hours. Despite the mandatory nature of the CIA program, NSGVP reported in 2001 that youth volunteered between 15% to 29% of all volunteer hours (CCP, 2001, p. 34). One suggested explanation for this decline was the increase in available low-skilled part-time jobs ideal for youth. Students have already entered the workforce and they have less time in which to volunteer. The overall rate of volunteering in Canada decreased from 31% in 1997 to 27% in 2000 with the largest decrease reported for Canadians aged 35 to 44. If parents or guardians of youth are not modeling active civic responsibility by volunteering, one cannot expect young people to take the initiative.

Another reason for the decline in volunteering could have resulted from the way students in the 2000 survey viewed their activities. Did they recognize their CIA as something other than volunteering and opted not to report their activities in this national survey? The fact that the CIA program is mandatory might have caused students to deny that they were volunteering because their participation was not voluntary. The actual percentage of volunteering might have been higher if this confusion had been addressed. Additionally, the survey is national and any statistical declines in provinces other than Ontario might have affected the survey's results. Clearly, there could be many causes for the decline in youth volunteering reported in the 2000 NSGVP survey.

2.13 Rationales and the lack of specific instructions

Citizenship rationales stated in the government documents reviewed are generally optimistic and broad, and do not provide the reader with concrete instructions on how to achieve the rationales' goals. The ROSE report (1982) states the importance of having "direction, curriculum requirements, and reasonable mechanisms for supervision and accountability" (MOE, 1982, p. 5). In 1999, Harris' Government assigned the sponsors the duty of providing all "training, equipment, or special preparation" required for the students' activities (MOET, 1999d, p. 6). The rationale that included community involvement, found in the CIA program's documents, may be too broad to be useful for community sponsors to use in designing activities, because these pamphlets' rationales lack specific instructions.

2.14 Alternative education and CIA

Community involvement provides students who do not intend to go to college or university with an educational alternative. The Royal Commission (1994) suggested that “the community organizations, local businesses, and post secondary institutions should help with the non-academic education of students” (p. 652). Cooperative education programs are the oldest and best developed example of non-academic community involvement associated with schools. The ROSE report (1982) stated that the education system should provide “students with a useful, basic education that prepares them either for direct entry into employment, or for post-secondary education” (MOE, 1982, p. 4). This suggests that the education system in the 1980s was not effectively teaching basic work skills. *The Common Curriculum* was more inclusive by ensuring all students had equitable options for planning their futures (MOET, 1995, p. 11). Radwanski (1987) promoted school-supervised work experience that would provide all students with a quality education regardless of their intended destinations (p. 157). In 1999, the PC Government implemented its new grade 11 and 12 courses. The courses were promoted to “help prepare students for their lives after secondary school and to better prepare students for university or college, apprenticeship programs, or the workplace” by providing different types of courses (MOET, 2000f, p. 1). The CIA program was implemented with these curriculum reforms as a graduation requirement for all students, regardless of their ultimate post-secondary destination. The CIA program could not be considered an alternative option to in-school academic courses, because it was meant to expand the activities that students had to complete and to expose them to new experiences.

The issues that are common to the CIA programs, the Ministry documents, and commissioned reports include: safety issues; career counseling and personal insights; youth employment preparation; the ever-changing job market and a "relevant education"; the concept of general education; and attitudes and skills vital for employment.

2.15 Safety issues

Another common theme is student safety during work experiences. School boards create provincial standards for physical safety and insurance coverage for work experiences (MOET, 2003a, p. 1). Ontario's Guidance and Career education grade 10 course set a specific expectation that at the end of the course students would be able to demonstrate an understanding of how to maintain safety in the workplace (MOET, 1999b, p. 16). The PC Government expected that during students' CIA, community sponsors would train students and provide them any required equipment (MOET, 1999d, p. 6). Safety training and proper equipment are vital to keeping students healthy and protected so they can complete their activities.

2.16 Career counseling and personal insights

Career education is another theme in various commissioned reports, Ministry policy documents, and the CIA program's objectives. In 1969, Ontario School Inspectors' Association (OSIA) stated that the business community and parents or guardians have the most to lose if students are not adequately prepared for a career and a life-role (p. 5). The Government expected the community to sponsor projects that link schools to local career-counseling services for youth and acquaint students with different career opportunities

(MOET, 1995, p. 27; p. 12). Premier Mike Harris' PC Government stated that a "goal of high school education was to prepare students for adulthood and make important choices about their educational and occupational future" (MOET, 1995, p. 12). This echoed the *Common Curriculum's* seventh outcome which stated that students should explore educational and career opportunities, and demonstrate awareness of knowledge of a variety of workplaces, roles, skills, and abilities of people who work in them (MOET, 1995, p. 28). Students do not receive formal career counseling during their CIA, but they are expected to acquire personal insights into possible careers available in their communities.

2.17 Youth employment preparation

There has been a persistent concern in Ontario education policy that students may possess few work-related skills by the time they graduate, and this has sometimes been expressed as dissatisfaction with the academic focus of the education system. The Royal Commission (1994) consultations discovered a fear that the school system was inadequate to prepare students for a future with an uncertain economy (p. 652). On the other hand, the Royal Commission (1994) found this fear was unwarranted as there was no evidence that schools were failing students "any more or less than they ever have before" (p. 652). This negative public perception led Premier Bob Rae's New Democratic Party (NDP) Government (1993) to overhaul Ontario's curriculum, but their efforts were curtailed by a provincial election in 1995 resulting in a change in government (Winter & McEachern, 2001, p. 683; p. 684).

Harris' PC Government brought another period of intensive educational reforms from 1995 to 2002 (Lewington, 1996, p. A49). His Government used many of the Royal Commission (1994) recommendations to produce its *New Foundations for Ontario Education* in 1995 (Davidson-Harden & Allison, 2003, p. 6; MOET, 1995, p. 2). The new curriculum was intended to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to be productive citizens and pursue careers in the contemporary marketplace (MOET, 2000c, p. 1). The *Ontario's Parent Survey on Education in 2001* was used to gauge whether the new curriculum had changed the public's perception that schools were not preparing students for work (MOET, 2001c, p. 26). The majority of parents or guardians (67%) stated that building the skills necessary to get a job was a major priority (MOET, 2001b, p. 13). The study revealed that the perception that the education system favours academics over work placements persisted, despite the Government's reforms.

Harris' academic curriculum was almost devoid of career education for some students and still lacked career education for all students. One method of filling this education gap would have been to greatly expand the successful Co-op education courses. One of the things the Government did to address the public's concerns was the addition of the CIA program which demands that all students have work placements. The educational void that the CIA program filled seemed to represent a huge advance in work education. Despite this praise, the Ministry managed to marginalize the program by making it extracurricular, by not assigning credits, by not writing curriculum for it, and by not incorporating an in-school component. The Ministry sent a clear message to the public that it was willing to provide work education, but not at the expense of the academic

curriculum, meaning that no class time was spent doing it. The Ministry would add work education to the curriculum, but only if it did not tax the education system financially by paying teachers to organize or evaluate the activities or have the Ministry write special curriculum for the CIA program. The reality of the CIA program's design suggested that Co-op education courses were the limit to how far the Ministry was willing to deviate from academics at the time of the reforms, and so the negative perception persists.

2.18 The ever-changing job market and a "relevant education"

Youth employment preparation is made more difficult by the constantly changing job market (Radwanski, 1987, p. 22). Recognizing economic and technological trends in the workplace is necessary to provide a relevant education. Historically, education was supposed to develop students who are compassionate citizens and academically successful, but Hall and Dennis (1968) acknowledged the need to respond to the changing work environment by providing more vocational training (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 83). Businesses need graduates who are self-directed, responsible employees, who can solve problems, who can work in teams, can operate a computer, and understand the latest technology (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 85). Radwanski (1987) stated that a relevant education would help students to develop the "ability to adapt to a changing work environment" (Radwanski, 1987, p. 22). Ontario's current curriculum for the Guidance and Career education grade 10 course addressed this issue in the strand "Exploration of Opportunities" when it stated the expectation that students "identify and describe economic and societal trends such as globalization, developments in information technology,

emerging work style alternatives and changing demographics" (MOET, 1999b, p. 17). The CIA program tries to provide a relevant education recognizing the ever-changing workplace by expecting all students to explore their local job market.

2.19 The concept of general education

Youth preparation for employment is often linked to the concept of basic or general education commissioned reports and scholarly literature. According to Toole and Toole (1995), the goal of the education process is to mass-produce standardized, educated citizens and workers (p. 85). There is little agreement in the literature on whether schools should provide work experience as part of the mainstream education. Hall and Dennis (1968) suggested the purpose of a school is to provide a general education and that vocational training is best left to post-secondary institutions (OSIA, 1969, p. 12; Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 83). Despite this, Hall and Dennis (1968) acknowledge that "activity and experience, both physical and mental, are often the best means of gaining knowledge and acquiring facts, but these fact are best retained when used and understood" (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 60). Radwanski (1987) believed that modifying education to an individual child's aptitudes, interests or presumed career potential or intentions was less important than providing a general education relevant to the needs of society and of the economy (p. 24). He also argued that it was "simply not possible to predict what kind of skills will be needed in the work force (in the future) and the goal of education is to provide a high quality general education" (p. 13).

This idea of a general education was echoed by Premier Mike Harris' PC Government when it stated that "the prerequisite (of a skilled work force) is a high level, high quality, but general education" (MOET, 1995, p. 13). This "general or basic education" concept was apparently the basis for the CIA program because of the great latitude sponsors, parents or guardians, and students are permitted in the activities, and the broad nature of the CIA program's objectives.

2.20 Skills vital for employment

Ministry policy documents often list several skills vital for employment, but no one document lists them all at once. The *Common Curriculum* included employability skills as important for students to develop in order to function effectively in the world of work (MOET, 1995, p. 6). The skills mentioned most often were: the ability to communicate; leadership; the ability to work collaboratively in the workplace; and development of organizational skills.

Communication is a vital skill students need to acquire before graduation. The Ministry described its communication expectations in the current grade 10 Civics' curriculum. According to these guidelines, students should be able communicate their own beliefs, points of view, informed judgements, and effectively use appropriate discussion skills like persuasion and negotiation (MOET, 1999c, p. 52). Although communication skills were not listed specifically in the CIA program's objectives, the Ministry links CIA in this Civics curriculum to which communication plays an important role.

Another skill is the ability to work collaboratively in the workplace. In the 1995, the *Common Curriculum* listed working collaboratively as one of the ten essential student learning outcomes. The fifth outcome stated "students are to apply skills needed to work and get along with other people" (MOET, 1995, p. 27). To accomplish this, students must work collaboratively and effectively with others on common tasks (MOET, 1995, p. 25). The grade 10 Civics curriculum states that students should be able to collaborate in group enquiries and community activities at the end of the course (MOET, 1999c, p. 52). The Civics curriculum' focus on collaboration was clearly incorporated into CIA program to try to change the public's perception that youth are disconnected from their communities.

Several commissioned reports mentioned that leadership is another skill students need to develop before graduating. The ROSE report (1982) seems to demand that students play a role in their own education decision-making. Hall and Dennis (1968) state that there are many types of leadership students need including academic, aesthetic (leadership on a personal level), and vocational (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 10; p. 199). The grade 10 Civics curriculum guide states that at the end of the course students would "provide leadership when appropriate" while actively participating in their CIA (MOET, 1999b, p. 52). The CIA program require students to have sophisticated leadership skills as they must take charge of their own CIA with little guidance from school staff.

Organizational skills are often named as being important in commissioned reports, Ministry documents, and the CIA program. The organizational skills required of

students to complete their CIA include making and keeping appointments, bringing adequate equipment required to do their activities, keeping records of their activities, and recognizing deadlines for handing in these records. In 1999, the grade 10 Guidance and Career Studies course required students to have the ability to "identify a broad range of options for present and future learning, local work, and community involvement" (MOET, 1999b, p. 16). The successful completion of the CIA program for students depends heavily on their ability to locate and organize their own activities. Students must take the lead to plan, participate, and record their CIA details with little assistance from educators.

2.21 Importance of attitude

Many Ministry studies over the years, as well as the CIA program, state the importance of having positive attitudes towards employment. Hall and Dennis (1968) expect school experiences to help students to recognize the dignity of work at all levels and to respect both physical and intellectual work (p. 45). The ROSE report (1982) suggests that education is to prepare students for entrance into the workforce with all the attitudes that would make them productive and successful upon graduation (MOE, 1982, p. 6; MOET, 1995, p. 27). The Ministry linked the CIA program to the Guidance and Career curriculum and its strand "Exploration of Opportunities" which deals with employment issues (MOET, 1999b, p. 16). The Ministry expect students to complete their CIA with positive attitudes towards their activities and to their community sponsor.

2.22 Chapter summary

Categorical themes were used to trace the program's evolution in the literature. The two themes that influenced the CIA program's creation most were citizenship, and employment. The themes identified in this chapter suggests that the CIA program has roots in the Ministry policy documents and commissioned reports. CIA policies were developed without consulting all the partners of education involved. The speed of the program's implementation in September, 1999 did not allow the opportunity for the CIA program to be discussed to any significant extent in scholarly literature.

Chapter 3: Educational theory review

This chapter examines the research question: What is the nature of the CIA program? Answering this question was made difficult because the CIA program does not fit easily into any established category of an educational program. It is difficult to classify because of its vague title and the Ministry's omission of reference to an educational theory on which the program is based. This chapter is designed to address this gap in the Ministry policy documents and commissioned reports that mention the CIA program.

3.00 Vague title

The title Community Involvement Activities (CIA) provides three bits of information: the location of the program; the fact that the participants must get involved; and the expectation that participants do activities. This title by itself does not provide enough information to classify the program, nor to understand its goals and procedures. In order to determine the nature or character of the program, it is necessary to review the Ministry policy documents and commissioned reports on CIA program. The first step is to identify into which category of program the activities might fall, and then, an educational theory may be easier to pinpoint.

3.01 Categories of programs

The CIA program has elements of many types of programs, but it does not fit neatly into any one of these categories. At first glance, the CIA program had

characteristics of a volunteering program, a pre-professional program, a service-learning program (SLP), community-based learning (CBL) program, a leisure program, and an educational program. In the following section, each type of program is listed and the characteristics of the program compared to those of the CIA program in order to highlight the various elements that make up the activities.

3.01.01 Pre-professional programs

Internships, practicums, field placements, and Co-op work experiences fall into a category of pre-professional experiences that are often offered as stand-alone courses (Mooney & Edwards, 2001, p. 4). Students serve the community by relating course content and existing skills to real-life settings, and receive credit for doing so (p. 4). The CIA program does not share all of the components of a typical pre-professional program.

3.01.02 Leisure programs

The CIA program has some characteristics of a leisure program because it is extracurricular, and its activities are completed outside of school hours. Leisure programs are expected to be entertaining. Nothing prevents students from choosing their CIA based on the amount of potential fun to be had. Clearly, the CIA program is not a leisure program because leisure programs are optional, and are held in parks, schools or other recreational halls, not usually in workplaces.

3.01.03 Educational programs

The CIA program has characteristics of an educational program because it is linked, if only loosely, to Ontario's grade 10 Civics, and Guidance and Career education

curriculums. The Ministry considers these activities to be part of the school's program (MOET, 1999d, p. 1). Usually educational courses award credits at the completion of evaluation activities. The CIA lack any quality assessment or evaluation of experiences beyond the tracking of the number of hours completed. Also, although the CIA documents offer a rationale as documented in Chapter One, the design of the program does not appear to be based on an educational theory, and there is only limited school staff supervision or planning involved. The CIA program does not appear to fit neatly into an educational program category, despite the Ministry's assertion that it is part of the secondary school's program.

3.01.03.01 Cooperative education programs

In 1998, the teachers' union, the Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF) expressed concern that the current Civics curriculum implies that the CIA might replace cooperative education courses (Co-op), and other programs such as job shadowing, and work experiences, "take-our-kids-to-work" day, career days, career fairs, workplace tours, job twinning, work internships, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), mentor programs, and project-based learning activities (p. 1; MOET, 2000b, p. 2). It is not surprising that the Ministry would like to replace the expensive and labour-intensive Co-op courses with an extracurricular program like the CIA program. The two programs are very different, and based on this, the activities might make a poor substitute for Co-op courses.

A comparison of the CIA and Co-op programs reveals that the two programs are

very different in their organization, delivery, and evaluation of students' work experiences. Overall, the CIA program is inferior to Co-op programs because the CIA program is under-developed in areas of both in-school components' and placements' pedagogy and design. The activities lack safeguards that protect and aid students during their work experiences such as insurance, training and school staff supervision. These shortfalls in curriculum and work placement design could leave students vulnerable. The activities are neither long enough nor well planned, and therefore the quality of the CIA experiences are largely left to chance.

Despite the limitations of the CIA program, it is superior to Co-op courses in certain areas because it is flexible, allowing students to try different activities, to choose the amount of effort they want to expend, and to set the length of their activities. The program is hindered somewhat by its mandatory nature, and whether or not students have access to their preferred CIA. The CIA program and the Co-op courses are similarly affected by the inequalities in access to activities for students living in rural and remote areas due to low population in rural communities and fewer businesses in their areas.

The CIA program's design lacks the guidance of an educational theory and strong links to the curriculum that provide a framework to organize design components like those found in Co-op programs, needed to ensure the provision of a high quality program. In its present condition, CIA do not offer students the educational value of the Co-op courses, and as a result, the Ministry would be ill advised to consider the teacher's Union interpretation that the activities could be a replacement for Co-op courses. The

Ministry would probably be more successful if it expanded the well established Co-op courses, and improved the design of the CIA work experiences for those students who cannot take Co-op courses.

3.01.03.02 Round Square

Another service program that I compared the CIA program to was Round Square. The association was formed in 1966 (Round Square Organization (RSO), 2000, p. 1). According to the Round Square Organization, it is a group of 50 schools in many countries which apply the educational principles of Dr. Kurt Hahn (p. 1). He was an educator who founded Salem School in Germany to develop youth whose convictions are rooted in personal responsibility, kindness, and justice (p. 1). The central goal of Hahn's philosophy was that schools should not only prepare students for post secondary education or work, but should also prepare them for life by facing life directly (p. 1). Other goals were to develop every student into a whole person through academic, physical, cultural and spiritual experiences (p. 1). Round square is based on the acronym "IDEALS" which represent International Understanding, Democracy and Leadership, Environmental Responsibility, Adventure, Leadership, and Service. Round Square has influenced other programs like Outward Bound and United World Colleges (p. 1). Clearly, the CIA shares many of the Round Square programs objectives so it could be possible that the Ministry was also influenced by one of these diverse service programs when it created the CIA program.

3.01.04 Volunteer programs

Many students believe that the CIA program is a volunteer program based on their efforts to define "volunteering" when asked about their CIA. In articles presented in *"Pitch In-Celebrating Youth Volunteerism"*, a student stated "After all, to volunteer is to willingly give your time, and with that, a piece of yourself" (Petrovsky, 2004, p. 1). Another student stated that "the dictionary meaning of the phrase volunteer work would be to do or to give something without being forced" (Gumber, 2004, p. 1). On the other hand, the Ministry was careful never to refer to the program as a volunteer program. The Ministry recognized that CIA do not qualify as a volunteering program because students do not participate voluntarily. Owen and Wang (1996) state that when programs are optional, the outcomes for students are generally more positive (p. 16). Also many volunteer programs require students to write a brief summary of their experiences rather than an in-depth processing (Dunlap, 1998, p. 2). The CIA program does not fit the category of volunteering due to its mandatory nature and its lack of any form of reflective activities. Students' service in the community could be considered volunteering if the CIA program was made optional. The comparison of these two programs reveals a link between the CIA program and a service-learning program (SLP) as a potential category in which to place the CIA program.

3.01.05 Service-learning programs (SLPs)

The CIA program shares many objectives with SLP. Fredericksen (2000) states that SLPs promote students' civic responsibility, personal development, enhanced learning, a sense of caring for others, and the application of newly acquired academic

skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities (p. 64; Owen & Wang, 1996, p. 3). SLPs are supposed to provide students with structured time to reflect on what they did during their activities. Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote students' learning and development (Fredericksen, 2000, p. 2). Boss (1995) further defines service-learning as an instructional strategy involving real-life settings, where academic knowledge is applied to previous experience in order to meet real community needs (Boss, 1995, p. 20). The *U.S. National and Community Service (NCS) Act* of 1990 adds that service-learning includes students' active participation in school-coordinated and organized service experiences. Billig and Eyler (2002) identify factors that lead to the success to SLPs: strong leadership, cultural acceptance, organizational expectations, and the availability of financial resources (p. 72). The CIA program has elements of SLPs because it is supposed to meet the actual needs of the community, to help to foster a sense of caring for others, to develop civic responsibility and is coordinated in collaboration with the school and community. Berv (1998) goes even further to suggest that SLPs also must contain an evaluation component. These definitions echo many of the objectives found in the CIA program's documents. The CIA program deviates from service-learning models because SLPs are usually integrated into the academic curriculum, and provide structured time for students to reflect on their service activity.

3.01.06 Community-based learning (CBL)

Another type of program to which I compared the CIA program is Community-based learning (CBL) which is defined as the broad set of teaching and learning strategies that enable youth and adults to learn what they want to learn from any segment of the community. Principles of CBL relate to the ever changing society, the learner, the learning processes, and sources for learning (Owens & Wang, 1996, p. 2). The motivations for CBL programs vary, but there is a concern that many jobs in the future will require different skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, development of a caring attitude towards others, awareness of responsibilities in the community, and ability to apply knowledge (p. 3). The components for CBL programs are similar to those of the SLPs including framing (planning), the activity itself, and reflection. Again reflection activities appear to be a critical step in CBL (p. 6).

CBL generally has similar outcomes to the CIA such as academic, career and vocational, personal-social development, service, work values, and use of community resources (Owen & Wang, 1996, p. 9). Like the CIA program, CBL programs give students opportunities to explore possible careers before graduation, to know about their communities, and to learn about the application of academic subjects to real-life settings (OID, 2004, p. 1).

CBL programs are different from the CIA program because CBL programs often require teachers' involvement, and Ministry financing (p. 12). The greater time demands of a CBL program often make it more difficult to integrate community-based activities into the curriculum, and the Ministry must have taken this into account because it made

the CIA program extracurricular (Erickson & Anderson, 1997, p. 152). Another difference between CBL and the CIA program is that most CBL programs have academic and civic responsibility expectations (Carter, M., Cadge, M., Rivero, W., & Curra, S., 2002, p. 5). The CIA program is not academic in nature, but it does contain civics goals. These differences and similarities suggest that the CIA program is not a typical CBL program, but there is a category of CBL program in which the CIA program could be classified: A service add-on.

3.01.07 Service add-ons

Service add-ons are optional programs where students' participation results in additional credit or additional points for volunteering (Mooney & Edwards, 2001, p. 4). Opting not to participate in a service add-on will not prevent a student from passing a course, and will not influence graduation outcomes. Mooney and Edwards (2001) state that optional add-ons inspire in students a positive attitude toward future volunteering opportunities (Mooney & Edwards, 2001, p. 4). A disadvantage of add-ons is the tendency for the volunteer activity to remain peripheral to the courses to which they is linked. Another disadvantage to add-ons is their limited duration compared to Co-op courses and other placements.

The CIA program shares many of the service add-on program's components. The program is limited in its duration like most add-ons. Despite the Ministry's statement that the CIA program is a school program, the extracurricular nature of it could qualify it as a peripheral add-on. A common goal shared by other service add-ons is to positively

impact students' attitudes towards volunteering. Optional service add-ons experience low student involvement, decreasing the program's impact on the community (Mooney & Edwards, 2001, p. 4). The creators of the CIA program opted to make it mandatory instead of optional because they anticipated that only a few students would choose to participate voluntarily. Service add-ons do not include any reflection activities, nor does extensive planning play a crucial role. These are two of the most compelling reasons to classify the CIA program as a service add-on.

In terms of links to courses, and accreditation, the CIA program does not fit the typical service add-on model. Service add-ons are usually linked to only one course, whereas the CIA program can be loosely linked to two different courses (Civics and Career and Guidance Education courses). The program is primarily a graduation requirement, and yet, no academic credit or additional point towards a grade is awarded to students at the completion of their CIA. The number of CIA hours accumulated is used to determine eligibility to graduate. Despite the similarities that the CIA program has with service add-ons, the evaluation differences are enough to suggest that the program is not a typical service add-on.

3.02 Matriculation service add-on (MSA)

Frustrated by my inability to fit the CIA program into any current CBL category and to answer the research sub question, "As what type of program is the CIA classified?", I believe that it is necessary to create a new category in which to place the CIA program. The new category is a variation on the CBL service add-on that focuses on the fact that the

CIA program is a graduation service requirement: a Matriculation Service Add-on (MSA). The Ministry has created a new type of service add-on that warrants a proper definition. A MSA is a CBL program that is a graduation requirement, and as a result, it is mandatory. MSAs lack reflection, in-school instruction time, and academic evaluation components. Despite the lack of in-school component, this new type of service add-on can be conceptually linked very loosely to one or more courses. This kind of short, intense work experience requires only limited supervision from school staff because CIA are held in the community. The purpose of a MSA is to develop student's civic responsibility, citizenship, and stimulate their awareness of careers and other employment issues. Ontario's CIA program could be the first example of a MSA.

3.03 Educational theories

Another research sub-question that this thesis explores is "On what educational theory is the CIA based?" Educational theories represent cognitive and linguistic templates that provide conceptual grounding needed for the creation of curriculum (Billig, 2002, p. 4). There is no clear educational theory associated with the CIA program in the Ministry policy documents. This is a shocking omission by the Ministry because there are several educational theories that would support the CIA programs including experiential learning, constructivism, multi-cultural education approaches, critical reflection, and preparation for civic responsibility (Erickson & Anderson, 1997, p. 3).

Clearly, the CIA program has aspects of all of these schools of thought.

Preparation for civic responsibility is a main objective of the CIA program due to its link

to the Civics curriculum. Service learning is based on David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Model as a conceptual framework for developing and implementing service-learning curricula (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 10). Kolb's Model integrates Kurt Lewin's (1890 to 1947) action research process, Jean Piaget's (1896 to 1980) dynamics of assimilation and accommodation, and John Dewey's (1859 to 1952) concepts of reflection and his concept that a student can learn a skill by doing an activity (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 10). Kolb's theory is based on the premise that reflection transforms experiences into new understanding, but it does not address the central role of students' interaction between themselves and the community. John Dewey's (1963) experiential theory of learning, in which students learn skills by doing activities, was another educational theory which the Ministry could have used to create a framework for the CIA program (p. 26). Contemporary educational psychologists have drawn upon Dewey's ideas, and the research of Piaget, to create a learning theory called constructivism (p. 10).

3.04 Constructivism and CIA

The constructivist view of learning suggests that students should be active learners who construct knowledge out of their personal experiences. Knowledge does not exist outside the student, but is molded, modified, and expanded by students depending on their experiences (Payne, 2000, p. 6). The tenets of modern constructivism include: learning is dependent on the prior conceptions the learner brings to the experience; the learner must construct his or her own meaning; learning is contextual; learning requires shared understandings that learners negotiate with others; and effective teaching involves

understanding students' existing cognitive structure (Payne, 2000, p. 8). Constructivism is expected to provide a framework onto which to develop appropriate learning activities to assist delivery of the curriculum. Another tenet of constructivism is that teachers use one or more key strategies to facilitate conceptual change, but taking into account the congruence of the concepts with student understanding and conceptualization. The constructivism philosophy works equally well for both academic and service components such as programs like the CIA program because it recommends placing greater emphasis on learning how to learn rather than on accumulating facts (Payne, 2000, p. 8).

There are many theories about service learning on which the Ministry could have based the CIA program. I believe that the constructivism model is superior because it incorporates aspects of John Dewey's (1963) theory of experiential learning which is vital to learning. Also, constructivism's emphasis on the prior knowledge of students, and their need to construct their own learning, supports the need for the addition of reflection activities before, during, and after their CIA. Constructivism could be an educational theory on which the CIA program could be based.

3.05 Empirical research on community service in Ontario

The CIA program is a fairly recent addition to Ontario's graduation requirements, having been implemented 6 years ago. In the period of its existence, only two groups of Ontario's English public sector students have had to achieve this graduation requirement. The first group of graduates were the "Double cohort" who graduated in 2003, and the second group were those students who graduated in 2004. As a result of the newness of

this topic, very little scholarly empirical research has been published on the CIA program. My thesis adds to this research literature. The following section is a summary of the most recent research related to CIA.

In 2002, A. J. C. King published the *Double cohort Study Phase 2 Report for the Ontario Ministry of Education*. This is a commissioned government report that examines the CIA program, alongside its focus on the impact of the restructuring of the secondary school program on student applications to universities and colleges in 2003. Two questions about the CIA program were asked in the survey. The survey asked in question 21 "how many hours of CIA have you completed so far?" The study reported:

By the time the survey was administered (February/March), half of the grade 11 students had completed at least half of the 40 community involvement hours required before graduation, but less than one-third had not begun to meet the requirements. About 60% of the second cohort of grade 10 students in the restructured program had begun their community involvement requirement and one-fifth of them had completed their required hours. The requirement does not appear to be presenting problems for students (p. 4).

This statement shows that the study is interested in the students' ability to complete the hours and does not address the quality of students' experiences. This form of quantitative investigation does not really show anything about the programs impact on students education. This question in King (2002)'s study was not relevant to my thesis. The CIA program is a graduation requirement, and as a result, students will complete it eventually.

King (2002) also asked: "What activity(ies) have you done or are you planning to do?" The study classified in broad categories the most popular activities as being "coaching or sports activities, fund raising or charity events, day care, animal care,

mentoring, religious associations, community events, and clean-up programs" (p. 67).

This information is more useful because it shows what students are doing with their time.

I did not expect to find anything in a commissioned report from the Ministry on the quality of students' CIA program experiences because generally, students' opinion of programs seem to be rarely included in this type of document.

Without much success finding other research studies on the CIA program, I decided to expand my examination to recent studies on volunteering in Ontario. As mentioned above, the CIA program is a new form of service add-on so I tried finding service add-on research, but this was another area lacking in empirical research. I was more successful in using volunteering as the next topic to search for empirical research. I found two projects by Meinhard and Foster (1998) and (1999) who completed their two studies just before Premier Mike Harris' PC Government's restructuring.

Meinhard and Foster (1998) published a two-part study called *Community Service Programs in Toronto's Secondary Schools*. The study has two phases: Phase 1 and Phase 2. The rationale of the study was to identify what educational initiatives Toronto schools were offering students with respect to community service. The first phase of the study used a telephone interview and it sampled 190 schools asking about:

the length of time the program was in place, grades involved, whether the program was mandatory, how many hours of service was required, number of students participating, number of staff members involved, how students find their placements, how records are kept, whether the school has evaluated their program. All respondents were asked school demographics, number of students, number of staff and whether the school was coed or not (p. 6).

This phase of the study covers the specifics of the programs. Since the CIA program is required only in the public sector, I will only report findings related to that sector.

Meinhard and Foster (1998) used multiple-response questions and scales that allowed them to report percentages and statistics that total more than one hundred for an individual question. The study reported that 37% of public schools had volunteer community service programs. Despite the fact that 43% of these schools had mandatory service programs operating in 1996, the average student participation rate in all sectors was 10%, and the average number of hours students participated was 12 hours per semester. A third of respondents reported that their schools had two or three staff members involved in their programs, and on average, the programs had been in place 7 years.

Meinhard and Foster (1998) said that the Toronto school system had made "a good start" in its efforts to provide "students some hands on experience in volunteering time to serve their community" (p. 8). They reported that there was no clear policy at the school board level, that the programs were teacher-run, and that the programs were unique to the schools where the organizing teachers worked (p. 8). This phase of the study focused on the program specifics, but it did not report the name or location of any specific program. The study did not describe what type of service programs were being done in these Toronto schools. Some questions are left unanswered. Were the mandatory service activities linked to a course and operated as service add-ons? Did the teachers in Toronto use closure activities such as reflection activities? Did the teachers have a curriculum they used to base assignments and then evaluated students work? Did the students get assigned marks upon the completion of the program?

As the result of these unanswered questions, there is no way to be sure that these programs are anything like the Ministry's current CIA. The descriptive statistics presented in the study suggest that individual schools were running service programs in their communities before the Ministry decided to set a Province-wide program. The Phase 1 of Meinhard and Foster (1998) could have influenced the Ministry in its decision to create the CIA program by alerting them to the fact only a small percentage of students were taking advantage the teachers' well-established service programs. It would be interesting to know if these teachers in the public schools are still operating their own community service programs now that the CIA program has been introduced.

In Phase 2, Meinhard and Foster (1998) surveyed 233 students from the three school sectors in Toronto. The study reported no significant differences between the different school sectors, so the study did not report separately the public schools' findings (p. 9). Despite this limitation, the study asked students, using a questionnaire, about their service experience, educational competence, personal and social responsibility, acceptance of diversity, communication skills, work orientation, engagement in service learning, leadership, formal helping behaviour and self-esteem (p. 9).

The majority of respondents reported that they were satisfied with their overall experience saying that most felt the program was very helpful to the individuals being served and others reported that they learned a skill through the experience that will be helpful in the future (p. 9). The majority of respondents reported that they designed or selected their own specific volunteer projects, but some were assigned their activities. The

study does not state if any other adult besides teachers participated in assigning students their activities. The CIA program requires parents or guardians to help their children find appropriate activities.

The places where students were volunteering included hospitals, day care centres, homeless shelters, and food banks for which they fund raised and collected food. Respondents reported doing additional volunteering outside of the community programs organized at school by their teachers. Many students worked in schools as teacher's aides, mentors, tutors, or helping with school clean-up. The CIA program does not allow any activities to be held during school hours.

Phase 2 of this study assessed the quality of students' school-based volunteering programs. There appears to be major differences between the school-based, teacher-driven volunteer programs that Meinhard and Foster (1998) studied, and the current Ministry's version of a school program. Phase 1 of this study did help to answer the question about the quality of experience of students experiences, but the study focused more on program specifics. Phase 2, at least, asked students about their experiences and provided information on the state of volunteering programs in Toronto schools.

Meinhard and Foster (1999) published another study on volunteering in Toronto schools called *Impact of volunteer community service programs on students in Toronto's secondary schools*. The study examined ten schools and had a sample size of 467 students who answered a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked questions on the student's service experience, educational competence, personal and social responsibility, acceptance of

diversity, communication skills, work orientations, engagement in service learning, leadership, formal helping behaviour, and self-esteem (p. 5). Some students reported that they designed their own placement activities, but most felt that they were not in control of their volunteering in this study because they had their activities assigned to them. Students reported that they worked in placements that directly helped other people by working in nursing homes or shelters, or by tutoring and mentoring. They also participated in activities that indirectly helped other people by raising money, collecting food and clothing for people in need. Other students felt that they helped their community or the environment because they recycled, cleaned parks, and got involved politically by gathering signatures on petitions (p. 6).

Meinhard and Foster (1999) suggest that "what appears to be missing from these programs is adequate follow-up" because students reported having no opportunity to discuss their experiences in class and even fewer students were required to keep a diary as part of their voluntary service project. Meinhard and Foster (1999) remarked that the role of adults in these programs was "hands off" with only ten percent of students reported discussing their experiences with their teachers. The CIA program also lacks closure activities, suggesting the Ministry might have modeled it after a program that also lacked them, or the Ministry did not see the need for them. Another factor that Meinhard and Foster (1999) suggested as a reason for not incorporating these reflection activities is the issue of workload for teachers that resulted in teacher strikes and work-to-rule initiatives against Premier Mike Harris' PC Government in the 1998/1999 school year (p. 5). Meinhard and Foster (1999) stated that the CIA program was made with no systematic

evaluation on the impact of community service on either participants or recipients (p. 5). They also suggested that until they did their study no one collected information about the outcomes of adolescent participation in the Toronto school-based volunteering activities (p. 5).

Support of students during their experiences seems to be an area of concern because only a third of respondents felt that the adults at the volunteer site took a real interest in them, and that they needed more help from their adult supervisor. Some students felt that adults criticized them or their work leaving these students with negative attitudes about level of support they received from adults while working in the community (p. 7).

Meinhard and Foster (1999) stated that the quality of the initial volunteering experience is pivotal to engender a life-long commitment to the voluntary sector (p. 6). The majority of the respondents reported experiencing a very meaningful placement, being happy, and very satisfied with their volunteer service experiences, but between 25% to 33% did not describe their experience in positive terms (p. 7). Meinhard and Foster (1999) suggested that the opportunity to do meaningful service may motivate uninterested students to stay in school (p. 8).

Meinhard and Foster (1999) asked students their opinions on issues such as employment, skill development, and life-long commitment to volunteering. The majority of respondents said that they learned a skill that would be helpful for the future, but fewer felt it helped them think about the kind of job they might want (p. 9). Only 21% felt their

service helped them learn more about a career in which they thought they might be interested (p. 9). The majority of students felt that youth in general needed encouragement to participate in volunteer programs, but they did not support any move to make it a compulsory requirement. Students felt that they made a contribution, that they felt the service they performed was helpful to the community, and to the individuals they served (p. 10). In terms of students developing life-long commitment to community service, the results were encouraging, because 65% of respondents said they were committed to service in the present and in the future. Other students reported doing additional volunteering over and above their community placement activities (p. 10).

Another empirical study written by Foster and Meinhard (2000) examined volunteering programs in selected Toronto schools focusing on their content, structure, participant choice, participant involvement, and the level of feedback and reflection (p. 10). They suggested that there were some characteristics that might be necessary to develop life-long attitudes towards volunteering. These features included:

- a) Choosing projects and programs in which participants have meaningful work. Participants want real responsibility, challenging tasks and a variety of activities.
- b) Designing projects and programs so that participants have significant input. This serves to increase involvement, commitment, satisfaction, and the positive impacts of participation on social development.
- c) Incorporating structured opportunities for feedback and reflection. This includes in-class processes in addition to discussions with family and friends about their experiences.
- d) Ensuring committed and adequate on-site adult supervision. Adult support enhances improvement in social development and commitment to future volunteering (p. 16).

Foster and Meinhard (2000) assigned these roles to either the Ministry or to the community sponsor. They felt that the Ministry has control over formal reflection and feedback components, and control over the range of activities allowed as a community service requirement for graduation. Sponsors determine if students do meaningful work, the quality of adult supervision, and the level of student input in their activity. I feel that the Ministry is responsible for more because it has access to curriculum specialists who could produce a CIA hand book for sponsors and parents or guardians to guide them in the roles that Foster and Meinhard (2000) have assigned.

3.06 Chapter summary

The classification of the CIA program was challenging due to various reasons. The title of the program is vague implying only that students get involved in their communities. The Ministry's simple title for the CIA program only describes the geography of where the program is held and provides little information about what capacity students are to fulfill within the community. To compound the problem of the vagueness of the program's title, the policy documents on the CIA program omit any reference to an underlying educational theory, and do not mention into what category the program fits. The result of this literature review is the suggestion that the CIA program represents a new form of a community-based learning program. The CIA program almost fits into the category of a service add-on, but there are several differences that suggests the program is a variation because the CIA program is primarily a graduation requirement. The term "Matriculation Service Add-on (MSA)" is my recommended title for this

alternate form of service add-on. MSA and the CIA program require an educational theory, and this researcher recommends constructivism as an excellent framework on which to develop future CIA curriculum. Although there is limited research on the CIA program, using related research on volunteering, a partial review of it was possible.

The research used to inform this study included King (2002), Meinhard and Foster (1998), Meinhard and Foster (1999), and Foster and Meinhard (2000). Although these projects did not totally apply to my topic, I feel they constitute the bulk of the empirical literature on the topic of CIA. In general, the few studies available found that there were teacher-organized volunteer programs operating in Ontario before the CIA program came into effect, but there was no clear policy on service programs stated at the school board level. What programs there were lacked adequate follow-up, and had limited adult involvement. The various studies listed above reported that students found that their volunteering experiences were helpful to their community, and they learned some skills that will be helpful to them in the future. The studies stated that the programs were less effective in career education. These studies were very informative, but they did not deal specifically with the CIA program with the exception of King (2002). My study may add to the above mentioned literature, and will hopefully add some valuable insight into the quality of students' CIA experiences.

Chapter 4: Research design

This research study is exploratory in nature. The study's design allows for a general investigation of students' experiences acquired during their CIA. It has two sections: a preliminary study, and a main study which examines two consecutive cohorts of Ontario secondary school graduates.

4.00 The preliminary study

This study uses an Internet questionnaire as its primary data collection device. There are many advantages of using an Internet questionnaire. The questionnaire is more interactive than a mail survey. Students get to control what questions they answer, when they answer questions, and move around the website easily using the software's progress navigation chart. The Internet questionnaire is also visually more attractive than a black and white photocopy of a questionnaire because the Internet questionnaire is colourful. The presentation and interactivity of the Internet questionnaire will have helped to hold students' attention.

There are many technological advantages to using an Internet questionnaire to collect data from University students. The students are regularly contacted using email by their course instructors and this researcher was confident that the majority of students would have the technological knowledge to use a computer and email. There are many computer labs in campus and most students have a personal computer, so I was sure that the students would have access to a computer with an Internet connection. Computer hardware technology and highspeed Internet access on campus was advanced enough to

quickly manage a large file size of the questionnaire. The researcher was hoping that even if the student is not interested in of the research topic, the fact that receiving an Internet questionnaire on a research study may be a new experience for most student and they might try the questionnaire because they were simply curious about what the questionnaire. The technology allowed the immediate return of the respondents questionnaire. The database software organizes the data and allow it to be exported to other software for various forms of analysis. This automated entry of data prevents a lot of human error that occurs when using paper questionnaires. Another helpful feature of the internet software package is that written comments can be cut and pasted into the final report easily, ensuring that students are not misquoted. The software also produces a summary report on the data that is helpful in the preliminary assessment of the results. The computer also protects the identity of respondents by assigning them a number. There are many technological advantages to this method of reaching students in a University setting

There are a few disadvantages to using an Internet questionnaire. Data collected could be easily lost due to malfunctioning computers and once lost the data would be very difficult to find. This disadvantage was minimized by having a preliminary study to troubleshoot any problems with the software before issuing it to the sample group. The distribution of the questionnaire has been made more difficult with increased privacy laws pertaining to contacting students. Overall, the advantages outnumber the disadvantages and the disadvantages could be avoided by good planning.

UWO's "Survey in a Box" was the software package used to write the questionnaire. An Internet questionnaire was the chosen distribution method for four reasons; 1) the researcher's wanted to introduce technology into the data collection process; 2) the determination that this method was the most effective way to contact the target sample groups; 3) the immediate return of the completed questionnaires; 4) and the confidential features of the software package protected the respondents' identities. The preliminary study tested whether the Internet questionnaire was clearly written and easily understood by the respondents before issuing it to the main study's participants. Also, the preliminary study checked that the technology supporting the questionnaire was working properly.

Students who participated in the preliminary study were electronically mailed a letter of information which contained an address that linked to the preliminary questionnaire. The preliminary questionnaire was administered to several students at the University of Western Ontario (UWO). After viewing the questionnaire some participants reported a couple of problems that needed to be addressed such as navigational computer improvements, spelling and grammatical errors, suggestions for new titles for the sections, and general questions about the CIA program. Once these issues were addressed, the Internet questionnaire was ready to be distributed to the main study's population. Appendix II contains a copy of the electronically mailed a letter of information, and a printed copy of the final Internet questionnaire.

4.01 Main study's design

After the preliminary study, the main study's research began with the use of a modified Internet questionnaire. The main study used the improved preliminary study's questionnaire. The main study is a 2-year research project with sample groups consisting of two consecutive groups of secondary school graduates now attending the UWO.

The first year sample group was quickly and easily contacted with the permission of the UWO registrar using electronic mail because all students are issued an UWO electronic mail address when they register at UWO and in 2003, and some large classes maintained course specific bulk email addresses.

Year 1 sample group consists of first-year, Double cohort students who attended UWO in 2003/2004. The term "Double cohort" refers to students who entered grades 11 and 12 in September, 2001 and graduated from secondary school in 2003 together (MOET, 2002, p. 10). These were the first students to graduate from the new 4-year secondary program and the last students to graduate from the old 5-year Ontario Academic Credit (OAC) program (MOET, 2001d, p. 20). The Double cohort students were located with the assistance of UWO professors who taught a first year Biology course. Over 900 students were recruited at the UWO.

Year 2's sample group graduated in 2004/2005 from Ontario's secondary schools. They are only the second graduating class to complete the CIA program. In the second year of data collection, maintaining consistency in what classes were sampled became a problem because finding another cooperative first year biology instructor was

unsuccessful. In second round of data collection, only 700 students were contacted from first year UWO Sociology and Physics courses.

4.03 Limitations and bias of the study

There are some limitations and biases associated with this research study. The limitations include the sample size and the respondents' demographics. The sample size was small, because the number of students the researcher contacted was limited by the number of professors who gave permission to sample their classes. Over 900 students were contacted, but only a certain portion of this number were eligible to participate in the study due to the sampling criteria. The small size of the sample groups limits the widespread applicability of the study's results, but it does allow for limited statements of findings about this select group of students. In addition to the sampling size, there was a limit on who the study could contact. After the students graduate, it is difficult to locate students from a wide variety of backgrounds. This study focused on the academic students who decided to attend university. The other portion of the student population was not represented in the study.

There is some respondent and researcher bias. The researcher bias was apparent in the preliminary questionnaire and was reduced by rewriting some of the questions and changing the order of the sections of the Internet questionnaire. The bias of students is more difficult to detect because the study was voluntary, and it may have attracted students who had extreme experiences. Students who had very positive, or very negative experiences may be more inclined to respond to a questionnaire, and this could affect the data. A larger sample would have further reduced this bias, but that was not possible, so a

second year of data collection was completed to allow for comparisons of the two data sets.

4.04 Confidentiality measures

Both the Internet questionnaire and this research study's design protects the identity of the respondents and ensures confidentiality in several ways. Firstly, individual student are never personally identified by the researcher, or contacted directly because students are contacted using a bulk course-specific email address or by the University's registrar on behalf of this researcher. Secondly, the computer package that organizes the submitted questionnaires contains no personal identifying information, and the email addresses of the respondents are not recorded by the computer system. Finally, the files containing the submitted questionnaires will be destroyed when the study is completed to further ensure the confidentiality of the informants.

4.05 Chapter summary

This research study is a 2-year exploration of the quality of students' CIA, covering many broad issues such as safety, objectives, and the opinions of students. The study consisted of a preliminary and a main study. The data collection device used in the study is an Internet questionnaire. The computer software package and the careful design of the research study combine to protect the identities of respondents and ensures confidentiality of the project. There are limitations and bias associated with this research study, but careful planning and execution of the study compensates for them. Regardless of my efforts to reduce the above mentioned limitations, the findings of my study are only

suggestive, and do not provide valid inferences to the larger population of students in Ontario.

The study was limited to the province of Ontario, and the results may not be generalizable to other provinces or countries.

Due to the small sample size, the study may have been underpowered.

The study was a cross-sectional design, which only allows for the measurement of variables at a single point in time. This design does not allow for the measurement of changes over time.

The study did not control for confounding variables, which may have influenced the results.

The study did not include a control group, which may have influenced the results.

The study did not include a random sampling method, which may have influenced the results.

The study did not include a standardized measurement tool, which may have influenced the results.

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Chapter 5: Results and Analysis

In order to facilitate the presentation of data collected during the study, the results are organized in themes and supported by relevant survey information.

5.00 Sample populations (N) and labeling of charts

This study offers the reader 2 years of data collection, and all of the graphs show both data sets in order to better visualize any differences between them. The figures are labeled to indicate the chapter and the order in which the figure appears. In the first sample group, 390 out of 900 (43%) respondents returned the Internet questionnaire. In the second sample group, 172 out of 700 people (25%) responded to the questionnaire. Because the questionnaire allows students to skip questions when they answered the questionnaire, the statistics in this study could not use the overall sample totals to do the calculations. The descriptive statistics were calculated using each individual question's total of valid responses. I also used some multiple-response questions and scales that allowed me to report percentages and statistics that total more than one hundred for an individual question. Table 5.01 states the N's for each question and states the question itself.

5.01 Program specifics

There is considerable variation in the types of CIA students are choosing to pursue. In addition to the activities listed in King's (2002) categories, students in this study also volunteered at school activities, cadets, library and archival activities, political campaigning, theatre clubs, and clerical work with a newspaper

Table 5.01: Valid N's for each question and the questions. This table lists the totals (N) for each sample in Year 1 and Year 2. It also lists the response totals for each question. Please refer to the questionnaire in Appendix II for the specific questions.

QUESTION NUMBER AND QUESTION	YEAR 1 N=390	YEAR 2 N=172
1 Are you male or female?	389 (99%)	145 (84%)
2 Describe where you went to secondary school.	280 (72%)	141 (82%)
3 Describe the place where you lived while in secondary school.	369 (95%)	147 (86%)
4 Do you believe the CIA you completed last year helped you decide the following?	300 (77%)	145 (84%)
5 What category of activity(ies) did you complete for your main CIA?	290 (74%)	138 (80%)
6 Estimate the total number of community involvement hours you completed by the time you had graduated?	301 (77%)	139 (81%)
7 Why did you choose to do these types of activity(ies)?	300 (77%)	147 (86%)
8 Do you feel that the activity(ies) you completed last year were educational?	298 (76%)	139 (81%)
9 Do you believe that the CIA program enhanced or improved the quality of your secondary education?	296 (76%)	139 (81%)
10 Do you think that the CIA program should be a mandatory graduation requirement?	296 (76%)	139 (81%)
11 Were your volunteering experience in the CIA program primarily positive or negative?	297 (77%)	139 (81%)
12 What did you learn about yourself that regular school activities could not teach you?	233 (60%)	143 (83%)
13 Did you continue to volunteer with a sponsor after you had completed your 40 hours?	286 (73%)	131 (76%)
14 Will you continue to volunteer in your community?	288 (74%)	132 (77%)
15 After finishing the CIA program, did you feel more inspired to go out to work or continue going to school for a higher education?	284 (73%)	132 (77%)
16 Do you agree with the MOE that the CIA program is the most rewarding highlight of your high school program?	289 (99%)	131 (76%)
17 Did you get a summer or part-time job from your community sponsor?	289 (99%)	132 (77%)
18 Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the CIA program from your community sponsor(s).	277 (71%)	128 (74%)
19 Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the CIA program from your school staff.	280 (72%)	131 (76%)
20 Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the CIA program from your parents?	280 (72%)	129 (75%)
21 Did you feel safe while you did your volunteering?	281 (73%)	131 (76%)
22 Did you get injured while you did your volunteering?	220 (56%)	124 (72%)
23 Did you get harassed while doing your activity(ies)?	277 (71%)	131 (76%)
24 Please rate the quality of the training you received from your sponsor to do your major activity(ies).	276 (70%)	140 (81%)
25 What part of the CIA program would you like to change?	300 (77%)	138 (80%)

or magazine (p. 67). The top four most popular activities for both sample groups include volunteering with children, at school activities, in sports activities, and with charity organizations. The expansion of activities, if it represented a valid difference, could have resulted from many reasons such as: students may be getting better at finding activities because with more publicity, new community sponsors may be learning about the program, and so a larger variety of types of activities have become available. In smaller communities, as more people are having to do the CIA, volunteer positions may have become harder to find forcing students to branch out into new areas.

The most popular activities for volunteering with children involve children's programming at clubs like Guides, and recreational children's camps. Respondent 33 of sample 2 stated she learned how to "interact with children of a younger age and I did event planning." Sports activities included coaching and instructing different sports like soccer, swimming, horseback riding, dancing, and cycling. Respondent 94 said that she realized that she had "the ability to teach others and (she) was a role model for others." Respondent 7 in sample 2 discovered that he "was good with children." The various charitable organizations that students reported helping included the Humane Society, and shelters for women. Respondent 152 in sample 2 indicated he "learned about homelessness in my area and what I could do to help. I also learned compassion and to be less judgmental."

All of these positive comments are encouraging and indicate that these types of activities may produce quality experiences. Another factor in creating this great variation of activities may be the lack of assistance in the planning stage of students' activities by

educators, resulting in a lack of focus on the objectives of the CIA program. Students and their parents or guardians are left on their own to plan activities, motivated by any number of reasons other than meeting the objectives of their program.

The respondents reported various motivations for choosing the types of volunteering they tried. The two samples of this study report similar motivations. The top five motivations included personal interest, having fun, past experiences, desire to help, and the fact that the CIA program is mandatory. Both samples ranked personal interest as the most popular reason for doing their CIA. It is encouraging to hear that students are curious about their communities and have interests. The next most popular reason for doing a certain activity was the pursuit of fun. Not all educational experiences are fun, in fact some really moving experiences can be hard work or upsetting. If students are new volunteers, organizing fun volunteer experiences may be a great way to introduce students to volunteering. Gradually introducing these new volunteers to more challenging activities would reduce the chance of them being turned off volunteering. Past experience working for a sponsor or with an activity is another popular reason students choose to do an activity. These students already have ties in their community and this suggests that these students may have volunteered before. This idea would support the statistics on youth volunteering that suggest youth are donating their time in their community and they are not disconnected from their communities. Other students picked their activities because they had the desire to help others. Respondent nine of sample 2 stated "that other people can benefit from what I have to offer." Other important motivations reported by students was that the CIA program is mandatory, and career related issues were also reported as

motivations. Clearly, the type of activities and the motivations for choosing them are as varied as the students themselves.

5.02 Meeting the CIA program's objectives

Without supervision or evaluation of the CIA program, it is unclear how the Ministry expects principals to assess whether or not students are meeting the program's objectives. This study asked the students over 2 years to assess which of the CIA program's objectives they met during their activities. There are ten main objectives mentioned in the Ministry documents, but three objectives were more successfully met than others. The criteria used to determine if the objective was met was that greater than or equal to 50% of individuals reported meeting the objective in the survey. The majority of students reported that they felt that they had contributed to their community. According to the *Globe and Mail*, students should feel they contributed because more than 80 000 grade 12 students had to each volunteer 40 hours (Canadian Press, 2003, p. 1). Assuming that all students did manage to complete their CIA hours before graduating, they would have contributed more than 3 200 000 hours of unpaid work. This is a staggering figure and creates questions about the state of child labour in Ontario.

The following section introduces qualitative data that was generated by the Internet questionnaire from an open response question # 12 and "Other" comment sections where students can add more information to different questions. Another successful objective is for students to find a role they can play in their community. Both sample groups reported that finding a role was the next most commonly met objective. The roles that students discovered in their communities varied from student to student. Leadership or a teaching

role were the two most popular roles reported. Valuable and strong ties with the community was the next objective the majority of respondents stated they met. Both sample groups reported that they had met this objective. Respondent 288 stated that she enjoyed her "volunteer activities and remain involved in community groups with whom I formed ties."

The Internet questionnaire collected both positive and negative feedback and some interesting reactions. Many students, when asked what Ministry objectives they had met, responded negatively to this question. Several students responded that they did the CIA program, but it "did not help me at all" or that they learned "nothing." These negative comments were present in both sample groups. There are some people who are not sure what they were supposed to learn. Other students resented being forced to participate in the CIA program. One student wrote that "forced volunteering does not teach the value of contribution to the community." Others said they participated "because I had to." Based on these reactions, and the fact that only three of ten objectives have been met with any consistent success, indicates that there are some problems with the current CIA program.

5.03 Mandatory volunteering

Volunteering in the past has always been an optional activity that students could do to get some work experience and get references for various purposes that might set them apart from their peers. Students were asked if they thought the CIA program should be a mandatory graduation requirement. Figure 5.01 shows that 52% of the sample one group would prefer that the CIA program be optional rather than mandatory compared to 47% in the following year's sample. Many students still would prefer to have had a choice

whether or not to participate.

Figure 5.01: Should the CIA be mandatory?

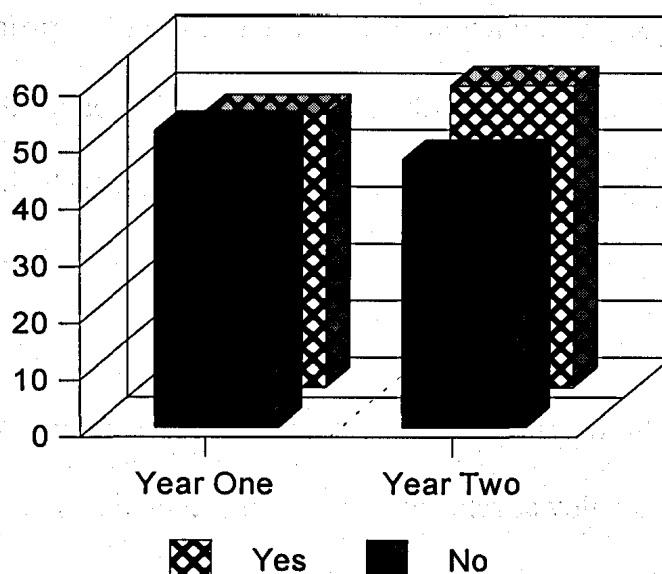


Figure 5.01: Respondents were asked if they believed the CIA program should be mandatory or optional. Respondents could answer yes or no. (Year 1's N= 296 & Year 2's N=139)

Many students mentioned that if the program were made optional, fewer students would probably volunteer due to their busy schedules and the demands of their other extracurricular interests. Several comments suggested that students had a problem with the mandatory nature of the program. One student stated that he or she would have liked "to do community service more because I want to, rather than being forced to in order to graduate." Another student stated that he disagreed "that community service should be mandatory to graduate. Forcing people into community service will teach them nothing." Respondent 14 in sample 2 "learned that (she) disliked being forced to volunteer."

An on-line volunteering journal called *Pitch In-Celebrating Youth Volunteerism*, was also critical that the CIA program was mandatory. It states that "volunteering" should be voluntary. Students in this electronic journal repeatedly defined volunteering as if correcting the Ministry. One student stated that "to volunteer is to be willing give your time, and with that, a piece of yourself" (Petrovsky, 2003, p. 1). Another student used the *DK Illustrated Oxford Dictionary's* definition of a volunteer as "a person who voluntarily takes part in an enterprise or offers to undertake a task" (Hodgson, 2003, p. 2). Another student used the *Gage Canadian Dictionary* to define a volunteer as "a person who performs a voluntary service, especially a public service" (Harris-Koblin, 2003, p. 1). Gumber (2003) gave the dictionary meaning of the phrase volunteer work as "to do or to give something without being forced" (Gumber, 2003, p. 1). Almost every student who wrote about the CIA program recognized the contradiction of making volunteering mandatory. It was as if students felt the need to remind or inform the reader what true volunteering actually involves. The Ministry was careful when it named the program, not to mention volunteering at all, and avoided addressing the contradiction by calling the program "Community Involvement".

The Ministry's efforts at carefully labeling the CIA program has apparently not avoided the intellectual conflict that people experience when confronted by the mandatory nature of the CIA program. Despite this contradiction, most students seem to find positive aspects to the program, and some even appreciate having been forced to try to volunteer. For example, respondent #15 in year two said "a good thing about this program is that it forces you to leave your comfort zone and actually go and see what's available to you in

the real world.” This compliance to the CIA program is an example of how much these academic students love school. They tolerate even a badly designed program.

Another interesting effect of the mandatory nature of the CIA program that emerged from the survey was that I had expected that die-hard, long-term committed young volunteers would welcome more people getting involved because it would lessen their volunteering loads. This was not the case at all. Those students who had been volunteering even before the program had been implemented actually developed negative feelings towards the CIA program. Respondent #153 in year one said he “learned a lot from the (CIA program), but the point remains I was doing these activities anyways. The fact that (CIA program) was mandatory cheapened the whole thing, and made my work look insincere.” This student indicated that the community sponsors were not making him feel appreciated. The fact that the Ministry has made the CIA program mandatory has rekindled the misconception that youth do not volunteer, and that when students do volunteer sponsors assume it is because they are required to in order to graduate. This attitude seems to anger the long-term volunteers when sponsors lump them into the same category as the students who only do the 40 hours and disappear. It appears that the sponsors’ attitudes and comments have a tremendous influence on how students perceive their activities.

A community sponsor education program should be created for sponsors on how they can enhance, or conversely negatively impact the students’ CIA. If some sponsors are turning off even these die-hard volunteers, what damage are they doing to those students who are new to volunteering? If the Ministry is serious about students becoming life-long

volunteers, then it should be coaching the sponsors in ways to motivate students.

5.04 CIA program's educational value

The study asked students if they thought that their CIA were educational, as opposed to just promoting work. It is the Ministry's position that the CIA program is educational. The majority of students in both sample groups agree with the Ministry's statement. Figure 5.02 shows that 69% in the year 1 and 63% in year 2, felt that the program was educational. The CIA program is linked very loosely to the Civics, and Career and Guidance Education curriculum. This research suggests that the development of a service ethic like civic responsibility, is also a function of time and variety of experiences (Richard, 1988, p. 12). The problem with service programs such as the CIA program is that the activities are generally projects that are isolated from the ongoing

Figure 5.02: Was the CIA educational?

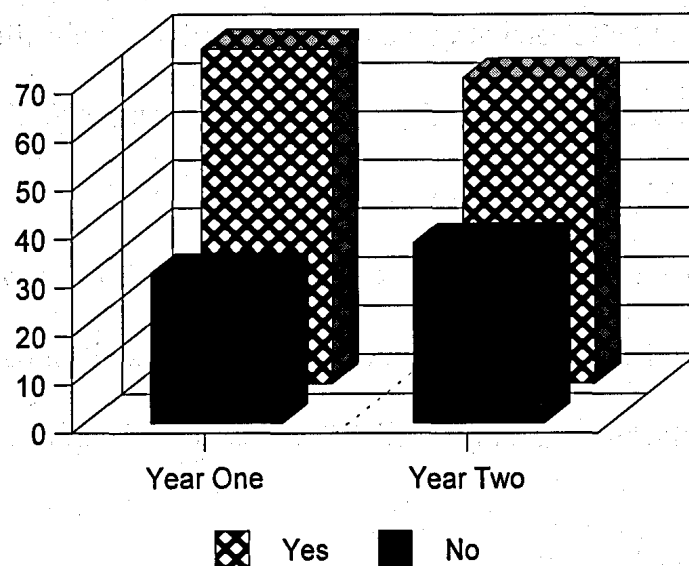


Figure 5.02: Respondents were asked if their CIA were educational. Respondents could answer yes or no. (Year 1's N=298 & Year 2's N=139)

curriculum (p. 10). Perhaps it is this isolation from the curriculum that has affected those who now hold the opinion that the CIA program is not educational. There is some suggestion that the Ministry did a better job convincing the year 1 sample of the value of the CIA program than the year 2 sample group, and this suggests that the Ministry must try to maintain their efforts to stress the CIA program connections to the curriculum. It is natural to lose some momentum once a program is implemented, but the educational value is an important factor in linking students' CIA experiences to the curriculum. The Ministry should also check that the CIA program students are doing have some educational merit, using their eligible activity lists to prohibit non-educational activities.

5.05 Enhancement

This study asked students their opinions on several aspects of the CIA program. In 1999, the Ministry implemented the reforms that included the CIA program with the intent that this service program would enhance the education system. Without supervision, evaluation, and reflection activities, there is no way to check that the CIA program is achieving this goal. Students were asked if they believed that CIA enhanced or improved the quality of their secondary school education program. Figure 5.03 shows that results of both samples are very similar, where 49% to 52% students stated that the CIA program did not enhance their education. These statistics raise the question, why is the program not enhancing the education of most students? The fact that the students in this study chose to

go on to university suggests they value academics over vocational issues. These students

Figure 5.03: Did the CIA enhance your education?

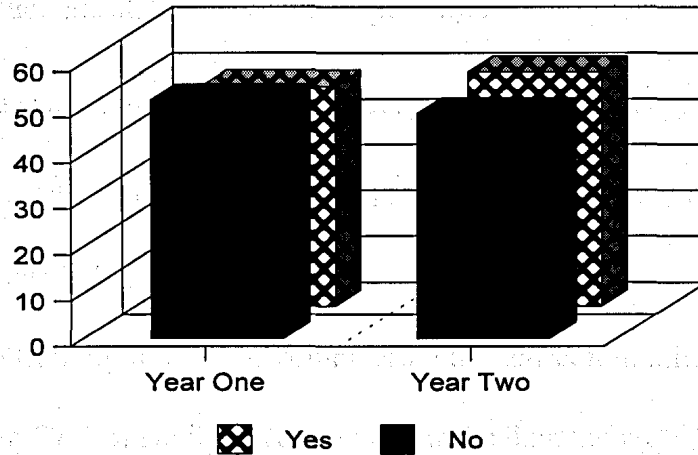


Figure 5.03: Respondents were asked if the CIA program enhanced or improved their education. Respondents could answer yes or no. (Year 1's N=296 & Year #2 N=139)

did not seem to view the low-skilled jobs that are available in the community as assets.

5.06 Positive and negative assessment of the CIA Program

The Ministry implemented the CIA program reform with the expectation that it would be a positive experience for all students. The study asked students if their volunteering experiences in CIA were primarily positive or negative. Both samples reported that 95% of students said that the CIA program was a positive experience. This is an encouraging result showing that youth who have early positive volunteer experiences are more likely to volunteer in their later years (Canadian Centre for Philanthropy (CCP), 2003, p. 1). Only 5% of students had negative experiences. At the same time, 5% of 80 000 is 4 000 students having bad experiences. This is too high a number for me, and I imagine parents or guardians would agree with me that something must be done if they knew of the

problem. Despite the overwhelmingly positive attitude of the majority of students, the Ministry should examine why some students are having negative experiences and take actions to try to reduce the statistic as soon as possible.

5.07 Links to peer attitudes and compliance with the CIA program

Students were asked to estimate the total number of CIA hours they completed by the time they had graduated. The Ministry promotes the CIA program as a method to inspire students to develop lifelong interest in volunteering in their communities. The study revealed that 86% to 87% of students volunteered more than the required 40 hours. It is impossible to assess whether the CIA program is achieving the Ministry's lifelong volunteering goal, but at least in the short term students are reporting volunteering more than the minimum requirement.

There are several reasons the students are now doing many more than the minimum number of hours. Several students reported that some sponsors are demanding more commitment than 40 hours from their volunteers and they can get it because the sponsor is in a position of controlling which students get the opportunity to do their hours at the sponsor's business. This is a development that disturbs me a lot. This dynamic places students in a position to be exploited. Sponsors should not be allowed to ask for more than 40 hours from volunteers doing their CIA.

Some students are committed volunteers who do their service activity with a positive attitude because they want to help their communities. Despite their positive attitude about volunteering in general, many of these committed volunteers reported

negative opinions about the mandatory nature of the CIA program. These students volunteered in the past without being asked by the government, but since the implementation of the program, they feel that they have to volunteer even more. They do this in order to maintain their special status in the community as being civic-minded people. They are feeling that their extra efforts serving their communities have been cheapened by their peers' lesser efforts. They no longer stand out amongst their peers because they volunteer (Richards, 1988, p. 12). Because all graduating students must to do CIA, volunteering has become a common experience and acceptable behaviour amongst high school students (Richards, 1988, p. 12). These elite volunteers are upset about losing their niche. They label students who do the minimum number of hours "slackers", and stronger language is used to describe those who cheat by getting someone to sign the various CIA program's forms without doing their 40 hours. This attitude shift in the students and the resulting peer pressure factor that is an unexpected issue will affect the quality of the experiences for many students depending on their level of involvement in the CIA program.

Despite the program being mandatory, four percent of students in the year 1 sample reported that they did not complete the program compared to all respondents in the year 2 sample reported doing exactly 40 or more than 40 hours of community involvement. Any future research on this question should ask respondents to provide the reasons for the exemptions which allowed them to graduate without fully completing their CIA. Obviously when a program as complex and widespread as the CIA program is rushed into existence, there will be higher numbers of exceptions and unforeseen problems resulting in a certain percentage of respondents graduating without completing their CIA. For example, any new

immigrants to the Province could have had several valid reasons for these exemptions. Other reasons for these exemptions in the first year of the program could have included problems with the establishment of the programs' tracking process, public education about the program, preparation and delivery of the program, special education issues, and problems motivating students to complete their community involvement hours.

5.08 Lifelong attitudes about community involvement

Although the question about number of community involvement hours completed could not reveal any concrete lasting attitudes about community involvement, the following questions might shed some light on the lasting effects of the CIA program on students' attitudes towards volunteering. Students were asked about whether or not they would

Figure 5.04: Will you volunteer with sponsor again?

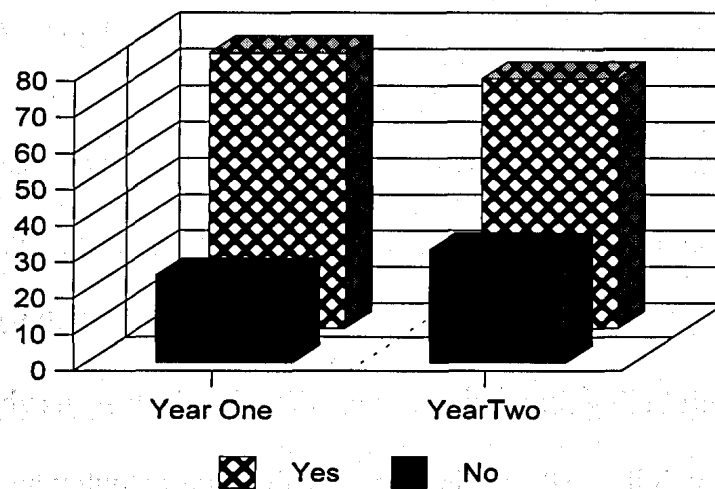


Figure 5.04: Respondents were asked if they would volunteer with your sponsor again. The respondents could answer yes or no. (Year 1's N=286 & Year 2's N=131)

continue to volunteer with a previous community sponsor. Figure 5.04 shows that 76% of respondents in sample 1 and 69% of respondents in the sample 2 reported that they

continued to volunteer with a community sponsor they had helped previously.

Figure 5.05: Will you volunteer again?

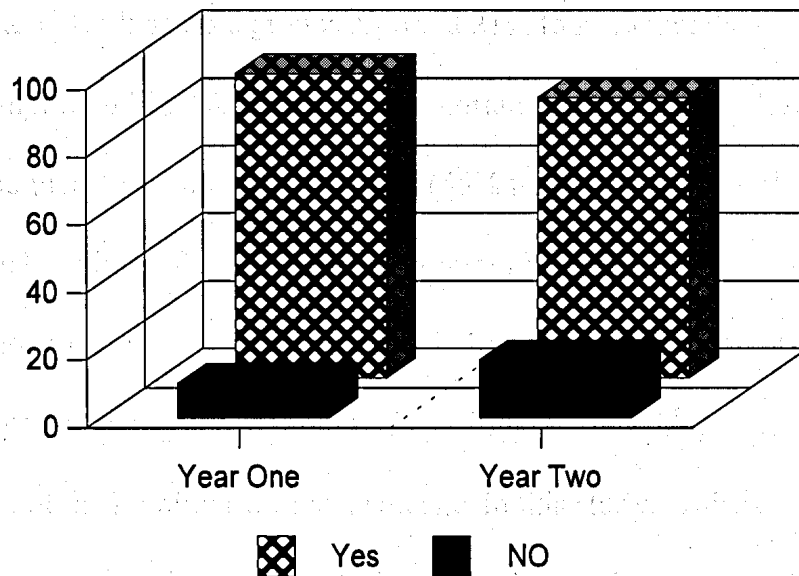


Figure 5.05: Respondents were asked if they will continue to volunteer anywhere in their communities in the future. They could answer yes or no. (Year 1's N=288 & Year 2's N=1320)

Figure 5.05 displays the results when the respondents were also asked if they would volunteer anywhere again and 90% of respondents in sample 1 and 83% of respondents in sample 2 declared their interest in participating in future volunteering opportunities. Overall, this study suggests that the CIA program is meeting the Ministry's objective that students find a role volunteering in their communities. The Ministry should be concerned that 10% to 17% of students reported that they will never volunteer again. This statistic suggests there is a need for more research that will discover ways to improve the program's success rate.

5.09 The highlight of students' education program

The Ministry stated that the CIA program was the highlight of students' K to 12 education program. Both sample groups reported 21% to 22% that they agreed with the Ministry's assumption of the CIA program's importance. Figure 5.06 shows that the majority of respondents in both sample groups (55% to 57%) disagreed that the CIA program was the highlight of their education program K to 12. In addition to the students 21% to 24% who either agreed or disagreed with the Ministry's statement, there were many students who reported being uncertain of their position on the CIA program. Clearly, the CIA program is not the highlight for most students in this study. This statement was probably motivated by politics and the Ministry's desire for the success of the CIA

Figure 5.06: Was the CIA a highlight ?

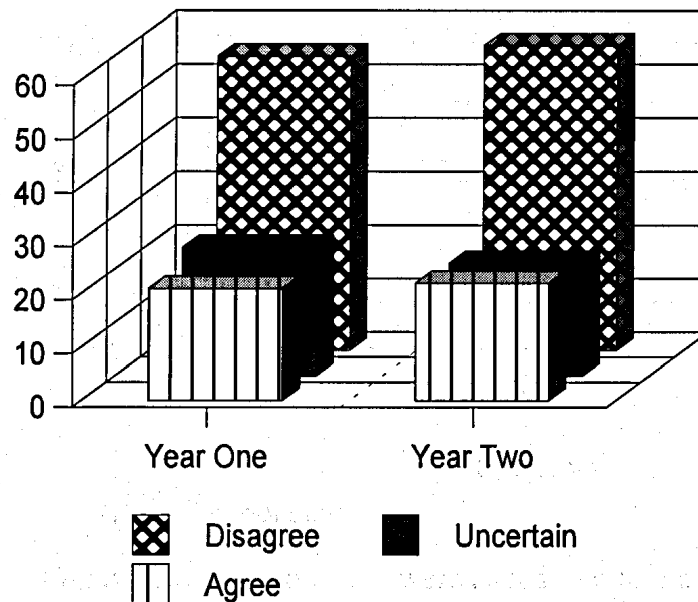


Figure 5.06: This question asked if the CIA program the rewarding highlight of your high school education? The respondents could respond by agree, disagree, or that they were uncertain. (Year1's N=289 & Year 2's N=131)

program. There is no data to support the Ministry's claim that the CIA program is the highlight of students' education, and as a result, the Ministry might be advised to remove or modify its statement in its documents. The Ministry undermines the credibility of its future claims, by overstating the influence of a program because it did not bother asking those who are involved in the program.

5.10 Support report card for Students

Due to the extracurricular nature of the CIA program, and its lack of supervision or evaluation, it is impossible to know how much support students are receiving. Students were asked to rate the support they received from their community sponsors, parents or guardians, and school staff. Figure 5.07 focuses on respondents' answers of "excellent"

Figure 5.07: Rating for student support

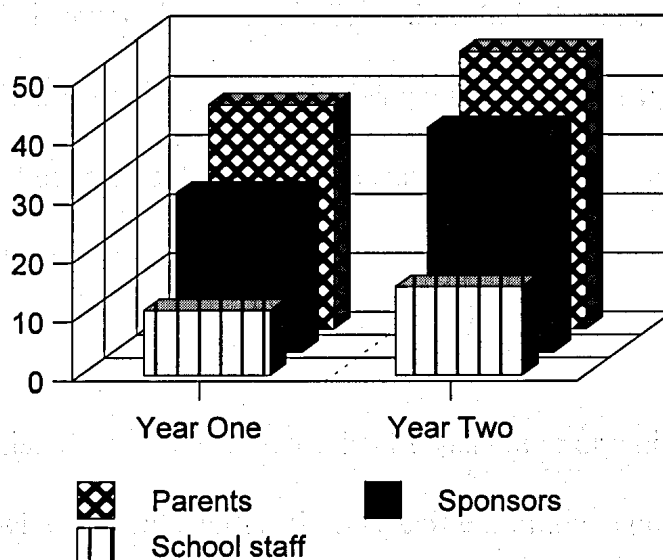


Figure 5.07: Respondents were asked to rate the support that parents, school staff, and sponsors provided them during their CIA. Because the MOE is committed to promoting excellence in Education, only the rating of excellent was reported in this figure. (See Table 5.01 for N's)

because the Ministry says it is committed to providing excellence in our schools.

In sample 1, 38% of respondents and 47% in sample 2 reported that parents or guardians provided the best support of all groups. Parental support is to be expected as most parents or guardians are highly motivated because they want their children to graduate from secondary school. Both sample groups reported that community sponsors provided the second best support. Only 27% in sample 1 and 38% of sample 2 reported that community sponsors provided excellent support. Sponsors may experience mixed emotions about being rated second in the area of support considering they provide activities for students. Between 11% to 15% of students in samples 1 and 2 respectively, rated the support provided by school staff as the worst support. Due to the limited amount of involvement school staff was mandated by the Ministry in the CIA program, this low rating was not unexpected. This low rating could indicate that students expected and preferred to have more help from their schools. Previously, I suggested that the Ministry hire CIA program coordinators at the school board level because school staff are already organizing other important extracurricular activities.

5.11 Training

One of the Ministry's objectives states that the person or organization sponsoring the activity should provide students with activity-specific training, equipment, and preparation (MOET, 1999d, p. 6). Activity-specific training is an issue that is related to the support community sponsors provide students. Again, due to the lack of placement visits by anyone employed by the Ministry, it is impossible to say how well sponsors are training students. Respondents in this study were asked to rate the quality of the training they

received from their community sponsor during their main CIA. Only 15% of respondents in sample 1, and 20% of respondents in sample 2 rated their training as excellent. It is clear that there is a lot of room for improvement in the area of training. This low percentage supports my request for providing training to sponsors via a handbook or a website.

5.12 Injuries

A way to tell if the training that sponsors are providing is adequate is to track the types of injuries that students are sustaining while doing their CIA. Clearly, many injuries

Figure 5.08: Did you get injured during your CIA?

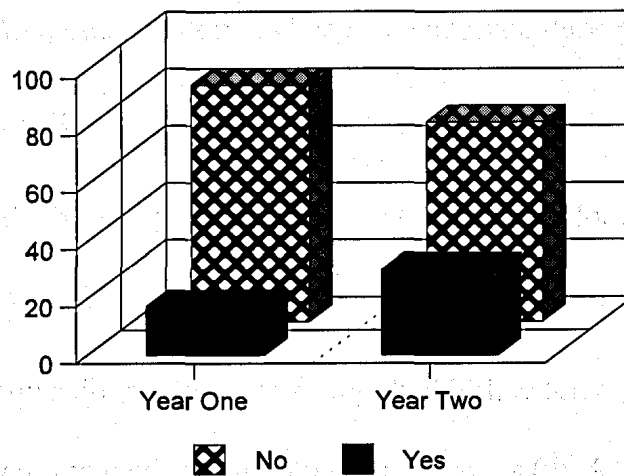


Figure 5.08: respondents were asked if they were injured during their CIA. Respondents were able to mark the type of injury or answer no. (Year 1's N=220 & Year's 2 N=124)

are preventable with adequate, activity-specific training. The Ministry has assumed that sponsors are training students because there are no procedures or personnel in place to check that students are getting trained. Figure 5.08 represents the data for the question "Did students get injured during their CIA?"

Between 70% to 83% of students in sample 1 and 2 respectively, did not experience injuries at all. The reported injuries were minor, like cuts, muscle strains, and bruises, but they suggest that students are still getting less than satisfactory safety training. Even in my small study, 17% to 30% seems like a very high numbers of injuries. I do not propose that my small study represents the whole population of Ontario, but I can imagine that if the 17% to 30% of the *Globe and Mail's* total of 80 000 students doing their CIA were actually getting injured, the injured students would total 13 600 to 24 000. Of course, this is just an unsubstantiated extrapolation in an attempt to show that even a small percentage of accidents in a Province-wide program like the CIA program could result in a huge number of injuries. More must be done to keep students safe during their CIA.

5.13 Safety attitudes

Clearly, the best way to find out how safe CIA are for students is to ask them directly. Safety in the workplace is such an important issue, and this study asked several safety-related questions. Students were asked if they felt safe while doing their CIA. The great majority of respondents in both sample groups (98% to 99%) felt safe while volunteering. For unknown reasons, 1% to 2% respondents in both groups reported not feeling safe.

5.14 Harassment

All students should feel safe while doing their CIA. One reason that some of these students might have felt unsafe could have arisen from experiencing harassment. Figure 5.09 shows the responses of student about whether or not they were harassed while doing

their activities. Only 4% of sample 1 and 9% of sample 2 respondents reported being harassed. These respondents reported experiencing verbal, sexual, and emotional harassment. Harassment of any kind is unacceptable. Harassment could arrest students' development of their desire to volunteer in the future. The Ministry should be concerned that students are experiencing harassment, or even worse, committing it. To protect students and the community, both students and sponsors should be educated about harassment to prevent more incident from happening again.

Figure 5.09: Did you get harassed?

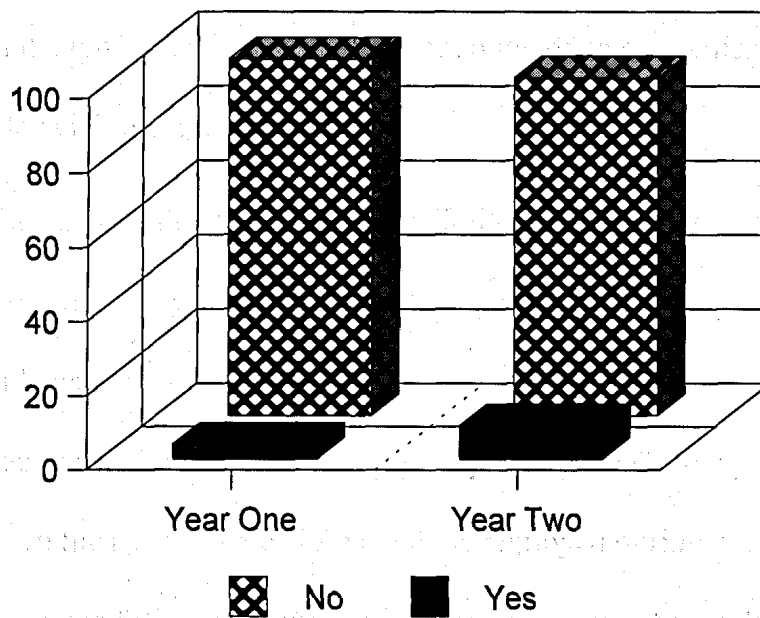


Figure 5.09: Respondents were asked if they were harassed during their CIA. Respondents could answer no or list the type of harassment encountered. (Year 1's N=277 & Year 2's N=128)

5.15 CIA and employment of youth

The Ministry promotes the CIA program for its employment value for students. The study asked students if they got summer or part-time job where they did their CIA. All

students in this study attend university and most would have started to save for university by finding summer and part-time work. Only 13% to 14% of both sample groups reported finding work with their community sponsor. The great majority of both sample groups reported (86% to 87%) not getting a job. Most students would have to find work elsewhere or remain unemployed. More and more young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 are choosing to work while in secondary school, but the students in this study are not being hired by their sponsors in their community. This statistic raises questions on whether or not students are learning skills that could be useful in the work setting. Why wouldn't a sponsor hire a volunteer, since they have already trained the person? Perhaps the restrictions on the type of activities students are allowed to do are negatively affecting their opportunities for viable employment.

Another factor is that there are only a limited number of low-paying unskilled jobs available in the community at any one time that students could do. Child labour laws ensure that students are not being exploited and restrict students even further in the times of the day they can work, the length of the work experience, and the type of work they can do. Students between the ages of 15 to 17 cannot be employed during normal school hours between 9 p.m. to the following 12:00 a.m. They are allowed to work for four hours after school hours, and up to seven hours on a non-school day (Luke & Moore, 2004, p. 13). I am not advocating removing any of these restrictions, in fact I would prefer that the laws be more restrictive. I just wanted to explore some of the reasons for the low employment rate in volunteers at the sponsors' work places. These restrictions are meant to protect children in secondary school because work can be detrimental to a student's education.

5.16 Student recommendations results

Without any supervision or reflection activities built into the CIA program, it is impossible to know what changes need to be made to improve the program. This study asked students what part of the CIA program they would like to change. The study revealed that students would like to see many changes to the existing CIA program. In both sample groups, the most popular change requested is that respondents want more help to find activities. Students reported having trouble finding activities to suit them. Both sample groups would like to have the ability to complete activities during school hours. This would be most helpful for students who live in small, rural communities where the school is also the community centre, or for students who have to be bused into town. One student complained that the "30 hour famine should count more than 20 hours! We are in school for 6 hours, therefore we deserve 24 hours, not 20 hours." Students cannot claim any activities occurring during the school day. The first 6 hours of this Famine are generally held during the school day, and so they cannot count these six hours as CIA hours. Students seem almost angry about this time/location restriction.

The third most requested change is that the Ministry remove the CIA program as a graduation requirement totally. Other popular changes that students requested included providing sponsors with more information on the CIA program, and students requested more training. Students also wanted less paper work possibly because some students are having problems keeping track of their volunteer hours or getting signatures. Students also suggested that school staff remind students to complete the activities more often. One student stated that "school staff (guidance) need to be more supportive and less

reprimanding.” Again students seem dissatisfied by the level of support they are receiving from the school system.

5.17 Inspirational value of CIA

The CIA program’s objectives have an inspirational quality to them, particularly those objectives mentioning civic responsibility. The respondents in the study were asked after they finished their CIA whether they felt more inspired to go out to work or to continue going to school for a higher education. Obviously, students in this study were attending UWO when they answered the questionnaire. This question was meant to determine if these academic students were inspired by their CIA to attend university. Both samples reported that 49% of students did feel that their CIA help them decide to go to university. The remaining 51% students reported that the CIA program did not play a role in determining their decision to attend university because their experiences were not inspiring. The decision to attend university is clearly a complex one, but the CIA program was not a factor for the majority of students.

5.18 Regional variation in access to work experiences

A comparison of the quality of experiences acquired by rural and city students is an interesting theme to pursue. Between 5% to 20% of students stated that they were motivated to do a certain activity because of the organizations’ proximity to their home. Location affects the quality of activities in different ways. Access to a large variety of CIA are more limited for rural students due to the extracurricular nature of their CIA. School is usually the center of the community and most of the community events are held there.

Students living in a city have more opportunities to try a variety of activities, not only because there are more organizations and placements, but also public transportation will allow city-dwelling students more freedom. Rural students have to rely more on their parents or guardians for transportation and school buses to get to activities, and as a result, have additional financial pressure for gas and vehicle repairs. Students have reported that quality and access of experiences are effected by the location in which they live.

5.19 Skills students learned during the CIA program

Chapter 1 pointed out several skills that the Ministry expects students to acquire during their CIA. Students in both sample groups of this study reported a wide range of success in learning these skills like time management. Respondent 25 in sample 2 reported that his "time management skills are horrible." Patience is another popular personal trait that many respondents reported they learned during their CIA. Respondent 12 in sample 2 stated she has "more patience than I thought." Leadership is another skill that many student reported their CIA helped them develop. Respondent 51 sample 2 said that he learned that "I could take a leadership role in an activity." Respondent 66 "learned to communicate more efficiently." Some students reported improved social skills. Respondent 79 stated she was now "socially able to converse with all types of people." Other students told me that they learned about their own personal strengths. Respondent 96 stated that her CIA showed her that she "could handle more responsibility." Respondent 159 said he learned that he "was capable of doing things (he) otherwise would not have known (he) was capable of doing."

Achieving a positive attitude towards work was another thing the Ministry wanted students to walk away with from their CIA. Respondent 15 in sample 1 stated:

The good thing about this program is that it forces you to leave your comfort zone and actually go and see what's available to you in the real world. It taught me the importance of hard work and what holding a job would be like, since I completed my hours early in highschool.

Another goal is that the CIA program will help focus students' career goals. This goal of employment awareness is best exemplified by Respondent 76 in sample 2 who stated:

I volunteered in a community cancer clinic. I wish to be an oncologist and feel that the experience helped prepare me mentally and emotionally for some of what I am to expect. The staff went above and beyond to help teach me the ropes and allowed me to sit in on several procedures. It was the most incredible experience of my life. It matured me emotionally and really took me out of my everyday experiences and forced me to challenge myself to deal with the whole experience. I feel as though I am a much happier person as a result of my experience and now cannot wait to become an oncologist. Working in oncology teaches and requires an unbelievable amount of strength, empathy, and compassion. I feel as though these are only a few of the incredible things that I actually got out the experience. I would do it again in a heartbeat and plan to volunteer in a similar type setting here in London.

Despite such clear reports of success, some students reported that the CIA program did not help them learn any skills. Respondent 62 stated "I do not think that the community involvement program provided me with any additional information that I could not have learned by participating in school activities." Respondent 24 in sample 1 stated that:

I helped out at a elementary school by doing photocopying, helping with sports events, and similar things, so I didn't really find what I did educational or anything. I also didn't feel as though I learned anything about myself in particular. It was good to be able to help out, but it wasn't an exciting experience or anything.

Other students were left with negative feelings of being unappreciated by the community and that the CIA program was a hassle. Respondent 155 in sample 2 stated that she learned "how hard some work is and how underappreciated you can be." Respondent 93 stated she had learned "nothing, helping people is often unappreciated."

Other students revealed that there were obstacles to doing their CIA they wanted, due to limited placements and the demand of students' heavy school work. Respondent 103 realized that "people can force you into things and call it volunteering- I lost interest in volunteering because it was a hassle -Took away from time needed to study- most community centres want a commitment of more than 40 hours." Respondent 19 in sample 1 said that:

I don't think that there was anything in particular that I learned through this experience aside from having to time manage and get it over with. Personally, it wasn't a valuable experience maybe because of where I chose to do my volunteering. I would have preferred a hospital, but the volunteer waiting lists in my area are 6 months long.

There was some resistance to the mandatory nature of the CIA program. Respondent 14 stated that she "disliked being forced to volunteer." Respondent 184 stated that:

I learned a lot of things from doing community involvement, but I would have anyways, if the (Ministry) hadn't forced us. How is it volunteering anymore if we are forced to do it? It makes it less rewarding if it looks like you may have another motive for volunteering.

The fact that this resistance is coming from a group of individuals who usually excel at academics, and generally like school, suggests that there may be major problems with the CIA program.

5.20 Chapter summary

There were many interesting results from this 2-year exploratory study on the quality of students' experiences acquired during the CIA program. The respondents in this study reported that the CIA program was a positive experience, but they did not agree with the Ministry that the CIA program was the highlight of their education program. The majority of students met three Ministry objectives consistently. They contributed to their community, found a role in the community, and made valuable ties in the community. The majority of students felt the CIA program was educational, but it was not the CIA that inspired them to go on to higher education. Students felt safe during their activities, despite reports of several types of harassment and minor injuries. Students reported that parents or guardians provided the best support during their CIA and rated school staff as the worst. The sponsor were rated as providing the second best support, but at the same time, students rated sponsor's training less than excellent. The Ministry promoted the CIA program for its employment value for students by linking it to the Guidance and Career education curriculum. Unfortunately, only a small proportion of students reported finding work with their community sponsor. Perhaps the Ministry should investigate the effectiveness of the connection between the CIA program and the issue of work opportunities. Student satisfaction with the present condition of the CIA program's organization was very low. The students reported many different recommended changes to make the CIA program a better program. The issue of regional quality differences in the CIA program arose throughout the study. The differences in the quality of students' experiences between students living in rural and metropolitan areas was noticeable. This perception might be

more widespread and the Ministry should explore whether or not this is a problem.

Because the CIA program is meeting only some of its objectives due to various factors listed in this study, it is difficult or impossible to ensure a high quality learning experience in the CIA program's current condition.

Chapter 6: Discussion

This thesis examines the CIA program and its impact on students using literature and my empirical study. This chapter examines the program using some of the Ministry of Education's expectations and objectives as found in its policy documents and commissioned reports. This chapter also presents my recommendations that if implemented could improve the program and would bring the CIA program more in line with other similar programs.

6.00 An evaluation of the Ministry's expectations on the CIA program

Prominent Ministry statements are used in this chapter as a framework to discuss the issues that control the quality of students' experience. The Ministry statements that can be used to gauge the effectiveness of the program deal with accountability, the fact that the CIA program was a school program, the inspirational value of the program, civic responsibility, employment, and the effect of the CIA program on students' attitudes.

6.00.01 The CIA program: A school program

Despite the extracurricular nature of the CIA program, the Ministry insists that "CIA are part of the school's program" (MOET, 1999d, p. 1). School programs, or specifically, work experiences, require teachers to provide lessons during the in-school segment using curriculum relevant to students' work placements, and school programs generally have an educational theory as a framework on which to base this curriculum.

If the CIA program is a school program, it is not a traditional form of work experience. I suggested that it is a Matriculation Service Add-on (MSA) due to its status as

a graduation requirement. In chapter three, the CIA program was briefly compared to Co-op courses revealing several major differences. The CIA program does not assign teachers any official role, but principals often delegate CIA-related tasks to their guidance departments or Teacher Advisory Program (TAP) members. Overall, CIA are planned, executed, and tracked by parents or guardians, students, and community sponsors. This is a major deviation from typical work programs. The lack of evaluation and the lack of credits for the completion of the CIA program makes it impossible for the Ministry to determine what objectives students are meeting.

Reflection activities are another tool the Ministry could have added to learn from students themselves what students are experiencing, and be able to explain to the other partners of education what is going on. Most school programs value activities completed during school hours, but the CIA program does not. The results of this study suggest that students want permission to count activities at school as part of their CIA hours, in addition to other changes. Despite their requests for major changes, students still feel that the CIA program is educational. Students seem unaware that the CIA program lacks an approved curriculum and an educational theory, possibly due to the fact that their sponsor may be providing some form of instruction specific to their activities. The majority of students rated their sponsor's training as being less than excellent. Although the majority of students rated the CIA program as being educational, without a curriculum the sponsors would have had no guide to what the Ministry wants them to teach students. In chapter 6, a handbook is suggested as a means to get information to sponsors in an attempt to improve the educational value of the CIA program. Also, further research on the quality of students'

experiences would allow the Ministry to revise its eligible activity list to prohibit non-educational experiences. The lack of Ministry-approved curriculum and the omission of what educational theory the curriculum is based upon, are indications that this is not a school program in the traditional sense.

6.00.02 Accountability

Premier Mike Harris' PC Government wanted to create an education system that is more accountable to the people it serves by implementing education reforms which included the CIA program among other requirements (MOET, 1996, p. 1). The issue of accountability is an excellent framework on which to base a discussion about the CIA program and its effectiveness. The *Collins Concise Dictionary* states that the definition of accountable is to be responsible to someone or for some action, or to be able to be explained (Hanks, 1988, p. 8). Using this definition, I will discuss the CIA program in terms of its accountability to the partners in education.

As mentioned in chapter 2, there are many partners in education to whom the Ministry is accountable, including parents or guardians, students, community sponsors, and school staff. The CIA program's design lacks many procedures like evaluation and closure activities, that could provide information required to begin the process of being accountable. The first step in being accountable is the collection of this information that will eventually be analyzed and disseminated to the various partners in education. Presently, the only features designed for this task are the four forms students use to plan and track their activities. See Appendix 1 for copies of these forms. Unfortunately, the information reported on these forms does not focus on the quality of experiences, and only

tracks the number and type of activities students are doing. Chickering (1977) suggested that time served does not seem an adequate method to track students' success (p. 48). The Ministry suggested that every four years, parents or guardians, employers, and students should be asked to complete program effectiveness surveys to evaluate the cooperative education and work experience programs (MOET, 2000d, p. 26). At 6 years old, the CIA program is now 2 years overdue for such an evaluation. Periodic assessments of programs like the CIA and Co-op courses would be beneficial in ensuring that the programs are accomplishing their goals and maintaining a high quality of students' experiences. If the Ministry planned a province-wide survey in Ontario on the CIA program using this research study, this would provide some information to share with the partners in education, and give the Ministry a chance to do more than just paying lip-service about being accountable. Why would the partners in education allow the Ministry the opportunity of denying students their hard-earned diplomas based on a program that is poorly designed and devoid of any means to be accountable to the public?

A comparison of the CIA program and the Co-op courses reveals that the CIA program lacks placement supervised visits, proper insurance coverage, and basic safety training for both sponsors and students. The lack of these safeguards became important when this study revealed that students were experiencing injuries and harassment during their CIA. If students are getting injured, then they are not receiving adequate training. All the forms the Ministry can produce will not reveal this type of problem, only on-site placement visits could ensure that safety training is being provided.

The Ministry should be very concerned about the issue of safety and the injuries being reported because they are liable for any legal ramifications of making an unsafe program mandatory. Students are vulnerable to unsafe working conditions illustrated by a recent case in British Columbia. A family member stated:

My 15-year-old nephew made headlines, becoming the youngest person in the Province of British Columbia to ever die in an industrial accident. Luke was only 5 days into his first summer job when he was killed, buried under a mountain of garbage....My brother also worked for the (company), and assumed because he worked there, that Luke would be safe. It wasn't until the Coroner's Inquest, that we discovered that (the company) had previously been fined for other safety infractions (CBC, 2004, p. 1).

How many parents or guardians in Ontario have made the same assumptions about their workplaces, and found their children volunteer positions? If an in-school course was producing reports that students were getting injured and harassed as the CIA program is amassing, there would be an investigation into the problem, but in the 6 years of its operation no major policy changes have been reported in the education Ministry policy documents and commission reports. Students recommended sponsors have police checks just like teachers are required to have. The majority of students are dissatisfied with the current design of the CIA program, and have recommended other changes to the program. Usually, the Ministry's recommendations refer to what should be done to and about students (Walz, 1984, p. 1). Only rarely are students' attitudes and feelings discussed, or the effect these attitudes have on students' education, despite their important role in developing student excellence (Walz, 1984, p. 1). If the Ministry is committed to being accountable then it cannot afford to ignore the students' recommended changes. The Ministry is responsible to ensure that the CIA program is operated safely, and it could

achieve this goal by assigning school board staff to check in person that community sponsors provide students with adequate training, and requiring sponsors to submit to police checks for safety violations and other infractions.

Because the issue of insurance must be addressed before an accident occurs, the optional insurance policy that the Ministry suggests parents or guardians buy, may not be the best way to handle this important issue. If parents or guardians and community members were aware of the high rate of injuries being reported in combination with the fact that their children may not be covered by the school board or community sponsor's insurance, they would be demanding insurance reforms. Despite the Ministry claims that the CIA program is meant to provide a more accountable education system, the program does not seem to have the policies or design features in place to provide adequate accountability to the partners of education.

6.00.03 Employment issues

Another issue that this study examines is the connection between the employment value of the CIA program and the quality of students experiences. The former Minister of Education, Janet Ecker stated that "by providing opportunities for student's to explore their careers while completing secondary school, we are helping our children gain insight and relevant experience to prepare for the job market, further education and training" (MOET, 2001a, p. 1). Although the Ministry believes that there is a connection between the CIA program and employment, my research study has made me less certain there is such a connection has any positive influence on the quality of students' experiences. Employment is a subject where the CIA program has not effectively met its objectives.

The CIA program are presently not relevant, authentic activities that could lead to part-time or summer employment due to the restrictions placed on sponsors, and the access to suitable career-related CIA in different regions of Ontario is a challenge for some students.

The Ministry stated that student should be able to explore a future career by doing their CIA with a sponsor in their community associated with that occupation. On the surface, for the cash-strapped Ministry which focuses mainly on providing a general basic education, the CIA program seems like a great solution to the pressure from the partners in education to provide work experience to all students. Because the CIA program is held exclusively in the community the Ministry assumed that all the communities where students live have a wide selection of suitable career-related CIA available. In a city or metropolitan area students can choose from a wider variety of businesses and organizations within an easy commute. Students living in a rural area or in smaller communities will be at a disadvantage in terms of their access to career related CIA. For example, if a student is interested in becoming a banker or bank teller, and his or her village does not have a bank, they would have to either commute to another village or choose another CIA outside of their future career option. This inequality in access to CIA opportunities due to the students' geography will make it difficult for some students to meet the career education objective. The Ministry could lessen this inequality by providing supplemental career information to those students who are unable to try a specific career-related activity.

Another employment issue is how students are being prepared for the workforce by the CIA program. In chapter 3, this study discussed the Ministry's position of providing only a general basic education to students, and the simple, all-expenses-spared approach to the design of the CIA program shows this attitude clearly. The Ministry expects sponsors to provide "relevant experiences" in the workplace, but at the same time, restricts students from doing what a paid employee would normally do. If all work relevant to a workplace is normally done by employees, what work is left for students do? Non-relevant tasks? Students will not learn skills or get a true sense of an occupation if sponsors, to meet this unreasonable restriction, have to create non-authentic tasks for the students to complete. Perhaps the best evidence that the CIA program is not teaching students relevant skills for the workplace is that so few students reported getting hired by their sponsors for part-time or summer jobs.

An alternative to the present planning activities involves the Ministry taking a leadership role by asking community sponsors interested in having students volunteer with them to submit to a local secondary school, a list of skills they plan to teach students, and descriptions of how they will teach these skills. The Ministry could choose a couple of interested sponsors with suitable plans and ask students to commit their 40 hours to one of the sanctioned sponsors. Many student would welcome the help finding a quality placement. This system would protect students from community sponsors who demand students do more than 40 hours. Several students have complained that they were asked to commit far more than 40 hours to get a placement and other students complained that they needed assistance finding positions. The Ministry should protect students who are

vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace and develop methods to increase the effectiveness of its employment objectives.

6.00.04 Inspirational value of CIA

The Ministry stated that many students are finding community involvement is one of the most rewarding experiences in their high school program (MOET, 2000i, p. 1). The Ministry seems very confident about the inspirational value of the CIA program. Unfortunately, the majority of students did not feel that their CIA were the highlight of their program. Although a substantial number of students reported not being inspired by the program at all, some students did report that it did help them personally. By not asking students about their experiences in closure activities such as reflection, or debriefing sessions at the end of their CIA, and then making overly optimistic claims such as those stated above, it seems that the Ministry views a student as “a non-person and that his or her motivations, needs, and interests are insignificant in improving the quality of learning” (Walz, 1984, p. 1). Through the overstated importance of the CIA program, the Ministry loses some credibility, and casts doubt on its other statements about the CIA program.

6.00.05 Civic responsibility and other Ministry objectives

The Ministry stated that the purpose of the community involvement requirement is to encourage students to develop awareness and understanding of civic responsibility, recognizing the role they can play, and the contributions they can make in supporting, and strengthening their communities (MOET, 1999d, p. 1). These goals and others are listed in chapter 1 of this study. Chapter 5 states that not one student in either sample group responded that they met all of the Ministry’s objectives. The respondents in this study

reported mixed results meeting the objectives in that the CIA program helped them meet some of these objectives, but not others. Most students felt that they made a contribution, found a role to play, and made valuable, strong ties in their communities. Despite these accomplishments, the main objective of students' developing an awareness and understanding of civic responsibility was not achieved by many students. I believe this objective is not being met because the Ministry did not implement any form of curriculum or closure activities into the CIA program. Without providing sponsors with a carefully constructed curriculum designed to promote civic responsibility, the Ministry has left learning to chance. Dewey (1963) stated that:

experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness (p. 25).

The Ministry should be very concerned that its program has not interfered in the very objectives they set out to create. Although the majority of students reported that they would continue to volunteer in their communities, many of their comments suggest that this commitment on the part of students might be despite the CIA program, and not because of it. Respondent 153 in year 1 stated that she was "doing these activities anyways. The fact it was mandatory cheapened the whole thing and made my work look insincere." Respondent 144 stated that he "volunteered more before high school than during it." Respondent 184 learned "a lot of things from doing community involvement, but I would have anyways, if they hadn't forced us. How is it volunteering anymore if we are forced to do it. It makes it less rewarding if it looks like you have another motive for

volunteering.” Respondent 27 in sample 1 stated he “liked volunteering until I was forced to do it to graduate.” The Ministry and the general public may actually be negatively affecting students’ civic attitudes because of misconceptions about youth volunteerism. The mandatory nature of the CIA program has had a negative effect on the attitudes of the more civic-minded students. Generating civic responsibility using volunteering is more complicated than it appears, and the CIA program, in its present format, does not address this complexity.

6.00.06 Students’ attitudes towards mandatory CIA

The Ministry made the CIA program mandatory and some of the respondents in this study have reacted strongly to being forced to volunteer. Respondent 41 in sample 1 stated that “volunteering is really fun when people aren’t forced to volunteer.” Respondent 310 in sample 1 said she resented “that community service (is) mandatory to graduate. Forcing people into community service will teach them nothing.” Student seem to be reacting to the mandatory nature of the CIA program because the majority of students were already doing volunteering. Some students felt even stronger about the program being mandatory. A respondent in sample 1 stated that ‘coercing a volunteer really makes that slavery, doesn’t it?’ Another respondent stated that she had “the feeling of what it’s like to be the slave of the government.” Another respondent used more colourful language to express his feeling of being “like someone’s bitch.” Respondent 277 in sample 1 stated that the CIA program was “just cheap labour for the government.” Clearly, the students who have associated the CIA program with slavery have overreacted, but they have the right to their opinions. The question needed to be asked is “Why these students reacted

so strongly to their CIA?" These negative comments could indicate that the Ministry has done a poor job promoting the CIA program's goal of generating civic responsibility, and the Ministry might have to do more to convince students of the value of their activities.

6.01 The vulnerability of Ontario's education system and reforms.

The education system is vulnerable to reforms because every government who takes office usually includes reforms of the education system as an election promise. The reforms are often proposed and enacted without proper consultations, research or careful trials using pilot programs to study the reforms' effectiveness. As long as provincial politicians are allowed to use educational reforms as political platforms on which to get elected, and then follow through with quick and reckless reforms that result in often irreversible damage to the education system, programs like the CIA program are vulnerable to the whims of new governments.

Not all of the reforms were equally popular with the partners in education. The NDP Government's reforms to the grade 9 core program were strongly criticized by parent groups and business interests being dubbed the three "Ds" which are the "de-labeling, de-streaming and de-coursing." As a result of this resistance, Premier Bob Rae's NDP Government-commissioned the Royal Commission on Learning (1993) (O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 319; Milburn, 1996, p. 4; McConaghy, 1995, p. 651). Some reforms experienced more success in terms of their scope and longevity. I feel that the CIA program has enjoyed a period of uncommon longevity as it has yet to be reformed by successive governments. I advocate that certain reforms to the CIA program are warranted to ensure the quality of students' experiences.

“employability, earning power and the level of education an individual had attained” (p. 19). The strong link to business and Premier Mike Harris’ reforms could be the reason programs like the CIA program have experienced longevity.

6.03 Academic focus

The current education system’s primary focus is academics, and as a result, topics like volunteering, citizenship and employment issues are not incorporated extensively into the curriculum. The exceptions to this statement are Co-op, Civics, and Guidance courses. Academics are further protected by child labour laws ensuring that secondary school students have limited access to employment. The academic focus of Ontario’s education systems allows the system to frequently ignore the emotional, psychological or physical maturity of students. The Ministry set expectations that are challenging like asking student to be altruistic citizens. According to Neil (1960) true altruism develops slowly (p. 60; p. 7). As a result, students may be forced into CIA for which they are not yet ready. The CIA program may force youth to be altruistic when they are not by nature. This might have serious consequences in terms of life-long attitudes on volunteering. The education system’s focus on academics has created a gap in students’ preparedness for programs like the CIA program. The implementation of a more balanced education system that values both academics and work experiences would address many of the CIA program’s shortcomings.

6.04 Suggested reforms

The CIA program could fit into the pattern of a more typical community-based learning program by making several major changes to the programs’ structure. These

changes include the addition of school staff supervision, the addition of training for both students and the community sponsors, the addition of continuous reflection activities before, during, and after the CIA program, and major accreditation reforms. These major reforms would improve the program and bring it into line with other programs recognized in the literature, but the reforms would change the nature and goals of the program.

6.04.01 Supervision

School staff supervision is missing presently for the CIA program because CIA are held exclusively in the community. A second reason for the lack of supervision by school staff in the program is because the Ministry did not assign any employee supervisory duties, with the exception of principals. Supervision is an important component of CBL programs, and it should be provided to those individuals involved in the planning stage, during the activity, and after the activity. Students, parents or guardians, and community sponsors could benefit from help to plan their CIA so that the proposed activities meet the Ministry's objectives. Many new supervisory positions at the school board level would have to be created to carry out these new placement visits. The Ministry has not assigned teachers supervisory duties because teachers already have mandated responsibilities to organize extracurricular school events like running sports teams and clubs. Supervision should be extended to cover community sponsors because presently they are not supervised, and sponsors are not required to submit to police checks. The amount and quality of training sponsors has a huge affect on students' safety and learning. Supervision is a huge part of the planning stage, the activity itself, and the closure stage of other CBL programs. The addition of placement supervision at the

school board level would improve the quality of students' CIA, and this reform would have the secondary effect of allowing the program to better fit into a typical CBL program classification.

6.04.02 Accreditation reforms

The second major reform necessary to make the CIA program conform to established CBL norms and standards is in the area of accountability and accreditation. Tracking the numbers of CIA hours completed could still play a role in assessment, but the addition of evaluation components and clear goals or objectives will better ensure a high quality service experience. I recommend that grades be assigned to the CIA program, and to do this there must be some form of evaluation added to the CIA program. Assigning grades allows credits towards a course or a graduation requirement to be awarded to students who have successfully complete their CIA. If the Ministry believes the CIA program is important enough to be mandatory, then students should be accountable for their performance during and after their activities.

6.04.03 Training

Training is necessary to ensure that students meet employment civic objectives that are at the heart of the CIA program. Students and sponsors both require training, but these two groups have very different training needs. Students' attitudes towards volunteering could be negatively affected by a bad experience such as being the object of harassment. Students in secondary school are vulnerable due to their limited life experiences, and so, the school board should create a training program to help students recognize the various types of harassment. This training should provide students with

coping mechanisms to handle harassment and a clear reporting process for when students encounter it in the workplace. Teaching students what behaviours are considered harassment will have the secondary effect of protecting the community because students will be less likely to harass anyone else out of ignorance, and they will hopefully be more sensitive about how they treat others in the workplace in the future. Another bad experience could result from becoming injured on the job. If the Ministry provides basic workplace safety training to students, it might reduce the chance of an accident due to issues covered in the training. This training would supplement the activity specific safety training that sponsors are required to provide students before they start their activities.

Training sponsors about what the Ministry requires of them would ensure that the CIA program qualifies as a CBL program. Sponsors are largely left on their own in terms of the amount and the content of training they offer students doing their CIA, but they should be instructed on how to educate students in civics and employment issues, and how to treat students. Granted the majority of the training students receive will be specific to their activity, and may not be transferable across all of the CIA spectra, but the Ministry has several objectives for the CIA program that are common such as workplace safety, career training, and other workplace issues.

There are three ways to provide training to sponsors in the community. The first method is to go and visit them in the community, or to invite them to the school for training. This may require more resources and time, than the Ministry has to offer sponsors. Another method to train sponsors is to create an on-line course or a interactive website that provides sponsors the information and forms they need to appropriately train

students. The course or website must cover how sponsors should behave around students. The on-line method of training delivery would be a more economical idea than onsite visits. Unfortunately, not all sponsors own computers, not all have access to the Internet, or have experience using either, so there are limitations to the coverage this format could provide. The last method of training is a CIA sponsor handbook that would replace the limited information found in the Ministry documents. This new handbook would contain training information available in hard copy or a downloadable copy from a website. Students would have to give the handbook to sponsors with enough advanced notice of the actual CIA to allow the sponsor time to prepare for the event. A handbook would require resources to write, to print, and to distribute the document. The handbook is the best method of delivering training to community sponsors on a provincial scale because it does not rely solely on computer technology.

6.04.04 Addition of reflection activities

Reflection is critical to ensuring the quality of students' experiences because it is the service work itself that really ignites students' interest (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 106). Exploring the quality of students' CIA requires reflection which is an integral part of the learning experience (p. 106). Depending on the nature of the event, understanding is gained through reflection sessions related to the event, past experiences and students' cultural context (Tilstra & Van Scheik, 1999, p. 4). Despite this important role in CBL, schools tend to focus on academics and inadequate time is offered to students to rediscover what has sunk in, or to reflect on what they have learned (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 99). Students should be asked to organize and construct their own understanding

from the rich content embedded within their CIA experiences (p. 100).

6.04.05 Definition of reflection

The term reflection refers to those thinking processes responsible for converting service experiences like the CIA program into productive learning experiences (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 100). These processes include creative and critical thinking skills that help students succeed in their CIA. Reflection asks students to examine the larger picture putting into perspective the meaning of their learning, feelings and experiences associated with the placement (p. 101; Dunlap, 1998, p. 2). Reflection is not meant to direct students into specific behaviours or responses, but it offers examples and models of what it feels like to participate.

Reflection activities should be continuous, occurring before, during and after the work experience. They should also be contextual, connected, and challenging. The reflection should be connected to academics and the skills taught in school (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 107). The CBL experience should challenge students to think beyond their familiar comfort zones in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect (p. 108). CIA should contain relevant content and address the setting of the CIA program (p. 109).

Reflection activities not only make educational sense in CBL: they are an ethical requirement. Some examples of written reflection activities include letters, essays, flowcharts, poems, songs, plays, speeches, and drawing pictures or cartoons (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 107). Speaking and other exhibitionist reflection activities like making video tapes, sculptures, creation of dances, and photography can also help students reflect (p. 107). Traditional reflection activities are group discussions, journals and

personalized interviews because they provide widely accepted and consistent reflection opportunities for students.

Reflection journals completed by each student during the activity could be collected afterwards, and later offered to other students just starting similar placements. As more and more students complete their CIA, the Ministry will have a source of ample variety of journals which are cheap and ready to use. The challenge for the Ministry will be arranging access for students to view the collection of completed journals. Each school board or even the school itself could be responsible for determining how it organizes the journals in their collections. These reflection journals would be a valuable source of information, and could be a cheap alternative to the more costly personalized interviews (Dunlap, 1998, p. 12).

Personalized placement interviews provide students advice on what they can expect from the placement, tours of the placement from a supervisor, and help to design planned reflection activities before starting the activity. These interviews might be impossible to provide for all students for reasons such as limited time and resources. Most students do multiple activities so each student could require multiple interviews, making interviews costly and time consuming. Again creating time for interviews might be an issue because some students have poor organizational skills resulting in procrastination where they do their activities at the last minute. The question of who will do these interviews again becomes a complicated issue. Personalized interviews may put too many demands on the Ministry's resources to be viable.

Group discussions are another opportunity for students to reflect on their activities (Dunlap, 1998, p. 12). Discussions require time, space, and a facilitator to organize the discussion. Discussions could be held anywhere, and with a little training, anyone could become a discussion facilitator. Group discussions will help students realize that many of their feelings are a normal part of the learning process (p. 11). Sharing of reflections will improve effectiveness of programs like the CIA program by assisting facilitators to anticipate student issues, and help invited community sponsors to see the process from the perspective of students. Unfortunately group discussions only benefit those students in the room, unless discussions are taped or videoed, and their transcripts are made available to other students. Discussions are biased towards students who are comfortable speaking in public, whose first language is English, and to those students who might have had extreme experiences.

I was only able to find two assignments that might be categorized as CIA reflection activities that asked students to reflect before, and after their activities. The activities were found in a book called *Coping with the new curriculum* produced by the Ontario Secondary School Teacher Federation (OSSTF) in 1999 (p. 47). The two activities found in Appendix I of this study. There seem to be pros and cons to all of these reflection activities, and so, a combination of several of these different reflection activities held before, during, and after the placement would optimize chances for students to learn from their CIA (Dunlap, 1998, p. 12).

6.04.06 Reflection before service

Reflection before service activities could seem like a contradiction, but students

would be wise to reflect on their prior knowledge when they plan and design their future CIA. Reflection activities completed before the CIA program would focus students' attention on preparation for their placements by asking them to recollect, propose, hypothesize, build models, predict, and make judgements (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 192). Students reflect before the activity when they choose an activity, when they clarify goals and action plans, and when they prepare for the service activity (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 105). Clearly, reflection before an activity is an important part of the planning stage of the program and yet, it is missing from the CIA program.

6.04.07 Reflection during service

Reflection activities could be implemented at several times during students' CIA because both planned and unplanned events unfold, and students can get caught up in new experiences from moment to moment (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 106; Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 194). During service activities, students should be offered opportunities to share their observations and highlights, ask questions, solve problems, solicit feedback, receive encouragement, and learn from their peers (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 106). The reflection during the CIA program might allow students a chance to recognize a more immediate personal connection to their activity.

6.04.08 Reflection after service

Reflection is traditionally held after service activities have been completed. The goals of reflection at this time are to allow students a chance to evaluate their experiences, assess and develop self-knowledge, look for generalizations to guide future decision making, and find new applications for what they have learned (Toole & Toole,

1995, p. 107). The act of completing the reflection activity is not enough to achieve these goals because part of the reflection activity is to receive feedback from peers and facilitators. Most CBL programs have facilitators who assess the reflective activities and debrief students (p. 50). Facilitators usually begin with simple, brief reflection activities allowing students to practice on fairly neutral material, then gradually move to reflections that increasingly focus on students' more intimate service-learning experiences, or any uncomfortable feelings (Toole & Toole, 1995, p. 112; Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 204). Unfortunately, there is presently no one assigned to assess the CIA program experiences, and as a result, there is little evidence of any reflection occurring. Students are left to develop self-directed reflection activities without any support because Ontario's students are not often familiar with reflection activities.

6.04.09 Types of reflection

In addition to when reflection can occur, the Ministry has many types of reflection from which to choose (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 109). Reflection categories useful in high school CBL programs include Interrogative, Emotion-based, Critical thinking, Metaphoric, and Symbolic reflection (p. 109). Interrogative reflection uses single-word questions or very brief phrases to help students address the components within experiences that are meaningful in terms of targeted CBL outcomes (p. 109). Emotion-based reflection builds upon students' emotional responses to their academic and service experiences which helps students understand how their own feelings color their perceptions, and shape the limits of their understandings (p. 109). This form of reflection works well in conjunction with other types of reflections. Critical-thinking

reflection draws upon deductive and inductive thinking with academic or service content. Students recall and categorize key items of information from their experiences, use categories to develop concepts, and try to relate concepts to complex, disorganized situations to derive personal insights (p. 110). Metaphoric reflection help students identify elements within an experience by comparing the experience to other experiences. Students and facilitators slowly and carefully make these comparisons allowing the student time to reflect on sensitive issues. Symbolic reflection is similar to Metaphoric reflection because it helps to create a sense of safety and increase students' ability to objectively consider events that are emotionally loaded. Symbols are used to represent real-life or abstract items that can be named (p. 110). Regardless of which of these five types of reflection the Ministry chooses to implement when it reforms the CIA program, reflection must be added in order to conform to CBL standards.

6.05 Chapter summary

After doing this research, I believe that the quality of students' experiences acquired during their CIA is linked to the quality of the program's curriculum and design. The CIA program appears to have fallen short of meeting some of the Ministry's goals. There are several areas in which the CIA program could be improved. The accountability of the program could be enhanced by hiring placement supervisors at the school board level, adding evaluation activities, and implementing a credit system to track student success. The Ministry should follow its own advice and immediately begin work on a survey for parents or guardians, students, and sponsors on the effectiveness of their CIA. To improve the success rate of students meeting the CIA program's goal of generating

civic responsibility, the Ministry should add closure and reflection activities which are vital for creating connections to their experience. The survey and the closure activities could be sources of information on the educational value of CIA, and then the Ministry could revise the eligible activity lists to ensure only educational work is being done. It is the lack of information on the CIA program that is preventing positive improvement to the program.

The CIA program lacks proper insurance coverage, and this is an huge problem due to the fact that the training sponsors are providing students is not being ranked highly by students and accidents are happening during the students' CIA. The Ministry must provide students doing their CIA free automatic insurance, and the Ministry must apply to get the CIA program added to the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) act that covers the other experiential programs. The Ministry must provide basic safety and harassment training for both sponsors and students to ensure the safety of students and the safety of the community the Ministry is trying to serve. The Ministry must produce curriculum and make it available to sponsors in the form of a handbook that provides the sponsor with guidance on how to organize an educational experience. The Ministry has operated the program without such guidance, and few of its objective are being met. Volunteering is a complex activity and the poorly designed CIA may have negatively affected the attitudes of some of the students it was supposed to motivate. The Ministry should take the recommendations from students in this study into consideration when the department reforms the CIA program.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.00 Review of the study's chapters

The first chapter of this study introduces the research question and provides the rationale for doing the study. It contains important definitions and some background history information needed to understand the study. It also describes the specifics of the CIA program. The CIA program is a mandatory graduation requirement in which all Ontario secondary school students must complete 40 hours of community service. This program was implemented in 1999 as part of the K to 12 curriculum reforms completed by Premier Mike Harris' PC Government. Despite the extracurricular nature of the CIA program, the Ministry has linked the program to the Civics, and Career and Guidance curriculum and has created objectives covering the issues of civic responsibility, personal growth of students, and employment preparation.

The second chapter is a literature review designed to trace the development of the CIA program in Government policy documents and commissioned studies. Due to the speed of the program's planning and implementation there is little discussion found in this literature, and categorical themes had to be used to trace the program's development. The vast array of Civics,- and Career and Guidance issues could be grouped into two themes: citizenship, and employment. The themes and issues found in the literature review suggest that the CIA program has well-established roots despite the fact it is the first extracurricular service graduation requirement the Ministry has attempted.

The third chapter discusses the classification of the CIA program which had not been previously done. The Ministry documents on the CIA program omit reference to an

underlying educational theory, and do not mention into what category the CIA program fits. The result of this literature review is the suggestion that the CIA program represents a new form of a community-based learning program. The CIA program resembles closely a service add-on, but there are several differences that warrant the variation on the typical service add-on taking into account the fact that the CIA program is primarily a graduation requirement. The term Matriculation Service Add-on (MSA) is the recommended title for this alternate form of service add-ons. MSA and the CIA program require an educational theory, and this researcher recommends constructivism is an excellent framework on which to develop any new CIA curriculum. Despite the fact the CIA program has been operating for 6 years, there is very limited research on the quality of students' experiences, and my study will add valuable insight into students' experiences acquired during the program. It reveals shortfalls in the CIA curriculum and a lack of safeguards that protect students.

The fourth chapter describes the study's questionnaire methodology. This research study consists of a preliminary and main study. The main study uses an internet questionnaire to examine the experiences of two consecutive sample groups of university students who were, at the time of the data collection, in their first-year university, and recent grads of Ontario secondary schools. The two data sets are presented using descriptive quantitative statistics and qualitative descriptions.

The fifth chapter presents the results of the exploratory study on the quality of students experiences acquired during the CIA program. Overall, students found the CIA program to be an educational and positive experience, but not the inspirational highlight

of their education program that the Ministry had hoped for. Clearly, some of the Ministry's objectives are being met by students' CIA. Students also felt safe during their activities despite reports of several types of harassment and minor injuries. Students were not satisfied with the CIA program's design, the sponsors training, school, staff support, employment value, and access to suitable CIA.

The sixth chapter discusses the analysis of the study. Prominent Ministry statements are used in this chapter as a framework to discuss the issues that control the quality of students' experience. The Ministry's statements that can be used to gauge the effectiveness of the program deal with accountability, the fact that the CIA program was a school program, the inspirational value of the CIA program, civic responsibility, employment, and the effect of the CIA program on student freedoms and rights.

This, the seventh chapter discusses the major changes required if the CIA program is to fit into a typical community-based learning program model. I feel that classifying the program will help curriculum designers to identify an educational theory which will be used as a framework on which to base any future curriculum for the CIA program. These changes include the addition of school staff supervision, addition of training for both students and the community sponsors, the addition of comprehensive reflection activities before, during, and after the CIA program, and accreditation reforms. At the same time, changes on the scale of these would radically change the nature of the present the CIA program and would require considerable Ministry resources to design and implement.

7.01 Research questions and the study's results

The overall research questions for this thesis are: What is the nature of the CIA program?; and What are the qualities of students' experiences acquired during the CIA program? The nature of the CIA was explored and analyzed by comparing it to other programs and attempting to classify it. The CIA program qualities that were investigated here include: the success of its objectives; safety; volunteering attitudes; the educational value of the program; training issues; students recommendations; the inspirational value of the program; skills developed; and other qualities.

In this section I will review what I found in the literature and my interpretations. How did the program evolve? The motivations behind creating the program are apparent in themes found in the Ministry's policy documents and commissioned reports. The main two themes that probably motivated the Ministry to create the CIA program include citizenship and employment. Citizenship is apparent in the CIA program being linked to the Civics curriculum. The employment theme is shown by the strong links to the community sponsors and career education. Other themes include skill development, roles and responsibilities of the partners, student's attitudes, and safety. Identifying these themes in the Ministry's policy documents and commissioned reports was helpful in better understanding the CIA program and its creation.

This thesis also asked the question: How does the CIA program compare to other work experience and service programs? Based on the work of Meinhard and Foster (1998), (1999), and Foster and Meinhard (2000), the program may have been based on programs already operating in the United States or perhaps on less well-known teacher-

operated volunteer programs in Ontario's secondary schools. Because there was some discussion in the Ministry documents that CIA might eventually replace Co-op courses, the CIA program was compared to Co-op courses. The CIA program appears to be very different in most areas, and as a result, the CIA program would not make a suitable replacement for the well-established Co-op courses. The main common theme in both the CIA program and all of these programs are citizenship and employment development.

To better understand the CIA program and the framework on which its curriculum should be based, the question was asked "What type of program is it classified as?" This program appears to be a new form of service add-on that I have coined "Matriculation service add-on" due to its position as a graduation requirement. The Ministry did not state what educational theory it used to develop the CIA program, but I have suggested that the high degree of student control over their experiences suggest that the theory of constructivism might apply.

The second research question asks what is the quality of students experiences? Overall, the majority of students felt that their CIA were positive and educational. The majority of students did not feel that the program was the highlight or the most rewarding part of their secondary school experience and they did not report it as the activity that inspired them to go on to higher education. Students reported that they did diverse array of activities and most completed greater than or equal to their required 40 hours of community involvement. Students reported regional access problem with finding suitable activities. They felt safe, but some experienced sexual and verbal harassment while participating in the program. Students also reported sustaining minor injuries

during the performance of their activities. Students rated their parents or guardians as providing the best support during the CIA program. Sponsors received the second highest rating for support, but the training they provided was rated as less than excellent. Students were dissatisfied with the program's design and requested many changes. In terms of the objectives that the students were expected to meet, the citizenship objectives were met more successfully than the employment objectives. Students reported low success at finding work with their sponsors, but many reported learning many useful skills such as organizational, leadership, social, and communication skills. The citizenship objectives met by the majority of students included finding a role in the community, feeling like a contribution was made to the community and valuable ties to the community were made.

7.02 Education implications of study

The Ministry should consider major changes to its design of the CIA to ensure the quality of student experiences. The main educational implication of this study is that the Ministry must investigate how effective the CIA program is in meeting its civic and career objectives it has set out to accomplish. The Ministry may use this exploratory study to focus their survey which should be given to the widest sample group possible to account for the regional differences. Between now and the future study, the results of this study and the suggested curriculum changes should be implemented to educate those students presently in the system, and provide community sponsors more guidance in organizing safe and educational CIA.

7.03 Study Recommendations

There are several changes that were recommended in this chapter which will improve the CIA program. They include the addition of school staff supervision, the addition of training for both students and the community sponsors, the addition of continuous reflection activities before, during, and after the CIA program, and major accreditation reforms. These major reforms would improve the CIA program and bring it into line with other programs recognized in the literature, but would greatly change the nature of the program.

7.04 Future research directions

The CIA program is basically unresearched with the exception of this study. There are several topics and themes found in this exploratory thesis that could be potential areas for future research. One area of CIA program that could be investigated further is the connection between curriculum and safety. The reason for the call for further interest stems from the statistics revealing that some students were injured and the idea that the injuries could be issues related to improper training. The curriculum related to training both sponsors and students should be examined more closely. In this chapter, a handbook for training for sponsors was suggested as a way to improve the CIA program. The curriculum within this handbook does not exist presently and could make an interesting directed research project.

7.05 Limitations to future research

Despite the potential for many curriculum research questions, anyone planning to use the CIA program as the basis for a longer term study should be aware of how vulnerable to cancellation it is due to its nature as a graduation requirement. The Ministry would not have to disturb the main academic curriculum to remove it because the CIA program is so loosely linked to the present curriculum. The CIA program has been operating for only 6 years, and its future is uncertain as each new government reforms the Harris Government's K to 12 curriculum. The main thing that may prolong the longevity of the CIA program would be further funding cuts to community services and charities. With less funding to meet its staffing demands, the community will have to increasingly rely on students trying to complete their CIA, much to the dread of child labour activists and educators.

7.06 A final note

Exploring this new topic was exciting and frustrating at the same time. There are now even more questions raised than questions answered about the CIA program by this study, but this is the nature of an exploratory study. Unfortunately, the Ministry is not obligated to pursue any of this study's recommendations to improve the program because the CIA program seems to be fulfilling some of its objectives. Any program as hastily created and implemented as the CIA program is bound to have major problems with its curriculum and design. Ensuring that students receive the highest quality work experience possible, even during an extracurricular activity like the CIA program, must start with a quality curriculum.

7.07 Chapter summary

Despite the difficulty in categorizing the CIA program, it could be made to conform to typical community-based learning standards by making several major changes. These changes include the addition of school staff supervision, addition of training for both students and the community sponsors, the addition of comprehensive reflection activities before, during, and after the CIA program, and accreditation reforms. At the same time, changes on the scale of these would radically change the nature of the CIA program and would require considerable Ministry resources to design and implemented.

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APPENDIX I: CAPTIONS & PAGES

Secondary school diploma requirements (continued)

Compulsory Credits - 18

English - 4 credits (1 per grade)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Civics - 0.5 credit
Mathematics - 3 credits (at least 1 in Gr. 11 or 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career studies - 0.5 credit
Science - 2 credits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plus:
French as a second language - 1 credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 credit in English or a third language or the social sciences and humanities or Canadian and world studies
Canadian history - 1 credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 credit in health and physical education or business studies or the arts
Canadian geography - 1 credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 credit in science (Gr. 11 or 12) or technological education (Gr. 9-12)
The arts (music, visual arts, media arts, drama, dance) - 1 credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and physical education - 1 credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Optional Credits - 12

Additional planning for next year

• Record what you plan to do next year in each of the following areas.

	Plans for Grade 8	Plans for Grade 9	Plans for Grade 10	Plans for Grade 11	Plans for Grade 12
Career Exploration Activities (e.g., learning about economic sectors; job shadowing; touring a workplace; participating in cooperative education)					
Education Exploration Activities (e.g., researching university, college, or apprenticeship programs on the Internet; visiting campuses)					
Extracurricular Activities (e.g., joining a debating club, a sports team, or a Junior Achievement company; volunteering to tutor other students)					
Community Involvement Activities (e.g., assisting at a local hospital, a food bank, or a local arts festival)					

A-1.03

MOE's Notification of planned CIA form: Students need to fill out this form to plan and notify the school staff of their planned activities.

**Notification of Planned
Community Involvement Activities**

Student _____ Date _____
 School _____ Telephone _____

Please provide the information requested below about the community involvement activities in which you plan to participate.

Activity	Estimated number of hours	Estimated date of completion	Location and telephone number	Supervisor's name	Principal signature (if required)

In each activity identified on the school boards list of approved activities? Yes No
 If you checked "No", you must obtain written approval from the principal (the principal's signature above) before starting the activity.

Student's signature _____ Date _____ Parent's or guardian signature _____ Date _____

Note: (Board must insert a statement on the collection of personal information.)

A-1.05 MOE's Provincial Report Card, Grade 9-12: The School staff fill in this form. There is a section to log the number of the CIA hours students reported on their Completion forms.



Provincial Report Card,
Grades 9-12

Completion of Requirements
for Graduation

Student

Diploma Requirements	Total Required	Earned This Report	Earned to Date
Compulsory Credits	18		
English	4		
French as a second language	1		
Mathematics	3		
Science	2		
Canadian history	1		
Canadian geography	1		
The arts	1		
Health and physical education	1		
Civics	0.5		
Career studies	0.5		
<i>Choose 1 of the following</i> English Third language Social sciences and the humanities Canadian and world studies	1		
<i>Choose 1 of the following</i> Health and physical education The arts Business studies	1		
<i>Choose 1 of the following</i> Science (Grade 11 or 12) Technological education	1		
Optional Credits	12		
Total Credits Required for Graduation	30		
Community Involvement (40 hours)	(40 hours)		
Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test	Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
For school use			

Principal's Signature _____	Date _____
-----------------------------	------------

A-1.07

TVDSB Notification of planned CIA form: Students need to fill out this form to plan and notify the school staff of their planned activities. This is the school board's version of the MOE's form.

THUNDER VALLEY NOTIFICATION OF PLANNED COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Student _____	Principal _____
School _____	Telephone _____

Students and Parents/Guardians please provide all the information requested below and sign at the bottom.

Planned Community Involvement Activity	Location of Activity	Estimated Number of Hours	Estimated Date of Completion	Supervisor's Name & Telephone Number	Principal's Signature (if required)

1. We have read the list of ineligible activities as outlined on the Board's pamphlet, and certify that the activities listed above are not on the ineligible list. Yes No
2. Is each activity represented on the school board's list of eligible activities? Yes No
3. If you checked "no", you must obtain written approval from the principal (the principal's signature above) before starting the activity.

Student's signature _____ Date _____ Parent's or guardian's signature _____ Date _____

A-1.08

TVDSB Completion of CIA form: Students use this form to track their hours and must get their sponsors to sign the form. The form is then handed in to the school staff upon completion of the CIA. This is the school board's version of the MOE's form.

COMPLETION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES



Student	Principal
School	Telephone

Please submit this form annually to the school when the Principal requests it, or when you have completed 40 hours of community involvement activities.

Completed Activity	Location of Activity	Number of Hours	Date of Completion	Supervisor's Name and Telephone Number	Supervisor's Signature	Supervisor's Comments
Total						

Per office use only

Completion has been noted on the student's OST.

Signature of school official _____ Date _____

Student's signature _____ Date _____ Parent's or guardian's signature _____ Date _____

Activity 1

Checking out your skills!**A-1.10**

Before looking for community involvement activities, take time to assess the skills you already have. You may be required to have an interview and therefore you need to think about what skills you have that might apply to your community involvement activity.

1. Personal skills (Some examples would be—flexibility, initiative, punctuality, enjoyment of working with a variety of people)

2. Technical skills (Some examples would be—computer skills, speaking Arabic, playing the piano)

3. Other volunteer experience (Helping in the school library, helping younger students practise their reading)

4. Work experience (For example, babysitting)

A-1.11

OSSTF CIA activity 2: What did I learn?: This form is a reflection activity that is available.



Activity 2

What did I learn?

Think about the volunteer activity that you just had and evaluate it. Were you successful? Did you learn something new?

Community Involvement Activity _____

Location _____

Days volunteered _____ Number of hours _____

Who was your supervisor? Name and position _____

What did you do? (List activities, tasks you completed, new skills you learned, old skills you practised)

What did you accomplish? (Give examples of what you were able to accomplish and the successes you had.)

Keep this information in a safe spot. You will be able to use it for another volunteer position or when you need to do a resumé for a job search.

APPENDIX II

A-2.02

Internet questionnaire: This is a printed copy of the questionnaire that was issued for both of the two sample groups. The questionnaire has 25 questions.

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

key : $\left(\begin{array}{cc} 2003 & 2004 \\ \text{year one} & \text{year two} \\ \text{data} & \text{data} \end{array} \right)$

Question 1.

Are you Male or Female?

Frequencies

Female (288/110)
Male (101/36)

Question 2.

Describe where you went to secondary school.

Northern Ontario (39/8)
Eastern Ontario (32/17)
Central Ontario (56/30)
South Western Ontario (101/60)
Western Ontario (21/3)
Not in Ontario (0/0)

Question 3.

Describe the place where you lived while in secondary school.

Rural (in the country) (81/22)
Urban (in a town) (100/75)
Metropolitan Core (in a big city) (100/44)

Question 4.

Do you believe the Community Involvement activity(ies) you completed last year helped you develop the following? (You can check more than one answer.)

- An awareness of civic responsibility. (100 / 36)
- An understanding of civic responsibility. (79 / 33)
- A role you can play in your community. (204 / 99)
- Valuable and strong ties with the community(example, resume references). (177 / 82)
- A greater sense of belonging within your community. (112 / 45)
- Future career ideas and related work experience. (158 / 68)
- A feeling that you strengthened your community ties. (75 / 34)
- A feeling that you contributed to your community. (220 / 68)
- A new awareness of a variety of summer and part-time job opportunities. (105 / 46)
- An ability to use community resources to find information on jobs/volunteering. (83 / 35)
- Other.

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART C: ACTIVITY SPECIFICS

Question 5.

What category of activity did you complete for your main Community Involvement Activity?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Coaching. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (90 / 45) |
| Sports activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (108 / 54) |
| Fundraising. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (97 / 33) |
| Participating in charity events. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (87 / 37) |
| Volunteering in a charity organization. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (107 / 44) |
| Medical/Hospital activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (79 / 27) |
| Lawn maintenance. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (6 / 7) |
| Snow shoveling. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (6 / 3) |
| Animal care. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (8 / 2) |
| Clean-up programs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (11 / 7) |
| Food services. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (34 / 15) |
| Volunteering with the elderly. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (73 / 20) |
| Volunteering with people with disabilities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (48 / 8) |
| Volunteering with children. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (16 / 16) |
| Religious activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (64 / 29) |
| Volunteering with school activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (136 / 53) |
| Counseling and mentoring. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (53 / 13) |
| Other. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Question 6.

Estimate the total number of Community Involvement hours you completed by the time you had graduated.

- Less than 40 hours. (13 / 0)
- Exactly 40 hours. (26 / 20)

More than 40 hours. (262/119)

Question 7.

Why did you choose to do these types of activity(ies)? (You may check more than one.)

- Only because it was mandatory in order to graduate. (101/49)
- Personal interest. (209/97)
- Had past experience in the activity. (127/59)
- Investigating a future career. (78/29)
- A desire to help. (145/57)
- Pressure from others. (7/4)
- Sponsor asked me to help. (37/21)
- Hoped to get a summer/part-time job with sponsor after the activity was completed. (33/13)
- Wanted a challenge. (45/19)
- Thought the activity would be easy. (27/11)
- The activity was easy to find. (59/20)
- A volunteer placement agency arranged it for me. (2/3)
- Friend planned to volunteer at the same place. (55/26)
- Location of the activity was close to home. (62/33)
- Sponsor offered to pay me. (6/1)
- Sponsor offered scholarships for university. (3/0)
- Knew someone who worked there. (54/24)
- To impress a girl or boy. (19/2)
- Needed a reference for my resume. (151/16)
- University application required a certain type of volunteering activity. (37/3)
- Thought it might be fun. (4/59)
- Compatible with my religious beliefs. (1/13)
- I was attracted by an advertisement. (1/0)
- Other.

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART D: OPINIONS ON THE PROGRAM

Question 8.

Do you feel that the activity(ies) you completed last year were educational (as opposed to just play or work)?

Yes (205/87)
No (93/52)

Question 9.

Do you believe that the Community Involvement Program enhanced or improved the quality of your Secondary education?

Yes (141/70)
No (155/69)

Question 10.

Do you think the Community Involvement Program should be a mandatory graduation requirement?

Yes (141/74)
No (155/65)

Question 11.

Were your volunteering experiences in the Community Involvement Program primarily Positive or Negative?

Positive. (283/132)
Negative. (14/7)

Question 12.

What did you learn about yourself that regular school activities could not teach you?
(Please type your answer in point form in the space provided below.)

[Empty text input area for the answer]

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART E: OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Question 13.

Did you continue to volunteer with a sponsor after you had completed your forty hours?

Yes (218 / 90)
 No (68 / 41)

Question 14.

Will you continue to volunteer in your community?

Yes (260 / 109)
 No (28 / 23)

Question 15.

After finishing the Community Involvement Program, did you feel more inspired to go out to work or to continue going to school for a higher education?

Work. (0 / 3)
 Higher Education. (140 / 65)
 Not inspired by the program. (144 / 64)

Question 16.

The Ministry states that "most students feel that their Community Involvement Activities are the highlight of their High School program."

Do you agree or disagree with the Ministry's statement?

Strongly agree (15 / 7)
 Agree (47 / 22)

Uncertain (69 / 27)
Disagree (83 / 46)
Strongly disagree (75 / 29)

Question 17.

Did you get a summer or a part-time job where you did your Community Involvement activity(ies)?

Yes (40 / 17)
No (249 / 115)

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART F: QUALITY OF PROGRAM

Question 18.

Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the Community Involvement Program from your **community sponsor**.

- Excellent. (74 / 47)
- Very good. (89 / 28)
- Good. (69 / 30)
- Satisfactory. (22 / 9)
- Fair. (13 / 7)
- Poor. (6 / 7)
- Very Poor. (4 / 3)

Question 19.

Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the Community Involvement Program from your **school staff**.

- Excellent. (30 / 20)
- Very good. (43 / 29)
- Good. (70 / 27)
- Satisfactory. (64 / 15)
- Fair. (33 / 19)
- Poor. (25 / 13)
- Very Poor. (15 / 8)

Question 20.

Please rate the overall quality of the support you received during the Community Involvement Program from your **parents**.

Excellent.	c	(105 / 61)
Very good.	c	(76 / 31)
Good.	c	(64 / 20)
Satisfactory.	c	(21 / 10)
Fair.	c	(10 / 3)
Poor.	c	(1 / 1)
Very Poor.	c	(3 / 3)

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART G: SAFETY IN THE PROGRAM

Question 21.

Did you feel safe while you did your volunteering?(For example, the Sponsor made an effort ensure a safe work environment for you.)

Yes (279 / 128)
 No (2 / 3)

Question 22.

Did you get injured while you did your volunteering? (You may choice more than one injury.)

Cut. (31 / 10)
 Muscle Sprain (13 / 1)
 Burn (1 / 2)
 Eye injury. (0 / 0)
 Broken or fractured bone. (0 / 0)
 Respiratory injury (affected by fumes) (2 / 1)
 Bruised by something hitting you. (12 / 2)
 Not Injured. (156 / 105)
 Other.

Question 23.

Did you get harassed while doing your activity(ies)?

Emotional harassment. (2 / 0)
 Sexual harassment. (1 / 1)
 Physical harassment. (0 / 0)
 Verbal harassment. (9 / 11)

Not harassed at all.

(265 / 119)

Question 24.

Please rate the quality of the training you received from your sponsor to do your major activity.

- Excellent. (43 / 34)
- Very good. (68 / 27)
- Good. (90 / 37)
- Satisfactory. (54 / 22)
- Fair. (9 / 4)
- Poor. (9 / 5)
- Very poor. (3 / 3)

Submit and Proceed to Next Question

Submit and Examine progress chart

Community Involvement Program Survey

PART H: RECOMMENDATIONS

Question 25.

What part of the Community Involvement Program would you like to change? (You may check more than one option.)

- No changes are necessary. (36 / 21)
- Remove it as a graduation requirement. (104 / 44)
- Fewer volunteer hours should be required. (29 / 28)
- More volunteer hours should be required. (27 / 13)
- More help needed to find activities. (110 / 50)
- A final group discussion should be held to talk about the experience. (16 / 8)
- Less paper work is needed. (60 / 26)
- A mark should be given based on a final written assignment or a journal. (18 / 6)
- More reminders should be given to students about completing activities. (53 / 19)
- Training should be provided to sponsors to plan student activities. (37 / 8)
- More information should be given to parents/students on what is an educational activity. (64 / 21)
- Sponsors should have a police criminal record check before being allowed access to students. (26 / 11)
- Mandatory safety training should be provided by sponsor to students. (38 / 14)
- Allow some activities to be completed during school hours. (105 / 55)
- Hire school staff to visit each sponsor. (13 / 6)
- Other:

Community Involvement Program Staff