Faculty of Education

CONFUSION, CLARITY, COHESION, DISINTEGRATION:

A STUDY OF CURRICULUM DECISION-MAKING

IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

In the last decade, the Commonwealth Government has relied increasingly on policy-induced consortia to implement its education policy initiatives. The study focused on education policy pertaining to citizenship education, and specifically on the recommendations of the Civics Expert Group's 1994 report *Whereas the people ...Civics and Citizenship Education*. The then Commonwealth Government called for policy-induced consortia to submit grant applications as a means to implement the report's recommendations. As a result, the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was formed. The Consortium's submission for a grant to assist teachers to prepare curriculum materials for citizenship education was successful. The study examined the decisions made by the Consortium members in relation to the curriculum materials project.

The study was informed by an examination of literature pertaining to citizenship and citizenship education, the implementation of public policy, and group and curriculum decision-making. The review of the literature concerning the constructs of 'citizen' highlighted the contested nature of citizenship. In turn, this is reflected in the debates about the nature of citizenship education. As well, the literature review revealed many models of policy implementation and group curriculum decision-making do not adequately reflect the complexities and realities of group decision-making processes. The models often ignore the socio-political dynamics of the group, particularly in a policy-induced consortium, which exists for a

specific and limited purpose, where members owe allegiance to their institutions rather than the consortium and where the consortium is accountable to a government department for the management of the project.

A case study approach using qualitative methods was used. These methods and approaches are most likely to capture and interpret the humanness of group decision-making. Moreover, they take into account the importance of the values each member of the Consortium brought to the group and recognise that each member constructed his/her meaning as a result of social interaction with other Consortium members.

The case study focused on a detailed examination of the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and especially on the sub-group of the Project Management Committee over eighteen months. The notion of 'critical decisions' was used to analyse the Consortium's decision-making. Each critical decision had significant consequences for the ongoing work of the Consortium. The nature of the Consortium's decision-making highlighted the overwhelming importance of social dynamics over curriculum decision-making.

The intentions of the study were to build towards a more complete understanding of the socio-political nature of group curriculum decision-making; to contribute to theorising about the humanness of group curriculum decision-making; and to provide an informed perspective about

the significance of the Commonwealth Government's intervention in education through the mechanism of policy-induced consortia.

The thesis makes a contribution to the socio-political dimension of group curriculum decision-making in federations. It illustrates that curriculum policy delivery is a socio-political process focussing on interpersonal relationships rather than a rational or deliberative process based on educational outcomes.

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My parents, Alan and Gladys, who provided me with early opportunities through their personal sacrifices.

My grandmother, Irene, who gave me the confidence to believe in myself.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0   Focus of the research

The focus of this research is a detailed case study of a policy-induced consortium and its involvement in the implementation of government education policy. The consortium, the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, was made up of members who represented various institutions, universities, education systems and government agencies. The government policy was the Civics Expert Group's 1994 report *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education.* This study provides a micro-analysis of the complex group curriculum decision-making that occurred in the Consortium as it translated and interpreted the recommendations of the report.

In recent decades in Australia, numerous Commonwealth and State government reports pertaining to education have been prepared. Other government reports, although not immediately related to education, contain recommendations that affect education either directly or indirectly. Some of these reports are shelved - literally and metaphorically. Most reports, however, are accepted and endorsed. Such reports become public policy, with a clear expectation their recommendations will be implemented.

The purpose of most public policy is to bring about change. Therefore, change in educational settings needs to be considered in any discussion of the processes of translation and implementation of education policy. Hall and Hord (1987) and Fullan (1991 and 1993) state change is a process and not an event. The development or announcement of a policy does not guarantee a change. Rather, change needs to be seen as a process which takes time and in which individuals translate the policy before it is implemented. This present study focuses on the role of individuals in translating the policy developers' intentions into a plan of action to bring about change.

There is much that can happen during the process of translation of public policy before its recommendations are put into action. Ball and Bowe (discussed by Crump, 1993, p. 31) make the distinction between policy intentions (what the various interest groups want); actual policy (the document, legislation and/or report); and policy-in-use (regional and school level action). In 1992 Bowe, Ball and Gold revised these labels to: context of influence (intended), context of policy text production (actual) and context of practice (policy-in practice). Crump (1993, p. 32) argues "the analysis of policy development and implementation suggests that policies are not frozen texts, that they are not immutable creeds set in tablets of stone, nor omnipotent discourses". The present study highlights the significance of these distinctions. It asserts there can be crucial differences between the intended policy and policy-in practice.

In some cases, a report's recommendations are specific, well defined and non-contentious. These reports provide clear guidelines as to how their recommendations are to be put into place. Such report's recommendations become policy and are implemented with great 'fidelity'. More often, a report's recommendations may be more generally stated, less clearly defined or even contentious. The recommendations of such reports provide an abstract and broad framework which must be translated into a much more specific plan of action. Such reports can be viewed as soft innovations as they are open to various interpretations. Rice and Rogers (1980) and Loucks (1983) describe soft innovations as a collection of ideas or a "loose bundle" of components that are susceptible to interpretation.

The Civics Expert Group's 1994 report *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* provides an excellent example of policy recommendations that are a loose bundle of components. Its content is contentious and its recommendations broad and wide-ranging. For example, the first of its fifteen recommendations refers to "a non-partisan program of public education and information on the Australian system of government, the Constitution, Australian citizenship and other civic issues"; the second to "a program [should be] a means of fostering a core of unity in a diverse society"; and, the third to "a comprehensive civics and citizenship education program which builds awareness and support for civic participation, while simultaneously providing a range of opportunities for improved civics and citizenship education across all formal education sectors and in the wider

community" (*Summary of the Report of the Civics Expert Group*, 1994, p. 24).

Clearly these recommendations are general and wide-ranging and, therefore, open to various interpretations. In order for implementation to occur, such recommendations must be translated into a much more specific plan of action.

A sum of $25 million was allocated from the 1995-96 Commonwealth Government budget to implement the recommendations of the Civics Expert Group's report. (A change of government in the 1996 Commonwealth election meant this amount was reduced to $17 million.) The then Commonwealth Government Department of Employment, Education and Training (subsequently re-structured and re-named as the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs) called for submissions under the Strategic Initiatives Element of the 1996 National Professional Development Project from universities interested in providing a course to renew subject knowledge of teachers in the learning area of Studies of Society and Environment: Informed Citizenship.

The Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was formed as a direct response to the preliminary activities associated with the work of the Civics Expert Group, including the call for submissions. In response to the call for applications for grants from the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Consortium submitted a proposal entitled *Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for the Classroom*

Practitioner. The Consortium was awarded funds for the project as part of the Strategic Initiatives of the 1996 National Professional Development Project.

These grants were a means for the Commonwealth Government to implement the recommendations of its Civics Expert Group's report. Although the Commonwealth Government has no direct responsibility for the curriculum in Australian schools, it could have at least some indirect influence on the curriculum in schools through such grants. However, it was up to policy-induced consortia such as the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education to translate the broad guidelines of the Civics Expert Group into a format that could be more readily used in schools. The Consortium did this by enrolling teachers in a series of professional development seminars and workshops. The result was the development of a curriculum package entitled *Active Citizenship: A Resource Manual for Teachers.* It is asserted during the eighteen months of the project, the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education translated, interpreted and even reconstructed the recommendations of the Civics Experts Group's report. As Hall (1992, p. 2) observes "... contextual factors, social definitions, power and resources, and contingent interactions transform the received policy by elaborating as well as altering it". It is argued these factors identified by Hall came into play during the Consortium's translation of the Civic Expert Group's report.

What happened during this process of translation and conceptualisation by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education? What were the

decision-making processes that occurred during the translation and implementation of the Civics Expert Group's recommendations? Who was included in the process? How were the key decisions made? Did the policy makers and the policy translators share the same vision? Were the recommendations re-shaped and adapted to such an extent during this process of translation into action that the outcomes of implementation had little or no resemblance to the policy makers' intentions? These questions were used to frame the current research.

1.1 Research questions

The questions below shape the current research. The general research question is: How did the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education translate Commonwealth Government policy on civics and citizenship education into a plan of action?

The specific research questions are:

- How did the group reconstruct the policy?
- What were the critical decisions during the process of translation?
- What were the external and internal influences on the decision-making process?
- How did group dynamics influence the decision-making process?

The research was carried out as a case study focusing on a detailed microanalysis of the dynamics of the decision-making of the Consortium. The case study identifies and examines the factors which shaped the Consortium's decision-making and analyses the ways in which the policy was reconstructed as part of the process of implementation of the recommendations of the Civics Experts Group's 1994 report *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education*.

1.2   Contentions underpinning the research

This research is premised on four major contentions. These contentions are: first, the already complex implementation process has been further complicated by the increasing intervention of the Commonwealth Government in curriculum policy development; second, the ambiguous and contested nature of citizenship means the policy itself is confused and confusing; third, the multi-faceted and multi-dimensional processes by which government education policies are implemented are poorly understood, and, therefore, often oversimplified; and, fourthly, the importance of the social dynamics of the group in curriculum decision-making is poorly understood.

Consider the first contention on which the research is premised. It is posited that the already complex implementation process has been further complicated by the increasing intervention of the Commonwealth Government in

curriculum policy development, especially thorough the mechanism of tied grants to the states. Kennedy observes:

> ... *it is possible to identify an increasing interest by the Commonwealth government in the school curriculum. It is an interest which seems to have increased exponentially under successive Labor governments since 1983. Given the resources and responsibilities of the Commonwealth government, its interests in the curriculum of schools should be subject to close scrutiny.* (Kennedy, 1993, p. 7)

The Commonwealth Government relies on State Government authorities or other organisations, such as professional associations or consortia, to implement its policy initiatives rather than interacting directly with schools. Cumming (1993) and Kennedy (1995) discuss the growing role of professional associations and the way in which, especially after 1993, the Commonwealth Government used professional associations and other partnerships to circumvent uncooperative state governments. Instead of allocating block grants to state education bureaucracies, as had occurred in the past, "bids for funds had to be made by partners, employers, professional associations and universities" (Kennedy, 1995, p. 161). The result has been the proliferation of *ad hoc* cross-sectoral consortia and project management committees that report to the Commonwealth government department administering the grants. Cousins and Simon (1996) describe such partnerships or consortia as policy-induced partnerships - albeit in a research setting.

These partnerships or consortia differ to state education bureaucracies in many ways. The consortia frequently have a sole purpose; that is, the implementation of a single policy initiative. They often exist only whilst the implementation process is being funded; often have limited infrastructures; and are comprised of members who represent a variety of constituencies including employer and employee groups. Moreover, new systems and structures are established in order for the consortia to report directly to the Commonwealth government agency administering the funds.

Conversely, state education bureaucracies are multi-functional; will continue to exist well beyond the life of the implementation of a single policy initiative; have well developed infrastructures; and are comprised of members who are all employees of the same organisation. These bureaucracies also have well established and clearly defined systems and structures to account for expenditure of public funds.

The emergence of policy-induced partnerships or consortia has added another dimension - the mezzo level - to the policy implementation process. The inclusion of a new level of player in the implementation process means the process has become even more complex and protracted, and this creates opportunities for an even greater diversity of policy interpretation.

The present study provides a fine-grained examination of the micro decision-making that occurs as the individuals of a mezzo level, policy-induced

consortium work together. The nature of the group decision-making and the dynamics of personal interactions are affected by the fact each member of the consortium is representing an organisation, institution or agency. The decision-making is politicised by the very nature of the membership of the consortium.

The second contention on which the research is based is the contested nature of citizenship itself, and, therefore of citizenship education means the policy on civics and citizenship education is open to various interpretations and re-constructions. The lack of consensus is reflected in the failure of the policy developers, the Civics Expert Group, to clarify the debate. In turn, this meant their report was a soft innovation likely to be variously interpreted.

A perusal of the literature reveals there is neither a simple nor a single answer to the question: What is citizenship? Heater (1990) notes as early as ancient Athenian times, Aristotle observed the nature of citizenship was an issue that was often disputed and that there was no general agreement on a single definition. Hogan (1997) notes in 1576, Jean Bodin complained he could identify some 500 definitions of citizenship. Much more recently, Davidson (1997, p. 2) refers to the "Heinz fifty seven varieties of citizenship in Australia" alone. Walter (1996, p. 63) observes "citizenship may mean different things in different nations: there is no neat formula about the precise mix of entitlements and responsibilities". Certainly, Gilbert (1996, p. 108) is not without perception when he states "citizenship is a contested term".

The literature, which is replete with discussions about the evolution and meaning of citizenship, reveals the concept of citizenship has changed from a relatively simple one to one that is increasingly more diverse and contentious (Gilbert, 1996 and Heater, 1990). [Its] "development is linked to the emergence of the modern nation state, with modern concepts of citizenship reflecting the political, legal and social complexities of the modern world" (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 1994, p. 9).

The complex and disputed nature of citizenship itself means the debate about directions for citizenship education is also contested and problematic. There is the divide between civics and citizenship education. The former is generally viewed as a more formal program of instruction about political and legal institutions and structures. The latter is more complex, but it is generally agreed there is a greater emphasis on participation in society. Kennedy (1997, p. 1) observes, "there is no single unitary construct [of citizenship education] that will suit everyone". There have been many attempts to describe approaches to citizenship education including those of Hill (1993), Musgrave (1994) and Gilbert (1996a).

This lack of a single construct of citizenship education is reflected in the Civics Experts Group's 1994 report *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* itself, and, in the reactions to it. The report argues, "citizenship should be the mortar that holds together the bricks of our contemporary, multicultural society" (*Summary of the Report of the Civics*

Expert Group, 1994, p. 5). It does not define citizenship. Even in the section

entitled, *Meanings of Citizenship*, there is no discussion about what the

members of the Civics Expert Group understood citizenship to be. Instead,

the diversity and complexity of Australian society are discussed and the

observation made "this has great implications for citizenship" (*Whereas the*

People... Civics and Citizenship Education, 1994, p. 4). Although the report

defines civics as "an identifiable body of knowledge, skills and

understandings relating to the organisation and workings of society, including

Australia's political and social heritage, democratic processes, government,

public administration and judicial system" (*Whereas the People... Civics and*

Citizenship Education, 1994, p. 6), it does not provide a clear definition of

citizenship education.

The reactions to the Civics Expert Group's report were mixed. This further

illustrates the contentious nature of citizenship. Not surprisingly, Prime

Minister Keating, who had instigated the report, was fulsome in its praise:

> *The Commonwealth's proposed civics and citizenship*
> *education program will ensure that Australians have the*
> *opportunity to become informed about our system of*
> *government, our Constitution, and other civics and*
> *citizenship issues ... the program will aim to improve our*
> *understanding of what citizenship means in a modern society,*
> *and thereby encourage practical participation in our nation's*
> *civic life.* (Office of the Prime Minister, 6 June, 1995)

While some social educators welcomed the report's acknowledgement of the

importance of the humanities (Kennedy, 1996), other reactions were less

favourable. Concerns included it was "conventional" and "establishment" (Gilbert, 1996) and its emphasis on history, as the vehicle for civics, was backward looking and excluded a broader view of citizenship. Dufty (1995, p. 21) argued the report was "reductionist in nature and fails to come to terms with the breadth and depth of civic life in today's world". Hogan (1996a, p. 9) contended, "Macintyre [the chair of the Civics Expert Group] wants a rehabilitation of an Aristotelian politics of civic virtue". Hogan, Fearnley-Sander and Lamb argued:

> ... *in its preoccupation with civic virtue, we fear that* Whereas the People... *ignores the role that individual interests should and can play (for both normative and pedagogical reasons) in a publicly defensible approach to civics education which aspires to be liberal, democratic and effective.* (Hogan et al., 1996, p. 38)

Others argued the report failed to recognise the diversity of Australian society. For example, Foster (1996) contended the report failed to conceptualise the role of women in Australian society and Woods (1996) highlighted the tension for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who want to retain their identity rather than be absorbed into a common citizenship.

Furthermore, in its attempt to provide a comprehensive review of civics and citizenship education, the Civics Expert Group's report raised more questions than it answered. Pope highlighted some of these questions:

The notion of 'our history' and 'our Constitution' seem straight forward enough at first glance - but just who is included in the 'our' and, more importantly, who is excluded? Is the Constitution a thing set in stone or is open to revision and reinterpreting? By the time we get to 'the nature of civic life' some very contested and contentious issues are surfacing: what is the difference between civic life and community? (Pope, 1996, p. 15).

Gilbert (1996, p. 56) argued the report's "wide ranging recommendations leave open a range of questions about the educational programs it might generate". Because the report was a soft innovation it was likely to be interpreted in a variety of ways as it was put into action.

These various translations of the *Whereas the People...* report meant new players, previously with little or no interest in citizenship education, were drawn into the debate. The number of these players grew, especially after the announcement of substantial funding for various projects associated with citizenship and citizenship education. It is argued many of these new players, who entered the competition for grants, did not appreciate the nature of earlier debates and had yet to understand the complex history and philosophy of citizenship.

The contentious and contested nature of citizenship is significant for this research as it impacts on the discussions and decision-making within the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Furthermore, it has implications for the interactions between the members of the Consortium

and the teacher participants in the professional development project, especially as some of them were new players in citizenship education.

The third contention on which the current research is founded is the multi-faceted and multi-dimensional processes by which government education policies are implemented are poorly understood, and, therefore, often oversimplified. The development of and agreement to adopt a policy does not guarantee its implementation. The gap between policy development and its translation into everyday practice has been described as "sometimes a vacuum, or at best a space, rather than being filled by mutually understood and accepted procedures and responsibilities" (Carter and O'Neill, 1995, p. 83). Translation of policy into everyday practice as part of the implementation of a policy is frequently ignored.

Hall and Hord (1987), Fullan (1991) and Lowham (1995) claim policy makers expect the policy implementers will simply make the policy work, chiefly because the former assume implementation is an event not a process.

Crump argues:

> ...there is an emerging dissatisfaction in schools and
> academic circles with past theories and methods of policy
> analysis ... not only because they are failing to deliver in an
> increasingly overburdened and complex environment, but
> also because they are failing the practitioners: the policy
> actors, school leaders and members of the local community

who now have a sense of the policy process. (Crump, 1993 p. 1)

The present research is based on the premise the current theories and models of policy analysis tend to oversimplify a complex process. This leads to the dissatisfaction to which Crump refers. It is contended in the present research the policy process cannot be reduced to the linear models of Lowham (1995) and Hall (1995).

Many of the reductionist models of policy implementation pay little regard to the interplay between government, organisations, institutions, groups and individuals, all of which shape the final outcome of policy implementation. Hord asserts:

> *What change is really about, rather than structures and strategies, is people ... [It] is about each and every individual who will be implementing new policies, programs and processes. It is also about the people who will facilitate the implementers in doing so.* (Hord, 1995, p. 92)

In his paper, which discusses the multi-dimensional nature of the implementation process, Lowham (1995, p. 95) asserts there is little, if any, recognition of any discretionary decision-making on the part of the individuals who "actually operationalise policy".

The current research therefore seeks to understand the processes that occur in the rather 'fuzzy' area between policy formulation and its translation,

interpretation or transformation, before it is put into action. This research aims to highlight the complex nature of policy translation by tracing the decisions made by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education; by analysing the nature of decision-making and the interplay between individuals within the Consortium; and by examining the interactions that occurred between the Consortium and State and Commonwealth government agencies. It highlights the failure of linear 'policy into practice' continua to reflect the intricacies of reality.

The fourth contention on which the research is premised is the socio-political dynamics of the group need to be taken into account when analysing curriculum decision-making. One of the goals of the Consortium through its grant for the professional development project was to work with teachers to prepare resource materials on citizenship education for classroom use. Therefore, models of curriculum development inform this research. It is argued, however, many of these models are inadequate because they do not recognise the full significance of group dynamics in curriculum development.

Many of the traditional models of curriculum development are premised on a belief curriculum decision-making is a rational process. The works of Tyler (1949), Taba (1962), Goodlad and Richter (1977), Schwab (1970), Walker (1971) and Johnson (1977) represent the dominant thinking in the field of curriculum planning and development. Tyler (1949), Taba (1962), Goodlad and Richter (1977), and Johnson (1977) describe curriculum development as

if it were a technical and rational process. Tyler's and Taba's models, in particular, have been interpreted as showing curriculum development as a linear process. These models focus on the selection of content, learning experiences and resources and on the evaluation of the teaching/learning process. None of these models takes into account the interaction that happens between the curriculum planners themselves. There is an unstated assumption the planners will plan in a logical and rational manner.

The models developed by Schwab (1970) and Walker (1971) more closely reflect reality. Schwab's concept of deliberation in curriculum decision-making recognises curriculum development is not a linear process, but is a flexible, varied and iterative process. Walker uses the concept of deliberation to include formulating decision points, devising alternative choices and choosing the most defensible argument. Both Schwab's and Walker's models recognise curriculum planning is not a precise process that can be prescribed as a series of steps. Both these models acknowledge the importance of the social processes of any group involved in curriculum planning.

Schwab's and Walker's models inform the present study because they capture the significance of the group in decision-making. It is posited, however, neither Schwab nor Walker captures the complete dynamics of group decision-making processes. Walker makes note of the contributions of individuals to the group, but neither he nor Schwab takes into account the political nature of group decision-making. This is especially pertinent to the

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present study where, as discussed already, the individuals in the policy-induced consortium have loyalties to, and agendas from, the institutions and organisations they represent. It is ventured in the present research the curriculum planning that occurs is influenced more by socio-political interactions within the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education than by strictly educational decisions.

1.3 Significance of the study

The current study is of value because it contributes to the understanding of the processes of both policy implementation and curriculum decision-making. The study informs policy developers because it highlights the significance of the micro decision-making that occurs during the interpretation and implementation of their recommendations. It is essential the actions and reactions of everyone involved in the change process be understood if educational policies are to be implemented with fidelity, and to result in the intended changes or reforms. It is argued the micro decision-making of individuals involved in the process of implementation is as important as organisational and institutional factors. It is suggested if policy developers overlook the role of individuals in the implementation process, their policy intentions may be substantially re-shaped and re-constructed. Careful attention needs to be given to small, but key, details during the change process if the intentions of policy developers are to be put into action. This research

emphasises the importance of the way individuals interpret and re-shape the intentions of the policy-makers.

As well as emphasising the need to take into account the contribution of micro decision-making in the change process, this research identifies the significance of the socio-political context in which the decision-making takes place. Again this is a factor, which if overlooked by policy developers, will affect the success or otherwise of the implementation of their recommendations. The socio-political context is especially relevant in the present research as the members of the policy-induced consortium involved in the translation and conceptualisation of the policy represent agencies and institutions with particular interests to protect and advance.

The research informs curriculum decision-making as it draws attention to the significance of group dynamics in the curriculum development process. It suggests curriculum decision-making is not necessarily the logical step-by-step process represented by many models of curriculum development. The present research indicates the group dynamics and the interactions between individuals are at least as important as decisions about content, learning strategies, resources and evaluation. It is posited some curriculum development decisions are more about the shared professional history, personal relationships and loyalties to institutions than they are about educational objectives. Clearly, this has implications for those interested in either the theory or pragmatics of curriculum development.

Finally, the study is significant because at its centre is a detailed analysis of decision-making by members of a policy-induced consortium. There has been a growing use of policy-induced consortia over the last ten to fifteen years by Commonwealth and State governments. It has become common for universities to put together consortia to compete more effectively for research funds. Sometimes these consortia have members from several universities, from government departments and agencies or from businesses. In education, there is a trend to use committees to draw up new policies and to implement them. These committees are made up of individuals representing various stakeholders. Examples of such committees include those established by the Curriculum Council of Western Australia to review and implement the Curriculum Framework and the present Post-Compulsory Education Review. The partnerships in these consortia and committees are generally relatively temporary, short-lived and focussed on a single task. It is strongly suggested decision-making in such consortia and committees is based on socio-political debates rather than on educational debates. For this reason, it is argued this detailed analysis of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education contributes to a better understanding of the decision-making of other policy-induced consortia.

1.4 Limitations of the study

Qualitative research using a case study approach as employed in the present research is sometimes criticised on the grounds it is difficult to generalise

from the findings. Tripp (1983, p. 2), however, contends, "it is matter of some debate as to whether generalisation is an appropriate requirement to demand of case study research". Stake (1978, p. 5) defends the case study approach by arguing "case studies will often be the preferred method of study because they may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader's experience and thus to that person a natural basis for generalisation". Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 120) refer to Stake's "natural basis for generalisation" as a "naturalistic generalisation" that is "based on personal, direct and vicarious experience". Lincoln and Guba explain:

> *The case study builds on the reader's tacit knowledge, presenting a holistic and lifelike description that is like those that the readers normally encounter in their experiencing of the world, rather than being mere symbolic abstractions of such. Readers thus receive a measure of vicarious experience; were they to be magically set down in the context of the inquiry they would have a feeling of déjà vu.* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 359)

Stake (1978) contends readers of an inquiry make meaning of it for themselves. Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 359-360) explain the researcher must provide a "rich description" so the findings of the case study can be transferred to "a person contemplating application in another ... setting to make the needed comparisons of similarity". They suggest:

> *...if you want people to understand better than they otherwise might, provide them information in the form which they usually experience it. They will be able to, both tacitly and propositionally, to derive naturalistic generalisations that*

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will prove to be useful extensions of their understandings.
(Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 120)

Stake (1978, p. 5) writes "it is reasonable to conclude that one of the most effective means of adding to understanding - for all readers - will be approximating through the words and illustrations of our reports the natural experience attained in ordinary personal involvements".

The researcher in the present study has set out to provide a rich description of the decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education in a form readily recognizable to readers. It is hoped the reader will draw on his or her knowledge and experiences to derive meaningful naturalistic generalisations from the present case study and transfer them to familiar situations. It is contended case studies such as the present research are powerful means for building naturalistic generalisations.

1.5 Definition of terms

The following section provides definitions for some of the terms used frequently in this study. It is recognised some of these terms are contested and some have other meanings in different contexts. The definitions provided below attempt to capture the way in which the terms are used in this study.

Policy: is a strategy designed to bring about change resulting in improvement. Generally the change is to address or ameliorate a problem.

Implementation: the process by which a policy or decision is put into action. Implementation can be viewed as the link between policy development and the policy-in-use.

Group: a collection of people who, united by their shared interests and actions, work together for particular purposes or outcomes.

Group dynamics: the complex ways in which individuals within a group interact with and relate to each other. It includes socio-political interactions.

Decision-making process: decision-making is not an event; it is a dynamic process. It involves the evaluation of options, the choice of one followed by a series of steps to put that option into action.

Micro decision-making: the small, but potentially significant choices, judgements and evaluations that are made as the decision-making process unfolds.

Curriculum decision-making: the complex process by which a course of study is developed and planned.

Civics: formal programs of instruction about political and legal processes and institutions including the constitution, parliament and the justice system. The aim of civics programs is political literacy.

Citizenship education: a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes: knowledge about how society works; the skills needed to participate effectively; and an understanding active participation is a right and a responsibility of all citizens. The focus of citizenship education is to encourage people to pursue their roles in a democratic society.

1.6 Organisation of the report

Chapter One introduces the research and discusses four major contentions on which the research is based. The significance of the research is outlined and its limitations defended.

Chapter Two provides an overview of developments in civics and citizenship education occurring internationally and locally at around about the time of the

publication of the report, *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education*. This provides the background to the present research.

Chapter Three considers a wide range of literature pertinent to the present research. Literature pertaining to the constructs of citizen and citizenship and approaches to citizenship education, the nature of public policy, implementation and change theory, group decision-making and curriculum decision-making is considered.

Chapter Four identifies a number of assertions from the literature review in order to provide a conceptual framework for the research. The framework highlights the need for the socio-political processes of decision-making to be taken into account when developing theories about group curriculum planning.

Chapter Five describes and justifies the methodological paradigm and research methods employed in the research. It details how the research was conducted and describes the measures taken to ensure the study's rigour, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Chapter Six provides a rich description and analysis of the decision-making, which takes place in the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, and more specifically in the Project Management Group. The critical decisions made by the members of the Consortium are considered in

two distinct phases in the life of the group: the establishment phase and the subsequent phase.

Chapter Seven provides a discussion and analysis of the research findings in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

2.0 Introduction

While the focus of this study is the analysis of group decision-making in policy implementation, the impetus for the study was policy recommendations pertaining to civics and citizenship education. The formation of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was triggered by a resurgence of interest in civics and citizenship education in Australia in the early and mid 1990s. This resurgence of interest in civics and citizenship education was mirrored internationally, especially in English speaking democracies. This chapter, then, discusses some reasons for the resurgence of this interest in civics and citizenship education and provides a brief overview of international and Australian developments in civics and citizenship education around the time of the establishment of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. It is recognised there have been more recent developments including, for example since 1997 the *Discovering Democracy* project, but a consideration of them is beyond the scope of this research.

2.1 International interest in civics and citizenship education

Professor Stuart Macintyre, the chair of the Civics Expert Group, in his 1995 keynote address to the South Australian Studies of Society and Environment

Conference, observed, "citizenship has become a subject of growing concern around the world". He referred in particular to "recent reports on citizenship in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, France and other countries". What form has this growing interest taken and why has it happened simultaneously, especially in English speaking democracies?

Specifically, in 1990 in the United Kingdom, the Commission on Citizenship report, *Encouraging Citizenship* (1990), found broad sections of British society were unable to exercise their citizenship rights because of lack of knowledge. The Commission called for improved citizenship education in schools (Commission on Citizenship, 1990, p. 18). In the United States of America, a new framework for civic education was published in 1991. The National Curriculum Standards for Civics and Government followed it in 1994. Cogan (1997, p. 8) observed these changes were the only "major changes to have been seriously considered" in civic education in the United States of America since 1916. In Canada, the 1993 Senate Report, *Canadian Citizenship: Sharing the Responsibility*, examined how citizenship education might be revitalised in Canadian schools. In 1993, in France, where civics is a separate area of the curriculum, the newly elected government ordered a major revision of *education civique*, stating the existing approach was ineffective and calling for a more constructive approach. In 1994, UNESCO conducted a conference on Humanistic, Ethical, Cultural and International Dimensions of Education in Asia and the Pacific. All of the participants including Australia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan,

the Philippines, Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, recognized the importance of the concept of citizenship and the key role of citizenship education. In 1996, the UNESCO International Bureau on Education launched a major comparative project entitled *What Education for What Citizenship?*

It is suggested it is no coincidence this interest in citizenship has been expressed simultaneously by individual societies. Hughes (1994) argues it is a response to a general unease and feelings of uncertainty about the future. This unease and uncertainty have come about as the world goes through a transitional period following the end of the modern age. "It seems that something is on its way out and something else is being painfully born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were rising from the rubble" (Vaclav quoted in Hughes, 1994, p. 175).

In the early 1990s, emerging new nation states, such as those from the old Soviet bloc of Central and Eastern Europe, were seeking to develop their national consciousness and to foster social cohesion. Meanwhile the various ethnic and religious conflicts released by the collapse of Cold War divisions had created vast movements of transient workers and refugees whose national identity and citizenship was, and still is, a source of potential future conflict. In South East Asia and the Pacific regions, ethnic minorities were, and are

still, demanding at least a voice in government and, in some cases such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Bougainville, fighting for independence.

In the early 1990s, there was a tension between the globalisation of issues and the localisation of allegiances. The globalisation of the economy and the establishment of powerful trading blocs like the European Union were undermining the significance and role of single nations. The globalisation of the media and communication networks were, and still are, threatening to undermine local cultures and their inherent values. Nations were looking outward as they forged new alliances and jostled for position in the post-modern world order. At the same time, they looked inward in a search for shared core values in order to foster unity where there was diversity and conflict (Macintyre, 1995 and 1996; Walter, 1996).

In the early 1990s, there was apathy and cynicism in many established industrial societies. Rapid social change had resulted in long-term welfare dependency and alienated parts of the community, including youth and indigenous peoples (MacKay, 1993). With reference to the United States of America, Cogan says:

> *The cynicism and lack of efficacy expressed by our youth suggest a serious challenge to democracy in our national culture. ... But I would submit that, these youth, are simply mirroring the growing sense among citizens ... regarding the distance from power or control over the polity which impacts their everyday lives. People are becoming disengaged from the civic culture and are increasingly apathetic. This may be*

*the greatest challenge that the Republic has faced since the
civil war of the mid-nineteenth century.* (Cogan, 1997, p. 17)

Hughes argues this sense of disengagement and cynicism re-ignited interest in

civics and citizenship education especially in English speaking democracies.

He summarises his argument as follows:

> *It is precisely through these feelings of uncertainty and
> challenge that there is a spur to encourage civics education.
> It was so in the early days of the USA. The same need is
> being felt again today ... with many modern societies feeling
> the centrifugal forces of change.* (Hughes, 1994, p. 176)

Gilbert argues whether these changes account for the interest in citizenship

education or not, they do provide the context for the publication of the various

reports. He observes:

> *No doubt local questions have contributed to these
> developments – in the United Kingdom, European
> citizenship; in Canada, Quebec; in Australia, the republican
> debate. However, it is also true that the recent past has seen
> economic, social, cultural and political trends which have
> potentially powerful effects on all these nations. If the
> simultaneity of the interest in citizenship is in question, then
> these common experiences are part of the answer.* (Gilbert,
> 1997, p. 65)

2.2 Australian interest in civics and citizenship education

Although, there were very active programs in civic and citizenship education

from 1901 until at least World War 2, in general, citizenship education has not

received a high profile in Australia in the period between the 1960s until the

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1990s. Since the 1960s, civics and citizenship education has become embedded in social studies courses, rather than being a single subject or discipline. Macintyre (1995, p. 16) states, "in the course of the present century, civics has waxed and waned, but for the past quarter century there has been more waning than waxing". Kennedy provides one explanation for this being the case:

> *There has not been the historical need in Australia to create and reinforce a rationale for a 'new' democracy. Australians in general have settled for a democracy based on colonial heritage. For the most part, the issue of how democratic culture might actively be manifested in Australia has remained unaddressed.* (Kennedy, 1993, p. 1)

In Australia, many teachers are circumspect about teaching civics and citizenship education, despite the keen interest of some in political science. In part, this is because of a lack of training and because of the potentially controversial nature of civics and citizenship education. For many teachers civics and citizenship education are unavoidably linked with values education. With its historical legacy of a public education system claiming to be free, compulsory and secular there have been persistent calls for education to be values neutral. Mcintyre observes:

> *Values education has long been problematic in Australian education. For various reasons we have been shy about teaching values, and have clung to the myth of values neutrality. Some of these reasons are historical (older sectarian divisions, for example, made it difficult to agree about a common religious component) and some are practical (teachers have sometimes found it difficult to teach*

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values without opening themselves to official sanction).
(Macintyre, 1996, p. 26)

Citizenship education with its clear link to values, therefore, has been viewed

with suspicion as possible indoctrination. Teachers were advised to take a

non-committed stance and keep their own views private. Wiltshire (1996, p.

9) observes the argument about the bias of teachers "goes beyond the mere

ideological beliefs of teachers and extends to an accusation that they are

deconstructionists who have no respect for the institutions or processes of

Australian democracy and cultivate those same attitudes in their students". As

a result, in many citizenship education courses there has been an emphasis on

civics courses with non-contentious knowledge objectives concerning

legislative and judicial institutions and structures. Much of this teaching has

been dry, has been perceived by students as irrelevant and failed to engage

their interest. Macintyre (1996, p. 25) notes, "the old civics course was too

narrow and unimaginative to generate interest".

Added to this many Australians distrust politicians and have a cynical attitude

about the processes of government often fuelled by the media's emphasis on

political conflict. The Civics Expert Group's Report (1994, p. 21) refers to

"feelings of cynicism, estrangement and resentment about our system of

government". The revelations of inquiries such as the Fitzgerald Inquiry in

Queensland and the Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of

Government and other Matters in Western Australia, the imprisonment of

politicians and allegations of them 'rorting' the system, do little to dispel these

feelings (Phillips, 1995). It is difficult then, for teachers to interest students in citizenship education in such a climate of seemingly justifiable suspicion and cynicism. As a consequence citizenship education programs and the study of politics have been ignored (Phillips, 1989).

Other social changes in Australian society acted as an impetus for the reports emanating from the 1990s. The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee noted in its discussion paper:

> *The past twenty years have seen dramatic changes in Australia in areas such as family composition and gender relations and roles. The social benefits of such rapid and sweeping changes have been mixed ... There has also been some decline in civic values as evidenced by marked increases in the sense of personal alienation, powerlessness and a diminished sense of community. All of these circumstances suggest the need for some appraisal of citizenship, national identity and community goals.* (Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee, 1995, p. 6)

This, then, was the context for the publication of a series of Commonwealth Government reports pertaining to citizenship, civics and citizenship education. These created an "explosion of interest" in citizenship education (Phillips, 1996, p. 8). In its May 1995 Discussion Paper on a System of National Citizenship Indicators, the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee declared "in the 1990s citizenship seems to have made a dramatic come-back" (p. 45). Why did this dramatic come-back occur in Australia?

In Australia the renewed interest in civics and citizenship education was ignited by various factors. The first is there is widespread ignorance and misunderstanding of Australia's system of government, about its origins and about citizens' rights and responsibilities. In 1983, Australian Electoral Commission research found the majority of Australians "reach 18 years without any feelings toward or knowledge of our political system and what it means to live in a democracy" and "all young people were specifically critical of the failure of the school or their own parents to provide them with sufficient political education". These deficiencies were highlighted further by research conducted by the Roy Morgan Research Centre in February 1985. It revealed 22 percent of voters could not name either House of Parliament and 17 percent believed the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition sat in the Senate. In 1985, the then Australian Electoral Commissioner, Dr Colin Hughes, "put the view that the low level of basic political information in the community was a matter of concern for the operation of the electoral system" (Parliamentary Education Advisory Committee, 1995, p. 3).

In efforts to address this political illiteracy the Australian Electoral Commission and the Commonwealth Parliament produced educational materials, including *People's Power Pack* and *Parliament Packs 1 and 2*. In 1988 the Parliamentary Education Office was established in Canberra. Its purpose was to provide a variety of information about the Commonwealth Parliament to teachers and students.

In March 1988, the Senate requested its Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training to conduct an inquiry into "education for active citizenship in Australian schools and youth organizations" (Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1989, p. 4). The Committee called for submissions, published a discussion paper in July 1988 and conducted a series of public hearings in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Its report, *Education for Active Citizenship,* was published in February 1989. The report recommended "the Commonwealth initiate a national program in education for active citizenship, directed at the whole community" in general, and specifically at schools, higher education institutions and youth organisations in order to address "a crisis which Australians cannot afford to ignore" (Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1989, p. 6).

Although the report was criticised later for its emphasis on political processes and participation to the neglect of the substantive rights of citizenship (Gilbert, 1993), it is significant as it marked the trigger for a sustained debate about citizenship education in Australia. Phillips and Moroz (1996, p. 14) describe it as a "landmark". Phillips (1995, p. 2) also observes the report was "touted as one of the most worthwhile to emanate from the Senate's Standing Committee system".

It was against this background of heightened awareness of citizenship education that in April 1989 the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers

for Education agreed to *The Hobart Declaration on Schooling*. This Declaration included ten *Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia*. The seventh goal is: "to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context". This was a significant statement because all major political parties supported it unanimously. This bi-partisan support gave greater legitimacy to civics and citizenship education. Phillips (1997, p. 4) contends, "it appeared that one of the most formidable barriers to citizenship education, namely the fear of political party bias, was being eroded".

The *Education for Active Citizenship* report of 1989 announced the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training "will be closely monitoring responses to the recommendations and maintaining a continuing interest in the developments which it hopes will flow from them" (p. 5). As a result, in March 1991, the *Active Citizenship Revisited* report was published. The Committee was disappointed many of its key recommendations had not been implemented. In order to address these deficiencies, it called on the Commonwealth Government to make education for active citizenship a priority area and on universities to carry out more research into political and civic education. As well, it called on the Curriculum Development Centre and the Australian Electoral Commission to produce appropriate resources. The *Active Citizenship Revisited* report is significant because it kept civics and citizenship education on the agenda.

The nature of the citizenship education debate changed at about this time. The change occurred against a back drop of a recognition of the growing diversity of Australian society and the search for common values to provide cohesion; the ongoing, but contentious, reconciliation process between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians; discussions about the role of women in Australian society; and, debate about the efficacy of a British monarch as the titular head of the Australian government (Kennedy, 1994). Arguably, the shift in direction was precipitated by the appointment of Hon. P.J. Keating, a supporter of an Australian republic, as Prime Minister in December 1991. In his launch of the Creative Nation Policy in October 1994, he stated:

> *Multicultural Australia - a society which is both diverse and tolerant of diversity - is one of our great national achievements. It is important to remember that achievement was built upon the traditional democratic strengths of Australian society - and these should never be neglected. That is one reason why the Government is keen to see far greater understanding of our institutions, history and traditions. (Keating, 1994, p. 6)*

This change, then, saw a shift in emphasis from a primary concern about political illiteracy, to the role of citizenship education as providing "the glue which binds the nation and its citizens" (Malcolm; 1996, p. 2). The Ideas for Australia Program captures the undergirding of this new version of citizenship education in the following:

> *Not for the first time in its history Australia is in the process of being reinvented. Amongst the country's young people*

there is a yearning for new symbols appropriate to a reinvented world. If young people are not to pluck symbols from the air, or find them in anti-democratic and destructive movements, they must be given knowledge and the tools to help them create new symbols. They need to know where their country has come from, how it works, how it can be judged, how it can be preserved and how it can change. They need to know that behind all these processes is an individual called a citizen, and the groups of citizens that make up civil society. (The Ideas for Australia Program, 1994, p. 3)

Kennedy also refers to this re-invention of Australia:

It is not unreasonable, therefore, to assert at this point in time that Australia stands at the beginning of a new age, ready to cast off a colonial past and take on a new set of values that will underpin new directions and new ideals. In a sense, Australia is poised, as the US was in the eighteenth century and as many Asian and African nations were after 1945, to shape an identity that is unique and distinctive. What kind of citizenship will be required to support young Australians in this post-colonial age? (Kennedy, 1994, p. 3)

It was in this context that the then Prime Minister, Hon. P.J. Keating, foreshadowed the creation of the Civics Expert Group in his address to the New Education Realities Conference in June 1994. The Prime Minister invited Professor Stuart Macintyre, the Ernest Scott Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, to chair the group. The other members were Dr Ken Boston, Director General of the New South Wales Department of School Education and Ms Susan Pascoe, Coordinating Chairperson (Policy) of the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne. The Civics Expert Group was "to prepare a strategic plan for a non-partisan program of public education on the Australian system of government, the Australian Constitution, Australian

citizenship and other civic issues" (Civics Expert Group; 1994, p. 3). The group conducted consultations in every state, received 180 submissions and commissioned a national civics survey.

The Civics Expert Group's report, entitled *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* was published in December 1994. Its authors claimed, "education for citizenship ranks with English and mathematics as a priority for school education, and that it is an essential component of a liberal education" (*Summary of the Report of the Civics Expert Group*, 1994, p. 13).

An action plan for the implementation of the report was outlined in May 1995. A joint statement by the then Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Simon Crean, and the then Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, Ross Free, announced "the Commonwealth Budget will provide $25 million over four years to help develop a better understanding of Australian democracy and the rights and responsibilities of its citizens". The funds were committed over four years through the Department of Employment, Education and Training "to support a comprehensive non-partisan program for civics and citizenship education in schools, TAFE, higher education and community education". Materials for the school sector were to be developed by the Curriculum Corporation, an agency co-owned by the States, Territories and Commonwealth. Ross Free announced, "in the school sector, two key areas for civics and citizenship will be the development of curriculum materials and teacher professional

development". Funds were allocated for the development of an Open Learning Agency university course; for study circles in the adult and community education sector; and, for a campaign to inform prospective citizens of basic civic issues and to encourage residents to seek Australian citizenship (Media Release, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Simon Crean, and Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, Ross Free, 9 May, 1995).

Reactions to the Civics Expert Group's report were mixed as described in Chapter One. The comprehensive nature of its review and its recommendations attracted new players into the citizenship education arena. Some of these new players saw citizenship education as a vehicle to re-vitalise Australian history in schools or as means to promote indigenous, multicultural or women's issues. Clearly, the report sparked a revival of interest in civics and citizenship education and fostered a vigorous and ongoing debate. There followed a plethora of conferences and special editions of journals with civics and citizenship as the theme. Interest was all the more because there were grants to be won for research, materials production and professional development of teachers.

The reports of the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training and the Civics Expert Group are significant because as Owen observed:

> *What we are witnessing is a policy-led resurgence of interest in civics and citizenship education. That is the Commonwealth government has identified a "problem" – that young people are unmotivated, alienated from our structures of democratic governance, and displaying worryingly low levels of political literacy – and has set in train a range of "solutions" framed by the policy recommendation arising from* Whereas the People... (Owen, 1996, p. 20)

At the same time the Civics Expert Group was preparing its report, the Republic Advisory Committee also was concerned about the low levels of political literacy and urged more be done to educate the community on civic issues. Its message was relevant for educators:

> *The committee found a common view among the community and its leaders, regardless of particular views held on the republican debate, that Australians should have more opportunity to understand the basic principles of Australian Government. The Committee believes that those entrusted with primary and secondary education in particular, should consider the introduction or extension of appropriate courses in the fields of civics and government.* (Republic Advisory Committee, 1994, p. 20)

Similarly, the Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee identified community concern about the levels of understanding of civic issues:

> *One of the most powerful messages the committee heard repeatedly was that in order to celebrate the Centenary of Federation the Australian people need to understand what we are celebrating. Ignorance of Australian history and our Constitution is seen as the greatest obstacle to meaningful celebration of the Centenary of Federation. There is considerable disquiet about the shortcomings of the teaching of political and constitutional history and in the lack of opportunities for participating in education for citizenship.* (Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee, 1994, p. 12)

Another initiative linked to the 2001 celebration of Australian Federation was a series of federally funded forums. These were part of the *Ideas for Australia Program*. One outcome of these forums was the publication in 1994 of a discussion paper entitled *Teaching Australians to be Australian*. The focus of this paper was the exploration of how schools could help interest young Australians in playing an active role as Australian citizens.

At the same time the debate about citizenship education was occurring, parallel and highly pertinent debates about the very nature of citizenship were taking place in Australia. These debates were also linked to the centenary celebration of Australia's federation and to the 50th anniversary of Australia's Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1949. Two reports of particular interest are the 1994 report of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, *Australians All: Enhancing Australian Citizenship*, which recommended amongst other things 1999 should be the Year of Australian Citizenship, and the 1996 report of Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee, *National Well-being: A System of National Citizenship Indicators and Benchmarks.*

These reports are significant as they provide two quite different perspectives on citizenship. The Joint Standing Committee's focus was on the formal and legal aspects of citizenship. It provided a technical investigation of legal citizenship and addressed issues pertaining to broader concerns about multiculturalism. The Senate Committee's report on national citizenship indicators "broadened the debate about citizenship beyond the educational,

legal and constitutional focus to the social and economic underpinnings of citizenship" (Phillips, 1997, p. 7). This report is based on the premise citizenship includes a universal right to a level of economic and social well being in addition to the rights of equality before the law and political participation. Phillips poses the question:

> ...is citizenship now such a broad notion that it cannot be differentiated from broader social and economic policy? The national benchmarks certainly read like standard of living indicators with some recognition of the political participation of citizenship. (Phillips, 1997, p. 8)

These reports both informed and confused the simultaneous discussions about citizenship education, because of the variety of constructs of citizenship being discussed.

2.3 A Western Australian response

In Western Australia several State Government reports highlighted the significance of civics education and the need for public participation and education in civic and constitutional matters. These were the reports of the Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of the Government and Other Matters (1992 and 1996) and the Western Australian Constitutional Committee (1995). These reports were significant because they meant civics education was on the agenda and relationships between people interested in civics education were fostered. Some of these relationships were to re-emerge

in and shape the membership of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education.

The activity associated with the publication of these Western Australian and Commonwealth reports and the subsequent debates were the trigger for the formation of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Recognising the opportunities any funding might represent, and keen for Western Australia's voice to be heard in the discussion about the nature of any materials to be produced or any professional development to be conducted, representatives from three universities located in Perth met informally several times during 1995. This was the genesis of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, although the group at this time was without appellation.

The Consortium was ready to respond when, in September 1995, the then Commonwealth Government Department of Employment, Education and Training called for submissions under the Strategic Initiatives Element of the 1996 National Professional Development Project from universities interested in providing a course to renew the subject knowledge of teachers in the area of Studies of Society and the Environment: Informed Citizenship. The Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education submitted a proposal, *Studies of Society and Environment; Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners*, and was awarded a grant in December 1995 under the 1995 Projects of National Significance Program.

In March 1996, the First Howard Government defeated the Second Keating Government. By this time, the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education had begun the implementation of its project using the grant application, which was shaped by the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* report, as the template. The Howard Government did not make any statement about civics and citizenship education until May 1997, when the then Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, the Hon. Dr David Kemp announced the *Discovering Democracy* program. By the time this program was endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs in June 1997, the work of the Consortium was all but completed. The resource manual, which was the final outcome of the Consortium's project, was published in July 1997.

Throughout 1996 and part of 1997 the prime business of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was the administration and management of the grant and the implementation of the proposed project. Although, the project was being implemented in a context in which new priorities were being determined as a result of a change of government, the new initiatives did not shape it. Instead, the project reflected the policy context in which the application was conceived.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter summarises developments in civics and citizenship education leading up to the creation of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. In doing so, it provides insights into the activity pertaining to and debates about civics and citizenship education at that time. These form the broader context in which the members of the Consortium made their decisions. The following chapter reviews the literature, which has been used to inform the present research.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

A diverse range of literature has been considered in order to frame this study of the processes of decision-making undertaken by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Literature pertaining to the constructs of citizen and citizenship and approaches to citizenship education, the nature of public policy, implementation and change theory, group decision-making and curriculum decision-making has been reviewed. Literature from each of these fields informs the study of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, as its members engage in decision-making to manage and conduct the activities comprising the *Project of National Significance* entitled *Active Citizenship in the Classroom*. The project and, therefore, the activities comprising it have their genesis in the implementation of government policy about citizenship education, specifically the implementation of the 1994 report, *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education*.

3.1 Constructs of citizenship and approaches to citizenship education

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section of the literature review provides an overview of the way in which the various concepts of citizen and citizenship have evolved. This informs the contention that the

disputed nature of citizenship complicates discussion about the purposes and nature of citizenship education. The contested nature of citizenship and the debate about the approaches to citizenship education are clearly relevant to this study because the Consortium's work is situated in the context of citizenship education.

As the Chief Justice of Western Australia, David Malcolm, noted in his keynote address to the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education Winter Institute in July 1996, "defining citizenship is no easy task". The definitions provided in the literature give different emphases to the concept of citizenship. Walter's (1996, p. 62) observation, "at first to be a citizen was, formally, to belong to the nation", emphasizes the legal status of citizenship and belonging through nationality. The first part of the definition of citizen in the *The Cyclopedic Law Dictionary* (1940, p. 177), namely, "a citizen is as person who by birth, naturalisation or otherwise is a member of an independent society, called a state, kingdom or empire", gives a similar emphasis. The second part of the definition in *The Cyclopedic Law Dictionary* (1940, p. 177), namely "[the citizen] as such is subject to its laws and entitled to its protection in all his/her rights incident to that relationship", emphasizes the idea of citizenship conferring rights. Others define citizenship with reference to rights and responsibilities or to entitlements and obligations. This is captured in Walter's explanation of citizenship:

> *Citizenship is a way of talking about entitlements: the things which you are guaranteed by nationality, by belonging. But*

it is also a way of talking about responsibility; the things that you are obliged to do to preserve the public good. In Australia, both aspects are neatly captured in the franchise: a citizen is not only entitled to vote (to pursue or express political wishes), but also legally obliged to vote (mass democracy is deemed a public good). (Walter, 1996, p. 63)

Other definitions of citizenship emphasize participatory or active citizenship. Heater's (1990, p. 336) definition of a citizen is "...a person furnished with knowledge of public affairs, instilled with attitudes of civic virtue and equipped with skills to participate in the political arena. The acquisition and enhancement of these attributes is in truth a lifelong undertaking". This definition implies more than obedience to laws is required of a citizen. A citizen should be appropriately informed and skilled for participation in his/her community.

Saunders (1996, p. 30) argues the citizenship debate "is operating on at least two levels, to some confusion". One level of the debate concerns formal or legal citizenship. The focus is on those who are citizens in a legal sense and those who are not. At this level, the debate is focused on what citizenship comprises in terms of rights and responsibilities. Saunders (1996, p. 30) argues the debate at the second level is "on the nature of citizenship, in the sense of membership of the Australian community, on a more or less permanent basis". She goes on to explain this debate is about the rights and responsibilities of Australians more generally, and the nature and core values of the community that is being built.

Walter (1996a, p. 1) argues the contemporary notion of citizenship is used as "a language that might sustain cohesion". He asserts:

> ... in recognition that a community can no longer be appealed to as 'one people', both theorists and governments have sought a re-juvenated language of unity. The language of citizenship is being revived to remind people within a community of their common ties. (Walter, 1996a, p. 3)

The Chief Justice of Western Australia, David Malcolm, contends "...dictionary definitions tend to be rather unhelpful ... not unhelpful in the sense that they are inexact, but rather in the sense that they are incomplete... citizenship, is above all, a shared commitment" (Malcolm, 1996, p. 2). The Preamble to the 1993 Amendment to the Australian Citizenship Act states that Australian citizenship "...represents formal membership of the Commonwealth of Australia; and is a common bond, involving reciprocal rights and obligations, uniting all Australians, while respecting their diversity". This is the shared commitment to which the Chief Justice of Western Australia referred. He quotes part of the second reading speech for the Amendment Bill to the Australian Citizenship Act, "Australian citizenship, with its attendant rights and obligations, is part of the glue which binds the nation and its citizens in a manner which gives adequate recognition to the reciprocity of that bond" (Malcolm,1996, p. 2).

Smith (1989, p. 342) argues the contemporary notion of citizenship focuses on "imaginary connections (based on a common history, culture, language,

religion and race)". Walter (1996a, p. 2) contends the use of citizenship to build cohesion in Australia and "other multi-ethnic polities" will have to be "a cohesion that recognises diversity". He highlights the problems of imagining links based on shared history, culture and race in Australia. Walter (1996a, p. 4) suggests these problems mean, "the nation is a political identity" which in turn has "consequential effects on our thinking of citizenship". One of these consequences is that citizenship is provisional.

> [Citizenship] *is legally defined and institutionalised, but ... it should be regarded as always under negotiation. It encapsulates the bargain of the individual with the nation:* what must I do for the collective, what am I entitled to demand? *It is the* fundamental bargain *in politics: the point where we draw the line.* (Walter, 1996a, p. 5)

In Australia, the citizenship debate has become complex and more confused because other issues have been linked with it. Baker and Baker (1996, p. 2) argue "...continuous, if spasmodic, debates over national identity and republicanism inextricably thread their way through the current literature". As well, demands for more inclusive models of citizenship have increased the complexity of the citizenship debate. Calls have been made for post-modern conceptualisations of citizenship to address the diversity of a democratic society. Some writers argue that the role of women has not been understood nor captured in the conceptualisations of citizenship (Foster, 1996; Lake, 1996; Sawer, 1996); others argue that conceptualisations of citizens exclude Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Tripcony, 1996; Woods, 1996); and others call for the recognition and inclusion of migrants' experiences and

contributions to public life in Australia (Jayasuriya, 1994; Garbutcheon Singh, 1996). Others like Elshtain (1994) argue that while it is important to recognise the legitimacy of difference in democratic society, it can be destructive to highlight differences. Instead, Elshtain argues, the search should be for a common bond. She argues that the emphasis should be on what people have in common - a commonality expressed in a shared citizenship. Kennedy writes of Elshtain's argument:

> *It is possible to identify in Elhstain's thinking a hankering after a neoclassical civic ideal in which citizens should be committed to the polis because it is the polis which confers on them safety, harmony and economic well being. What it is necessary to recognise today is that for many people the modern State no longer performs that function and hence the emergence of the politics of difference as a powerful voice in modern civil society.* (Kennedy, 1994, p. 8)

The absence of agreement about the definition of citizenship results, in part, from the long evolution of the notion of citizenship. In its Discussion Paper on a System of National Citizenship Indicators, the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee (1995, p. 39) noted the brief history of citizenship contained within its report "illustrates the stages and conflicts in the evolution of modern citizenship, showing how its various layers have been gradually built up over the centuries". An understanding of how these layers have been built up informs the present study in two ways. First, it explains why the *Whereas the People...* report confused the debate with its unclear explanation of citizenship. Second, it explains why the members of the

Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education could not agree on a shared meaning of citizenship.

3.1.1 Evolution of models of citizenship

The report *Australians All: Enhancing Australian Citizenship* (1994) provides a concise and useful overview of the origins of the concept of citizenship from the Ancient Greek and Roman worlds, through the emergence of the modern state in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe to the modern more inclusive concept of citizenship. "In its traditional form the citizen was an autonomous member of a self-governing community, in which only some (typically the free men) possessed civic status" (Civics Expert Group, 1994, p. 14). Citizenship was a privilege in the Greek city-state. Citizenship was neither a right to be claimed by, nor a status to be conferred on, anybody outside the established ranks of the privileged class. Resident foreigners, women, peasants and slaves were excluded (Heater, 1990). In Rome, citizenship was not restricted to members of any ethnic group and could be conferred in recognition of services.

The birth of the modern nation state in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe generated a revival and broadening of the concept of citizenship. Walter (1996a, p. 4) states, "the eighteenth century nationalist revolutions were driven by conceptions of citizens' interests and

citizens' rights". Citizenship was linked to the belief in equality, freedom and self-government. The term citizen was given to those who were loyal to the liberal ideas of the Revolution in France (Dummett and Nicol, 1990). In the ancient world, citizenship was confined to the participants who deliberated upon and exercised power, but in the modern nation state citizenship extends across society (Barbalet, 1988). In contemporary society, the concept of citizenship includes membership of a nation state and the rights and obligations derived from membership of that nation state.

Nichol (1994, p. 1) notes "there is a long tradition of Western philosophy concerning citizenship rights and obligations, from Aristotle to Cicero, Machievelli, Burke, de Tocqueville, Mill, Hannah Arendt and T.H. Marshall". Hogan (1996a) provides a detailed discussion of these traditions of citizenship. An in-depth review of these traditions and of the proponents and critics of each is beyond the scope of this research study. Rather the focus in this literature review is on the classical, modern (civic exchange or protective) and civic republican (communitarian) traditions which, it will be argued, are reflected variously in the attitudes, actions and work of the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and participants in the *Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners* project.

The underlying principle of the classical model of citizenship is "the liberty of the citizens to be involved in the affairs of an independent and self governing polis" (Hogan, 1996a, p. 1). "Political activity was regarded as an essential part of human behaviour and that a man's [women were excluded] full potential and personality can not be achieved without participation in the polis" (Phillips, 1996, p. 2). The essential core of modern citizenship is civic exchange - "an exchange of protection and benefits on the one hand, for allegiance, obedience and obligation on the other" (Hogan, 1996a, p. 4).

Hogan (1996a) describes three major forms of the modern or civic exchange model of citizenship - absolutist, liberal and liberal democratic. The absolutists, including Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes, saw citizenship as an exchange of protection for obedience or allegiance, whereas liberal theorists such as John Locke argued the moral authority of the body politic or government was founded on the consent of the community. By consenting to join the community and thereby enjoying its protection, individuals divested themselves of their natural liberty (Hogan, 1996a, p. 4). The liberal democratic form of citizenship developed by Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill:

> ... protected citizens from each other and from the state ... the end of politics was the maximisation of aggregate individual utility ... Bentham deduced that a representative form of democracy was that form of government most likely to maximise aggregate utility by permitting individuals to

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define, pursue and protect their own interests relatively unhindered by the rapacious activities of an oppressive government. (Hogan, 1996a, p. 5)

The chief detractors of the models of modern citizenship have been the civic republicans including Harrington, Rousseau, Hegel, Dewey, Barber and Habermas. Civic republicans are not all of one mind. In general, they consider passive forms of liberal democratic participation are inadequate to protect citizens' interests and liberal democracy does not take into account the inherent value of participation in building community. For civic republicans, and especially communitarians:

> *A viable political community requires various kinds of "common social goods" that cannot be reduced to instrumental social action - a common substantive and comprehensive notion of the common good, the cultivation of a particular ensemble of civic virtues, strong forms of civic identity, or extensive participation in the civic life of the political community. ... A viable political community ... requires a conception of citizenship that emphasises a sense of attachment to, and identity with, an historically specific political community with its particular traditions and values.* (Hogan, 1996a, p. 8)

Hogan (1996 and 1996a) makes only passing reference to the work of the sociologist, T.H. Marshall, while others including the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (1994), Malcolm (1996), Phillips (1996), Walter (1996), and the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee (1996) emphasise the significance of Marshall's three categories of rights – civil, political and social. Civil rights include rights related to individual freedom, such as freedom of speech,

association and religion, the right to own property and the right to just treatment. Political rights include the right to vote and stand for election and the right to form and join associations. Social rights include the right to security safeguarded by access to welfare (Marshall, 1950). Walter (1996, p. 63) argues, "Marshall's assumption is that in the long run, citizenship is about equality: over time civil rights engender political and social rights and these spread to encompass more and more people". Heater (1990, p. 285) observes, "the concept of social citizenship presupposes at least a 'floor' of living standards, including health care and education, below which no one should be allowed to fall". This notion of social citizenship underpins the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee's 1996 report, *National Well Being: A System of National Indicators and Benchmarks*. It highlights the way in which the concept of citizenship has broadened over time.

This discussion of some of the literature on the traditions, models and evolution of citizenship illustrates how the concept of citizenship has changed from a relatively simple one to one, which is increasingly broad, more diverse and more contentious. The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee (1996) said of this process of expansion and development of the concept of citizenship:

> ... *citizenship gradually acquired broader content and more universal application: first concerned with tribal and then political rights and duties its scope widened to include social*

*and economic, and most recently cultural and environmental,
rights and duties. Its initial focus on relations between the
(implicitly male) individual and the state is now gradually
extending (although more problematically) to the rights and
status of groups, classes and minorities, and to gender issues.
And although it is still predominantly embedded in single-
culture values of particular nation states (with dire
consequences for some ethnic minorities), it has moved
appreciably towards the notion of universal human rights
and is beginning to come to terms with issues of globalism
and cross-nationality.* (The Senate Legal and Constitutional
References Committee, 1996, p. 39)

3.1.2 Civics and citizenship education

The difficulties of adequately defining the concept of citizenship,

brought about by its long evolution, mean the nature of civics and

citizenship education is also controversial. The range of views on the

nature of civics and citizenship education programs reflects the range of

views expressed about the nature and purpose of citizenship. A

fundamental difference centres on the relative emphasis that should be

placed on the public or common interest as distinct from private interests

– the difference between the theories of the absolutists and liberals. The

conundrum is whether citizenship education should "promote one at the

expense of the other" (Kennedy, 1996, p. 3). In Australia, many writers

support the notion of common citizenship underpinned by a set of shared

values (Crittenden, 1995; Hill, 1996; Kennedy, 1995a; Macintyre, 1996;

Saunders, 1996). Kennedy argues "one task of civics education is to

engender support for what all citizens share in common, including

values, political structures and a willingness to participate actively in the

democratic process" (Kennedy, 1996, p. 3). Others (Hogan, 1996; Gilbert, 1993; ; Garbutcheon Singh, 1993; Watts, 1995) mount strong arguments favouring civics education programs, which focus on the importance of individual interests. Burchell says of the tension between these emphases:

> This conflict between a civic arena for active citizenship in the public sphere and a civil arena of private individuals unmolested by the attentions of the police continues to haunt the theme of citizenship to the present day. (Burchell, 1994, p. 28)

Kennedy (1996) argues the tension between private and public interests might be resolved if one is mindful of Diamond's (1995) assertion that individual interests can only be safeguarded by a political and legal system guaranteeing freedom of thought and action. Therefore, Kennedy (1996, p. 3) contends, "civics education can highlight the importance of individual differences while seeking to support those institutions and values that allow individual interests to flourish".

One of the most contentious parts of the citizenship debate for educators pertains to the knowledge base of citizenship education and its location in the school curriculum. Wiltshire observes this is essentially:

> A question of whether the emphasis should be on knowledge of institutions and procedures through which democratic societies function and the context of these institutional arrangements, or whether the emphasis should be

*overwhelmingly on the procedures of a civil society as
practised everyday and in every way. This debate is
generally polarised into an* institutional *approach
(characterised by its opponents as sterile and rote) or an*
active *approach (seen by them as more relevant to the
everyday lives of students).* (Wiltshire, 1996, p. 3)

The debate about the appropriate content of citizenship education is
manifested in calls for it to be grounded in history (Civics Expert Group,
1994; Mellor, 1996; Young, 1996); in politics or in an understanding of
the system of government (Carter, 1993; Saunders, 1996); in the Studies
of Society and Environment learning area (Hogan et al., 1996); in
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (Woods, 1996); and, in
Geography (Fein, Gerber and Wilson, 1989). Lepani (1996) highlights
the need for the importance of developing systems thinking and
information literacy as necessities for effective citizenship. Fearnley-
Sander and Sprod (1996, p. 10) argue much of the failure of civic
education is due to a curriculum of 'mindless grounding'. They present
an argument for experiential learning. Brennan argues citizenship
education in schools should address school governance:

*I suggest that we need to emerge from the dominant concern
with management of schools and school systems, to be able to
consider how schools contribute best to the promotion of
citizenship. I question the static picture of the nation state
that often underlies concepts of civics, and suggest that
schools themselves need to be places for sustaining public
life, and for reinventing ways of making what we call
'Australia' in a global context.* (Brennan, 1996, p. 29)

Decisions about the content, resources and pedagogy used in civics or citizenship education programs are dependent on underlying values. This highlights, arguably more so than in any other part of the curriculum, that values are at the core of the debates about the nature and content of civics and citizenship education. Wiltshire (1996, p. 6) argues "[values] is unquestionably the facet of civics education which has caused the most agonising in this country. It ranges from what values should underpin the definition and content of the subject right through to the values of those who deliver it". Gilbert argues:

> *Whether we emphasise rights and obligations in individuals' relations to the state, or broader ideals of a just and democratic community connecting local, national and global relationships, citizenship involves committing oneself to and practising a set of values. Values are, therefore, an essential consideration in developing education for citizenship.*
> (Gilbert, 1996b, p. 1)

The range of citizenship education programs found internationally highlights that citizenship education programs reflect the values of a given society. In his survey of international best practice conducted for the Civics Expert Group, Hughes found a range of approaches to citizenship education. In the United States of America programs are used to instil a sense of national identity; in Japan the emphasis is on commitment to community; in Malaysia and Pakistan, Islamic principles form the basis; and, the approach in Germany uses Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Pascoe observes :

While countries with a religious base, such as Ireland or Iran, or with a political base such as China and Vietnam can base citizenship programs on particular religious philosophies or political ideologies, more pluralist societies such as Australia, need to devise a broader base for a civics and citizenship education program. (Pascoe, 1996, p. 23)

The nature of approaches used in Australia in civics and citizenship education in the past and the underpinning values of those approaches are well illustrated by Musgrave's 1994 study of textbooks most commonly used in Australian schools from 1895 to 1965. He identified five main themes, which he claims illustrate the implicit values of citizenship education during this period. In brief, the five themes are citizenship was for some not all; citizenship was based on an assumption of a single dominant religion; citizenship was conceived of in monolingual terms; citizenship promoted the values of a capitalist economic system; and, citizenship was based on a view of the world seen largely through British eyes (Musgrave, 1994).

Clearly, the approaches used in civics and citizenship education are dependent on the intentions of the programs, which in turn reflect the underlying values. Hill (1996, p. 37) argues the nature of citizenship education is dependent on "what we want in an educated citizen". He contends:

The word 'citizen' is not a neutral term. As soon as one tries to go beyond some bare descriptor ... then value judgements crowd in, even more so when one employs the abstract noun

> *'citizenship'. Does it build in such notions as loyalty and service? What would constitute exemplar behaviours? This is no mere quibble. It bears directly on what teachers presenting a civics syllabus think they're doing.* (Hill, 1996, p. 37)

In an earlier publication, Hill (1994, p. 7) poses five questions to represent teachers' intentions in Social Studies, the curriculum area which is most often regarded as the chief vehicle for citizenship education in Australia. He asks whether their intentions are to pass on to their students a body of information; to persuade their students to conform to the *status quo*; to train their students in social inquiry skills; to develop in their students the capacity to engage in reformist critique of the *status quo*; or, to encourage their students to work for the radical disruption of the *status quo*. Hill's questions are significant because they highlight that the nature of civics and citizenship education syllabuses is dependent on the underlying intentions.

Gilbert (1996, pp. 57-59) provides a useful typology of citizenship education programs based "on four main versions of the concept of citizenship from contemporary policy and educational debates". It shows the relationship between the conceptualisation of citizenship and the approach adopted in any program of citizenship education. The first type of citizenship described by Gilbert is citizenship as legal status. This concept of citizenship, Gilbert argues, results in educational programs which:

> ... *tend to emphasise the history of the state and its institutions, especially parliament. Such programs may laud the state as the source of protection of the rights of citizens, and promote the moral duty of citizens to be loyal to the state and its institutions.* (Gilbert, 1996a, p. 109)

The second type of citizenship identified in Gilbert's typology is citizenship as democratic identity. This approach to citizenship results in educational programs emphasising involvement "in a community shared with other human beings at local, national and global scales" (Gilbert, 1996a, p. 109). This approach is based on valuing the democratic ideal. The third type of citizenship identified in Gilbert's typology is citizenship as public practice. This approach to citizenship education results in educational programs focusing on the formal processes of public life as set down in the law and the operation of the public system. Gilbert (1996, p. 58) argues "citizenship as public practice ... limits the role of citizenship to the public legal and political spheres [and] rejects the need for shared values". He claims, "this is a limited concept of citizenship" because "its neglect of values gives no basis to ask how people can negotiate their rights and obligations in everyday situations, for interpreting and choosing among rules which involve value judgements" (Gilbert, 1996, p. 58). Gilbert (1996) argues the public/private distinction is a weakness in traditional approaches to citizenship. Gilbert (1996; 1996a) identifies a fourth type of citizenship - citizenship as democratic participation. The emphasis of this approach to citizenship is on:

... the right and need to participate in decision-making in the broad range of legal, political, economic, civil and private spheres according to ideals of democracy, rights and justice. As in the second concept, citizenship is centrally based in values of democratic rights, but these values must be translated into the practice of decision-making in all spheres of life. (Gilbert, 1996a, p. 110)

Gilbert (1996a, p. 111) asserts citizenship as democratic participation is the "most defensible in educational terms". Furthermore, he asserts while the strength of this type of citizenship is its "theoretical comprehensiveness, equally important ... is its pedagogical value". He suggests citizenship education:

... must be oriented to participation and decision-making ... [It] should not be the abstract descriptions of disembodied institutions found in traditional text books ... [It] should focus on decision-making in action, and ways of applying relationships. (Gilbert, 1996, p. 59)

In his discussion about approaches to education for citizenship education Gilbert (1996a, p. 111) argues the concept of citizenship provided by the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training is the "most defensible in education terms". The Committee describes the notion of 'active citizenship' in the following way:

An active citizen is not someone who has simply accumulated a store of facts about the workings of the political system ... An understanding of how the social and political systems work is an essential element, but equally important is the motivation and capacity to put that knowledge to good use. Essentially, it is a question of active commitment to democracy. An active citizen ... is someone who not only

believes in the concept of a democracy, but who is willing and able to translate that belief into action. Active citizenship is a compound of knowledge, skills and attitudes; knowledge about how society works; the skills needed to participate effectively; and a conviction that active participation is the right of all citizens. (Education for Active Citizenship, 1991, p. 7)

Gilbert (1996a, p. 111) argues any approach to citizenship education must "escape the dead hand of past attempts, with their emphasis on archaic detail and abstract description". He suggests the way to do this is to "develop programs and experiences, which show the operation of citizenship in contexts which students themselves can experience" (Gilbert, 1996a, p. 111). Gilbert (1996b) outlines three approaches to citizen education. These are education and citizenship for environmental politics; education for citizenship and cultural politics; and, citizenship, culture and Australian identity.

Clearly there is a strong link between the long history of the constructs of citizenship and the approaches to civics and citizenship education. Equally, it is clear the debates about citizenship and the nature of civics and citizenship education are grounded in values. It is posited that the complexity of the area means people interpreted the recommendations of the Civics Expert Group's report through different lenses as described in the previous chapter. This is significant in any consideration of the decision-making of the Consortium as its members had different levels

of understanding of the evolution of citizenship and the on-going debates.

3.2 Nature of public policy

The second section of this review considers the nature of public policy, as it was a Commonwealth Government policy on civics and citizenship education that was the impetus for the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Moreover, it has been contended in Chapter One the Consortium was a policy-induced consortium. This section of the literature review provides a brief overview of the Commonwealth Government's assumption of greater power and influence in education in Australia, and an overview of some of the literature on the definitions and nature of policy.

3.2.1 Education policy and the Commonwealth Government

A significant issue in any discussion of education policy in Australia is the role of the Commonwealth Government. The Australian Constitution does not refer to education; therefore education is regarded as a power reserved for or residing in the states. However, since World War 2, the Commonwealth has gradually developed interests in education and since the late 1960s it has taken an increasing interest in the school curriculum (Harman, 1984; Kennedy, 1993). Subsequently, the Commonwealth Government now has major interests in all levels of education chiefly

through its substantial financial contributions. It has a full ministerial department to provide advice and administer programs. This has resulted in the Commonwealth assuming even greater power in determining national priorities and policy direction (Lindsay, 1982; Steinle, 1982; Harman, 1984; Kennedy, 1993). Harman (1984, p. 29) observes "... the Commonwealth is a major force in Australian education, and education policies are influenced to a major degree by federal initiatives and directions". Kennedy notes the Commonwealth Government's role in school level curriculum:

> ... was once benign, but is now active and intrusive. It is quite an amazing role given the constitutional constraints involved. Yet these constraints have not been an impediment to the creation of a unified national system of higher education and did not stop the Prime Minister in 1992 from threatening to set up a Commonwealth TAFE system if the States did not hand over their systems to the Commonwealth. (Kennedy, 1993, p. 5)

Kennedy (1993, p. 8) outlines the Commonwealth's involvement in curriculum development from the creation of the Curriculum Development Centre in 1975, to the formation in 1988 of the Australian Education Council through which "the Commonwealth pursued an aggressive program of curriculum policy initiatives" to the present day Curriculum Corporation. More recently the Commonwealth Government became involved in the development and implementation of education policy through the *Young People's Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training* report (Finn, 1991), the *Putting*

General Education to Work report (Mayer, 1992) and through the attempted national curriculum initiative (Collins, 1995).

It is suggested the Commonwealth Government clearly intervened in the case of civics and citizenship education. The Keating government attempted to shape the nature of the civics and citizenship curriculum throughout Australian schools through the recommendations of the 1994 *Whereas the People...* report. It did this through the allocation of resources administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Curriculum Corporation, the Parliamentary Education Office and the Australian Electoral Commission.

The Commonwealth side-stepped state education departments by inviting submissions from consortia. The use of policy-induced consortia diminishes the power of the states in curriculum development and implementation. The work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was part of this process through the grant it received from the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The Consortium was to implement the Commonwealth's policy on civics and citizenship education.

3.2.2 Definition and characteristics of policy

A perusal of the literature on policy reveals ongoing discussion about the definition of policy. Harman (1984, p. 13) suggests, "the term policy is an elusive one and it demands some clarification". Mosychuk and Blowers (1978) describe policies as a frame of reference for decision-making. Baumgart and Low (1979) see policies as generalizations involving organisational goals and as a means of achieving goals via structures, operations and resource allocations. Spann (1979, p. 387) argues a policy is "a course of action, or an intended course of action, which comprises an object, a desired course of events, a selected line of action and a declaration of intent". He adds policy only lives up to its name if something actually happens. Holdaway (1982, p. 19) describes policy as consisting of "either official documents, or unwritten understandings, which direct and/or guide the actions of personnel". Harman (1984, p. 13) uses the term policy to "refer to the implicit and explicit specifications of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognised problem or matter of concern, and directed towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired goal". Harman (1984) observes policies may vary greatly in orientation, purpose and whether they are explicitly stated. Crump (1993, p. 12) defines policy succinctly as "a plan of action". Silver (1990, p. 213) describes policy as "an elusive concept" and refers to anticipating action, pointing towards "some intended or desired end".

Of these definitions, it is suggested Harman's (1984) explanation of policy provides the most insights into the nature of the *Whereas the People...* policy on civics and citizenship education. The report sets out specifications for purposive action in the form of its recommendations for school, tertiary and community education, teacher professional development and development of curriculum resources. It seeks to address a deficit in civic knowledge and to provide an education:

> *... that will enable Australian citizens to participate in the present debates about our future with a better awareness of the legacy of the past as well as the options for the future ... it should assist them to act as informed, confident, tolerant citizens, secure in their rights and responsibilities as members of a diverse and inclusive society.* (Civics Expert Group, 1994, pp. 27–28)

Guba (1984) provides eight different perspectives on policy. The perspectives which reflect the nature of the civics and citizenship education policy at the core of this study are first, policy as an assertion of intents and gaols and, second, as a strategy undertaken to solve or ameliorate a problem. The *Whereas the People...* report provides several statements about its intentions and goals, as well as setting out a plan of action with thirty-five recommendations. In brief, Guba's other perspectives on policy are the accumulated standing decisions of a governing body; a norm of conduct; a guide to discretionary action; sanctioned behaviour; the output of the policy-making system; and, the effect of the policy-making and policy-implementing system. The

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Whereas the People... report does not 'fit' with any of these

perspectives.

Harman summarises the discussion about the nature of policy well:

> *Policy is used in many different ways to refer to a highly diverse set of phenomena. Policy is sometimes used in a narrow sense to refer to a formal statement of action to be followed. Others use policy as a synonym for words such as 'plan' or 'program'. Policy can also be thought of as a position or stance developed in response to a problem or issue of conflict, and directed towards a particular objective.*
> (Harman, 1984, p. 13)

Beswick and Harman (1984, p. 28) define public policy simply as

"policy developed by governments, government departments and

agencies". In another article, Harman (1984, p. 15) explains public

policy "is generally based on law and is certainly authoritative". Crump

(1993, p. 1) argues, "most public policy has an economic basis related to

costs, funding, resources, efficiency and benefit". Crump's contention

helps to clarify a significant difference between the 1989 and 1991

reports of the Senate Standing Committee on Employment Education

and Training on citizenship education and the Civics Expert Group's

report. It is argued only the Civics Expert Group's report became policy,

because it received prime ministerial endorsement and had substantial

funds allocated to its implementation. Crump (1993, p. 13) goes onto

argue, "most public policy, unfortunately, is short-term, goal-oriented,

under-financed and linked to immediate political realities". Crump's

reservations about the short lived nature of public policy are relevant, too, for the present study because the 1994 government report on civics and citizenship education has been superseded by yet another Commonwealth Government initiative in the area. The political realities were the *Whereas the People...* report was superseded in 1996-1997 by a coalition government initiative, *Discovering Democracy.*

Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980, p. 33) observe policy makers have to steer "an uneasy course between conflicting pressures". It is suggested the Civics Expert Group's report was steering an uneasy course as it attempted to reconcile the many opinions about the constructs of citizenship and the approaches to civics and citizenship education. The report was not explicit and, indeed as has been discussed, it confused the debate even more. Randell (1982, p. 135) asserts, "the multiple, conflicting and vague objectives of most federal programs mirror the ambivalence of human behaviour. It is only when policy is worked out in practice at the 'street' level that the meaning of policy can be known". The present study analyses how the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education made meaning of the civics and citizenship education policy.

3.2.3 Policy development

Steinle (1982, p. 8) argues that although much of the literature suggests "policies emerge from a careful scrutiny of alternatives and their consequences by the persons responsible for deciding policy... there is little to support the notion policy-making conforms to this rational and visionary model". Spann (1979) and Steinle (1982) observe most government is reactive, government decisions tend to be made on the most urgent and immediate problems, and often there is neither the information available nor the time to make rational choices between alternatives. Harman (1984, p. 14) highlights "policy is focused on purposive or goal oriented action or activity rather than by random or chance behaviour. It refers to courses or patterns of action, rather than separate discrete decisions; usually policy application and development involve a number of related decisions, rather than a single decision".

Lindblom (1968) contends policy makers attempt to avoid conflict so there is a tendency towards an incremental style of policy development, rather than sudden shifts in policy direction. Hogwood and Peters (1983, p. 1) note "most policy-making is actually policy succession; the replacement of an existing policy, program or organisation by another". Lindbolm's, Hogwood's and Peters' contentions are relevant the 1994 *Whereas the People...* report. The 1989 Education for Active Citizenship and the 1991 Active Citizenship Revisited reports preceded

it and it has been superseded itself by the *Discovering Democracy* Project (1997). This is significant in the present study because, as will be discussed later, some of the members of the Consortium had a view of citizenship education as it was articulated in the 1989 and 1991 reports rather than of the view that was articulated in the *Whereas the People...* report. This suggests the influence of the previous policies lingers although a new policy is being implemented. The earlier policies have a residual effect.

3.2.4 Implementation studies

The third section of this chapter examines the pertinent literature on the implementation of innovations especially in educational settings. The innovation can be a policy, a product, a syllabus, a process or an idea. The purpose of the innovation – whether it is policy or other innovation – is to reform, improve or bring about change (Crump, 1993; O'Neil, 1995). Therefore, it is not surprising much of the literature on the implementation of policies parallels the literature on the implementation of innovations in education. A review of the literature on implementation informs the present study because the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education forms a part of the larger process of implementation of the Commonwealth government's policy on civics and citizenship education. The purpose of the *Whereas the People...* report was to implement change. The

intention was to develop curriculum materials - an innovation - to bring about improvements in students' understanding of civics and citizenship and to increase their active participation in civic life. Implementation, then, is about putting policies and innovations into practice. As Hyder observes:

> *Implementation is the often complex process of planning, organisation, coordination and promotion that is necessary to achieve policy objectives. As an* activity *implementation constitutes an important, even central, phase in the policy process. As a* concept *it has proved somewhat elusive.* (Hyder, 1984, p. 1)

This section reviews the literature on implementation of policies and innovations including curriculum innovations, which have been formulated to bring about changes in education. It highlights the parallels between implementation of policies and implementation of innovations.

Although the literature is now replete with studies of the implementation of policies and innovations, the research in this area only had its genesis in the mid 1960s. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) conducted a major case study of the failures of the Johnson era in the United States of America, entitled *How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland.* In it they showed "central government is not frequently the executant of its own policies, which are carried out by local authorities, public corporations, firms or other agencies" (Hyder, 1984, p. 4).

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) demonstrate even when a policy is relatively unambiguous, straightforward and uncontroversial and everyone involved is committed to it, the complexity and number of linkages that have to be made is likely to undermine its effective action. This informs the present research in that the civics and citizenship education report, itself, was ambiguous and controversial. The report lacked clarity. As well, its implementation was difficult because of the complexity of the linkages involved in its implementation. The linkages were made all the more complex because of the Commonwealth government's use of a policy-induced consortium as one of the ways to implement the report. This meant the Consortium was accountable to the Department of Employment, Education and Training. It was a case of Canberra attempting to ensure Perth did not dash its great expectations. Moreover, the members' loyalties and accountability were, in the first instance, to their institutions, then to the Consortium itself and then, if at all, to Canberra.

Randell (1982) summarises some of the earlier studies of implementation of public policies. She refers to Hargrove's work of 1975 in which he identified policy implementation as the missing link in the study of social policy (Randell, 1982). Since then numerous implementation studies have been published including those by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975); Berman and Mc Laughlin (1978); Nakamura and Smallwood (1980); Hough (1984); Huberman and Miles

(1984), Hall and Hord (1987); Fullan (1987), Silver (1990); Crump (1993); and Lowham (1995).

3.2.5 Policy process

Much of the early focus of these policy implementation studies was on policy-making or on the design of the innovation, itself. There was an expectation the endorsement of a report (or an innovation) meant it would be implemented (Lowham, 1995). Ball and Bowe (discussed in Crump, 1993 p. 13) emphasise policy is a process, not just an end product. Harman (1984) argues the traditional concept of policy-making should be replaced by the concept of the policy process.

> *Policy-making concentrates attention almost exclusively on the decision element of policy at the point of formulation, the concept of policy process is based on the notion that the handling of policy by any department or agency generally involves a series of sequential stages or phases.* (Harman, 1984, p. 16)

Harman (1984) identifies these series of sequential stages or phases as issue emergence and problem identification; policy formulation and authorisation; implementation; and, termination. Others including Berman (1981) and Loucks (1983) describe the change process as a loosely linked but time ordered flow of events. Fullan (1991) explains most researchers now see three broad phases to the change process. The first phase is "variously labelled initiation, mobilization or adoption".

The second phase is "implementation or initial use". The third phase is

called "continuation, incorporation, routinization or institutionalization"

(Fullan, 1991, pp. 47-48). The focus of the present study is on

implementation, which Fullan describes as:

> *The process of putting into practice an idea, program or set*
> *of activities and structures new to the people attempting or*
> *expected to change. The change may be externally imposed*
> *or voluntarily sought; explicitly defined in detail in advance*
> *or adapted incrementally through use; designed to be used*
> *uniformly or deliberately planned so that users can make*
> *modifications according to their perceptions of the needs of*
> *the situation.* (Fullan, 1991, p. 65)

3.2.6   The nature of implementation

In a way that parallels the studies of the implementation of educational

change, policy-making and its implementation were regarded as a series

of events. These events were rationally planned, tightly controlled and

directed from the top down (Lowham, 1995). Fullan (1991) argues, with

reference to educational innovations, that in the past, government

agencies have been concerned only with policy and initiation, and until

recently, vastly undervalued the problems and processes of the

implementation of change.   It is suggested this holds true for the

implementation of policy as well.   There is little recognition of any

discretionary decision-making outside the top echelons.   This control

from the top echelons down is suggested in the former Director General

of Education in South Australia, Albert Jones' (1980, p. 140) description

of policy-making as "the process whereby a formal statement of change or reform governing future actions in an organisation is achieved by the decision-making process with some goal in mind".

Crump (1993), however, argues policy is not fixed in the way suggested by Jones. Crump (1993, p. 31) contends policy is "constantly evolving, new problems arise, new conditions are set, and new contradictions arise as old ones are resolved". Walker (1989, p. 4) asserts, "there is no point at which policy-making stops and implementation begins". Crump (1993) draws on the work of Ball and Bowe (1991), and Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) to suggest a cyclic model of policy. The model includes partially overlapping phases that can be entered at any point. These phases are policy intentions (what the various interest groups want); actual policy (the document, legislation and/or report); and, policy in use (context of practice). Crump (1993, p. 31) argues "analysis of the process of policy development and implementation suggests that policies are not frozen texts, that they are not immutable creeds set in tablets of stone, nor omnipotent discourses". Clearly there are parallels with Fullan's (1991) summary of the three phases of the change process outlined above.

Appleby (quoted in Lowham, 1995, p. 96) argues, "policy is constructed when it is actually applied, because it is here that the implementer must translate it from the more abstract statement of words into concrete

actions". Appleby is highlighting the very complex nature of implementation. His ideas parallel Crump's concept of policy in use.

Odden (1991) captures the way researchers have come to realise the complexity of implementation. He provides a useful overview of the evolution of the understanding of implementation in which he identifies three stages. The first stage is from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s, in which researchers addressed the conflict in policy implementation. The second stage is from the mid 70s when researchers evaluated the results of implementation studies by asking questions such as whether innovations could be implemented in compliance with the original design and intention. The third stage is from the mid 1980s when researchers questioned whether the programs actually implemented could have the intention, quality, force and results underpinning the policy.

Much of the recent literature on change in educational settings does not make a distinction between the processes by which curriculum is implemented and the processes by which policy is implemented. It is contended there are differences, albeit subtle. The differences occur because of the characteristics of the innovation itself. Generally, policy provides broad guidelines; it can be described as a soft innovation. Rice and Rogers (1980) and Loucks (1983) describe soft innovations as a collection of ideas or a "loose bundle" of components that are

susceptible to interpretation and mutual adaptation. Conversely, an innovation like a new syllabus is likely to be more rigorous in its design with fewer opportunities for it to be interpreted variously. A new syllabus might be described as a harder innovation. Loucks (1983) describes hard innovations as having more explicit mechanical forms and functions. It is suggested a hard innovation is more likely to be implemented with greater fidelity thereby to more closely reflect the intentions of its designers.

Corson (1986) states policy is a process providing "major guidelines for action" creating frameworks "that allow discretion yet provide direction". This suggests policy users must interpret the recommendations of a policy as part of the process of implementation of the policy. Rein (1983) describes this process of slippage or reformulation whereby the intention of the policy or innovation is translated. Slippage is most likely if the policy (or innovation) is soft or lacks clarity and is complex (Fullan, 1991).

The present research focuses on the implementation stage and highlights that the very nature of the policy can be altered during this phase. It is argued the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education forms part of Crump's policy in use phase as the actual policy is translated into practice. The members of the Consortium reformulated the *Whereas the People...* report because, as already highlighted, it

lacked clarity and was complex. It was confusing because of the contentious philosophical debates about the nature of citizenship and, therefore, the approaches to civics and citizenship education. In this process of implementation, the members of the Consortium took little heed of the policy intentions or actual policy of the Civics Expert Group. Slippage occurred. With reference to Corson (1986), the *Whereas the People...* policy may provide direction sign posts, but its interpreters chose to go in other directions. O'Neill (1995, p. 85) argues "policy cannot be simply handed over like a parcel in a cloakroom: there have to be procedures in place to ensure its safe delivery and translation into requisite action". The Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education delivered a package with the same wrapping as the policy, but with quite different contents.

The use of policy into practice continua suggests the implementation process is linear and occurs in an orderly progression. It is contended policy implementation is a more haphazard process and more likely to be a spiralling process than a linear one. Similarly the policy into practice continua and models such as those provided by Hall (1995) and Lowham (1995) do not reflect the importance of policy interpretation. While both contend the policy into practice process is often oversimplified, their models still do not completely describe the complexities of the implementation process. The implementation process is much more iterative, interactive and multi-faceted than

suggested by the models. Socio-political processes are overlooked. The simplification of the processes of implementation and the reduction of complexities to uni-dimensional models results in policy makers who rarely consider or develop appropriate processes of implementation - policy users are simply expected to make it work in practice.

Fullan (1991, p. 92) underlines "it is individuals who have to develop new meaning" during the implementation process of either a policy or other innovation. He argues:

> *The problem of meaning is central to making sense of educational change. In order to achieve greater meaning, we must come to understand both the small and big pictures. The small picture concerns the subjective meaning or lack of it for individuals involved in the implementation process.* (Fullan, 1991, p. 4)

The current research, therefore seeks to understand the processes that occurred as the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education made meaning of the civics and citizenship education report as they played their part in the implementation process.

3.3   Curriculum decision-making

This section of the literature review considers literature pertaining to curriculum decision-making. This literature informs the present study of decision-making undertaken by the Western Australian Consortium for

Citizenship Education because the Consortium's prime task was to instigate and manage the production of a curriculum package on active citizenship for primary and secondary teachers. Essentially, the Consortium's decision-making as it interpreted the report was centred on curriculum decision-making, hence this consideration of some of the key models of curriculum decision-making.

3.3.1 Rational models of curriculum planning

The dominant perspective in curriculum decision-making for many years is best represented by Tyler's (1949) model. This model has been a major influence on curriculum decision-making. Most educators have interpreted it as a series of steps to follow when making curriculum decisions. Posner and Rudnizsky (1994) contend Tyler's Rationale provides a technical production perspective that sets out procedural steps to follow when planning a curriculum. These procedural steps are: deciding the educational purposes (objectives); deciding what educational experiences are to be provided; deciding how these educational experiences can be organised effectively; and, determining whether the educational purposes have been attained (Tyler, 1949). It is argued Tyler's model is too simplistic. It does not reflect the complex and dynamic nature of curriculum decision-making. It does not take into account the socio-political dynamics of decision-making nor the context in which the curriculum development is occurring. However, Tyler's

model of curriculum decision-making can be viewed as having provided a basic approach, which has been the springboard for subsequent refinements and models.

One of the refinements of Tyler's model is represented by the work of Taba (1962) where she added steps to Tyler's model. Posner and Rudnizsky (1994, p. 81) assert "Taba's work represents the most detailed elaboration of the Tyler Rationale". Taba's approach to curriculum decision-making is more prescriptive than Tyler's. Whereas Tyler sets out four questions to be addressed, Taba (1962) sets out seven. They are: diagnosis of needs; formulation of objectives; selection of content; organisation of content; selection of learning experiences; organisation of learning experiences; and, determination of what to evaluate and of ways and means to doing (Taba, 1962, pp. 11-12). Moreover, Taba argues for the order of her seven steps:

> *If one conceives of curriculum development as a task requiring orderly thinking, one needs to examine both the order in which decisions are made and the way in which they are made to make sure that all relevant considerations are brought to bear on these decisions.* (Taba, 1962, p. 11)

This clearly shows Taba's model is not only a technical production model, but it is also linear. This makes it an oversimplification of reality. Posner (1988, p. 81) supports this contention when he states like Tyler, Taba "explicitly accepts the assumption that curriculum planning [decision-making] is a technical (or 'scientific') rather than a political

matter". The present case study of the curriculum decision-making undertaken by Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education shows clearly that curriculum planning is a political matter. It is suggested that Taba's model is even more unrealistic because she ignores the politicality of curriculum decision-making.

3.3.2 Deliberative models of curriculum planning

Schwab (1970; 1983) challenges Tyler's and Taba's views and puts the case curriculum decision-making is not a linear process. He argues, "curriculum is not an endless string of objectives decided in Moscow and telegraphed to the provinces" (Schwab, 1983, p. 240). He continues by arguing against using strings of objectives because they "anatomize matters which may be of great importance into bits and pieces which taken separately, are trivial and pointless" (Schwab, 1983, p. 240). He argues "a linear movement from ends to means is absurd" and "curriculum reflection must take place in a back and forth manner between ends and means" (Schwab, 1983, p. 241). Instead, Schwab offers curriculum decision-makers the concept of deliberation. He proposes a "method of the practical" and explains:

> *Deliberation is complex and arduous. It treats both ends and means and must treat them as mutually determining one another. It must try to identify, with respect to both, what facts may be relevant. It must try to ascertain the relevant facts in the concrete case. It must try to identify the desiderata in the case. It must generate alternatives. It must*

make every effort to trace the branching pathways of consequences which may flow from each alternative and their costs and consequences against one another, and choose not the right, but the best one. (Schwab, 1970, p. 36)

Posner (1988, p. 8) describes Schwab's concept of deliberation as the cornerstone of his eclectic approach to curriculum decision-making. For him, this practical approach drawing on various theories in combination is preferable to the single-theory approaches, which had dominated curriculum decision-making up until the 1970s. Schwab (1970, p. 12) claims his eclectic approach means curriculum decision-making can draw on the strengths of various theories "without paying the full price of their incompleteness and partiality". Posner and Rudnizsky (1994, p. 84) are supportive when evaluating Schwab's approach asserting, "curriculum planning can be no more based on single theory than can other complex decisions such as choosing a spouse, buying a car or selecting a president."

Although technical in that he specifies which experts are to be included in curriculum decision-making, Schwab's approach rejects the constraints embedded in the separation of means and ends as found in Tyler's and Taba's models. Prescribed procedural steps to be carried out in a given sequence do not distinguish deliberation. Schwab argues for a more flexible, varied and iterative planning process (Posner and Rudnizsky, 1994). In doing so, his approach more accurately reflects

the realities of curriculum decision-making, but still is not cognisant of either the socio-political elements of curriculum planning or its context.

3.3.3 Naturalistic models of curriculum planning

None of models of curriculum decision-making discussed above describes what curriculum developers actually do. Arguably a more useful approach - certainly for the present study - is Walker's model of 1971. His naturalistic model is derived from an empirical investigation of notably successful curriculum development projects. He observed what was happening in practice was seldom reflected in a prescriptive approach to curriculum development. Walker identified and later described three distinct stages in the process of curriculum planning. These are "the curriculum's *platform*, its *design* and the *deliberation* associated with it" (Walker, 1971, p. 22).

Walker describes the platform as the most critical element in his model as it guides the development of the design, acting as the touchstone for all subsequent decisions. The platform is "the system of beliefs and values that the curriculum developer brings to [the] task and ... [which] guides the development of the curriculum ... [it] is meant to suggest both a political platform and something to stand on" (Walker, 1971, p. 52). The platform consists of 'conceptions', 'theories' and 'aims' as well as

examples or 'images' of exemplary teaching techniques and procedures (Walker, 1971).

Decisions must be made about each element or plank of the platform in order to design the curriculum. It follows, therefore, the design of a curriculum is characterised by choices about "the series of decisions that produce it" (Walker, 1971, p. 53). The process by which design decisions are made is deliberation, which is essentially a process of debate and argumentation. Walker describes deliberation as consisting of "formulating decision points, devising alternative choices at these decision points, considering arguments for and against suggested decision points and ... alternatives, and finally choosing the most defensible alternative" (Walker, 1971, p. 54). Roby (1985) stresses deliberation is not a stage-by-stage process but involves critical reflection, back tracking and revision.

According to Walker's model, curriculum decision-makers compare alternatives with the curriculum's platform, and where they resolve difficult decisions arising from contradictions in the platform; they preserve these precedents for future reference. Walker calls these precedents, derived from the platform, 'policy'. He distinguishes between the principles accepted from the outset (the platform) and those emerging during the curriculum decision-making process (the policy).

Whereas Tyler and Taba see curriculum as an object, Walker, like Schwab, sees curriculum as events made possible by the use of materials (Posner and Rudnizsky, 1994). The deliberative process of Walker's naturalistic model treats both ends and means as mutually determining one another, avoiding the prescriptive approach of the rational models of Tyler (1949) or Taba (1962). The curriculum development process involves making choices about design. Those choices are based on the platform. The curriculum, then, is not a set of objectives or learning experiences. It is a series of decisions based on justifiable and defensible criteria.

There has been considerable support for Walker's ideas. Skillbeck (1976) and Kennedy (1984) have built on Schwab's and Walker's concept of deliberation suggesting deliberation continues beyond the design phase of the curriculum development process. Deliberation continues into the implementation and evaluation phases. Kennedy (1984, p. 54) argues, "the completion of a product did not mean the end of the curriculum development process. The project was still subject to much decision-making". Clearly, this parallels the policy process in that the completion of the actual policy is not the end of the decision-making process. The processes by which the actual policy is put into use involve decision-making. There are parallels in the implementation process of any innovation whether it is a curriculum package, policy or another innovation.

In a paper defending Schwab's eclectic approach, Reid (1981) argues the case for more practical theories of curriculum development to replace the rational systemic models. He proposed:

> *If we were seriously interested in the improvement of the curriculum, we should be looking for styles of theorizing that confront the ambiguities inherent in curriculum decision-making, not styles that eliminate them by axiomatic pronouncement, or by-pass them by abstracting only those qualities from situations that can be measured with an apparent lack of ambiguity. The problem was not, I thought, to find theories which claimed to find answers to questions, but theories which could help us towards a productive search for answers.* (Reid, 1981, p. 7)

The present research describes the deliberation, which occurred during the curriculum decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Walker's model is useful in relation to the present study because of its emphasis on decision-making as a deliberative process underpinned by a platform consisting of the beliefs and values that the decision-makers bring to the task. Schwab's and Walker's approaches inform the present study, because their theories of the practical more closely reflect what happened in the real world of the Western Australian Consortium. Although it is argued these models still do not completely capture the complexity of the decision-making process, Schwab's and Walker's approaches provide a framework to answer questions like: Was the civics and citizenship education report part of the platform? What prior beliefs and values about citizen and citizenship education did members bring to the process? Were all the

defensible alternatives considered? What really happened? An underlying intention of the present study is to build towards theorising about the ambiguities and the humanness of curriculum decision-making.

3.4 Group decision-making

It is posited the models of curriculum planning discussed in the previous section do not adequately capture the complexities, realities and practicalities of the curriculum decision-making that occurred in the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. It is suggested the socio-political dynamics of the group are ignored in models of curriculum development, perhaps because curriculum planning is often a solitary process. Even Schwab (1983), who recommends curriculum planning be done by groups and who details the membership of the curriculum planning group, does not adequately capture the importance of interpersonal interactions. Therefore, the final section of the literature review examines some theories of group decision-making and discusses how they might contribute to a better understanding of curriculum decision-making.

3.4.1 The work of groups

There is a great divide between making a decision alone and making a group decision. Poole et al. observe:

The unique chemistry of social interaction can distil the best that each member has to offer, creating a resonance of ideas and synthesis of viewpoints. A different chemistry can stop the reaction and contaminate the product with erratic reasoning or low commitment. (Poole et al., 1986, p. 15)

Most of our waking hours are spent in, and the bulk of our work-related productivity, occurs within groups (Simpson and Wood, 1992). Knowles (1990. p. 146) defines a group as "a collection of people who, united by their interests and actions, strive together towards the achievement of a particular goal or objective". Similarly, Buchanan and Huczynski (1985, p. 131) refer to "people who consider themselves to be part of an identifiable unit, who relate to each other in a meaningful fashion and who share dispositions through their shared sense of collective identity". Dunford (1997 p. 103) argues central to such definitions is the notion "for a group to exist, members must have a clear sense of belonging, of collective identity and probably also a sense of common purpose. This provides a definitional basis for differentiating a group from a mere collection of individuals such commuters in a railway carriage or diners having a meal in a restaurant".

Given the importance of groups in our society, social scientists have long been interested in how group members interact with each other and with members of other groups to make certain decisions or carry out certain tasks. The study of groups is a major area of study in

behavioural sciences, and especially in anthropology, sociology and various branches of psychology.

Asch (1952) compares groups to water. He argues in order to understand the properties of water, it is important to know the characteristics of its elements, hydrogen and oxygen. However, this knowledge alone is not sufficient to understand water: the combination of hydrogen and oxygen must be examined as a unique entity. Asch asserts, then, so must both individual and group behaviour be studied to understand the nature of groups. The interaction of individuals within the group is of concern in the current study.

Individuals within a group make differing contributions to the group and interact differently with each other. One approach used to study the contributions of individuals to the group is to analyse the roles, which individuals play within the group (Dunford, 1997). Dunphy (1981) categorises these roles as task-focused, maintenance of interpersonal relations and cohesion within the group, and disruptive. The task-focused roles are initiator, expert, evaluator, implementer and procedural technician. The maintenance roles are exemplar, encourager, confronter, harmoniser and tension-reliever. The disruptive roles are dominator, absentee, aggressor, smotherer, recognition-seeker and confessor. Murnighan (1982) is concerned with the power difference among members of a group. He focuses on the formation of coalitions within

groups as a means of controlling or gaining power. Dunphy's (1981) classification of roles and the work of Murnighan (1982) are useful in the analysis of the interactions among the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education.

3.4.2 Decision-making

Decision-making is a central concept in the description and explanation of behaviour in groups. Decision-making is often seen as being at the core of the activities of managers or group leaders. Dunford (1997) asserts the focus on decision-making in the decision-action-outcome chain of causality explains the focus on the importance of decision-making. He argues "a more complex set of relationships exists" to account for behaviour in groups. This parallels the criticism of the simplistic linear models of implementation and curriculum planning.

Guzzo (1982, p. 1) describes research of group decision-making as "fascinating and important". He argues it is fascinating because the actions of groups can be "puzzling and unpredictable". It is this puzzling and unpredictable nature of groups that makes it difficult to capture their nature in theories. Guzzo goes on to argue the study of group decision-making is important because it often has significant consequences. He and others (Simpson and Wood, 1992; Stasser, 1992) highlight the importance of groups such as committees, councils, boards

and juries in making laws and regulations that affect all aspects of our lives.

Stasser (1992) claims groups are often maligned. They are described as inefficient, unimaginative, and unproductive (Anderson, 1978; Buys, 1978). They are prone to various dysfunctions ranging from suppressing minority opinions to instilling overconfidence in members (Janis, 1982). Yet we endure these shortcomings and continue to trust important matters to the deliberations of groups. In part, the appeal of decision-making groups stems from the democratic ideal that people should be able to impact decisions affecting them. Schwab puts the case for group curriculum planning:

> *A group is required, first of all, by the dependence of warranted decision on all the commonplaces, that is, the considerations they remind us to take into account in making decisions and the need to examine circumstances for the relative weighting of the commonplaces which is appropriate to time and place. The commonplaces demand a group because no one person adequately commands the concrete practicalities of all the commonplaces.* (Schwab, 1983, p. 244)

Simpson and Wood (1992, p. 1) assert despite the widely recognised importance of groups, basic social processes underlying group dynamics have received scant and intermittent attention. They argue this claim is particularly true of social psychology. Allport (1985, p. 3) writes this state of affairs seems quite paradoxical; it could be expected social

psychology, a field devoted to understanding and explaining "how the thought, feeling, and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others" would allocate a primary - perhaps *the* primary - portion of its theoretical and empirical attention to the study of groups.

Researchers including Hackman and Morris, 1975; Gouran and Hirokawa, 1983; and Poole and Hirokawa, 1986 have shown communication is the catalyst for group chemistry. It is the medium for the coordination and control of group activities; member interaction; and, group cohesiveness and conflict. Although small group researchers acknowledge the importance of communication processes in small groups, most readily admit there is not a clear understanding of how communication operates in group decision-making. Hackman and Morris, for example, contend:

> *Although there is substantial agreement among researchers and observers of task oriented groups that something important happens in the group interaction that can affect performances ... there is little agreement about just what that 'something' is, when it will enhance (or when it will impair) group effectiveness, and how it can be monitored, analyzed and altered.* (Hackman and Morris, 1975, p. 49)

The present closed-grained study of the decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education aims to address some of these gaps in our understanding of group decision-making. It aims to

contribute towards the theory about group decision-making by examining interactions between individuals and attempting to untangle some of the complexities of small group decision-making.

3.5   Models of decision-making

There are many models, which aim to explain decision-making in organisations and to capture the complexities of the process of group decision-making. Some of these models are described below and their relevance to the present study considered.

3.5.1   Rational model of decision-making

The traditional approach to the theory of decision-making is premised on a belief decision-making is, and should be, a highly rational process. This classical theory is known, therefore, as the rational model (Simon, 1957; Stoner et al, 1985) or the rational-economic model (Abelson and Levy, 1985) because of its presumption that decision-makers are rational, and because of its strong ties to the classical economic view of behaviour. There are parallels between these rational models of decision-making and curriculum planning models of Tyler (1949) and Taba (1962) discussed above.

The rational process of decision-making is described as a sequence of steps, which decision-makers should follow in order to enhance the probability of attaining a desired goal. First a situation must exist that triggers the decision-making process. This situation leads the decision-makers to recognise the existence of a problem or opportunity requiring action. This recognition is an essential element for without it the decision-making process will not occur. Next, the decision-makers define the nature of the problem or opportunity, which leads to the generation of alternative approaches for addressing the problem or maximising the opportunity. Gathering information about each alternative follows. This information is used to evaluate each alternative so the best course of action can be identified. This action is implemented and subsequently evaluated in terms of its effectiveness in addressing the problem or taking advantage of the opportunity (Vecchio, Hearn, and Southey, 1997).

House and Singh (1987) observe the classical view of decision-making does well at describing how decisions *should* be made, yet is largely deficient as a description of *how* decisions are made either by individuals or groups. Vecchio et al. (1997) provide a detailed discussion of the deficiencies of the rational approach to decision-making. They contend:

> *One major set of deficiencies in the classical approach lies in its assumptions that all possible alternatives will be*

considered, that the consequences of each alternative will be
considered, that accurate information is available at no cost,
and that decision-makers are totally rational beings.
(Vecchio et al., 1997 p. 355)

The emphasis of the rational model is on information processing rather than on both the information and social-psychological forces suggested by Guzzo (1982) and discussed already in this chapter. It is important to take into consideration the observation made by Vecchio et al. (1997 p. 355) that "the politics of decision-making are often more important than the logistics of the process". Certainly this is shown to be the case when the decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education is analysed.

3.5.2 Bounded rationality model of decision-making

Given the deficiencies of the classical or rational model of decision-making, an alternative theory emerged providing a more descriptive view of how decision-making occurs. This approach is termed a behavioural theory of decision-making, and is oftentimes known as the bounded rationality model (Simon, 1957; 1961). The bounded rationality model explicitly addresses the real world limitations of decision-making. The concept of bounded rationality acknowledges decision-makers are restricted in their decision-making processes, and must, therefore, accept something less than the ideal. Bounded rationality takes into account all possible alternatives and their

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consequences cannot be generated; the definition of the situation and the available information is likely to be incomplete and possibly inadequate; the situation may have changed as information was gathered and alternatives evaluated; and, the final decision may be based on criteria of simple optimisation or outcome maximisation (Dunford, 1997; Vecchio et al., 1997).

Because of the limitations outlined above, decision-makers tend to make decisions that are *good enough* for a particular situation rather than *ideal*. Simon (1961) describes this process as "satisficing". In rational decision-making, the decision-makers attempt to maximise by finding the best or optimal solution. In bounded rational decision-making, the decision-makers "satisfice" by considering each alternative until one is identified that is reasonably acceptable in that it meets all the requirements for a solution, although it may not be the very best choice. This notion of making a decision that is good enough compares with Walker's (1971) concept of deliberation that encompasses the notion of choosing the most defensible outcome.

The bounded rationality model assumes if only complete knowledge were available quickly and inexpensively, the optimal decision would be made. However, this fails to take into account that many issues in group decision-making are complex. Group decision-making is likely to be at least as much a process involving persuasion and influence as it is about

the mechanistic process of gathering and evaluating facts (Dunford, 1997). Moreover facts themselves are elusive; data are subject to varying interpretations. Kahneman and Tversky (1980), for example, show decision-makers use automatic and non-conscious processes, shaped by their experiences and underlying values, to evaluate information and make decisions. Others (Bazerman, 1990; Meyer, 1984 and Schwenk, 1988) describe how an individual's ability to make decisions depends on the cognitive maps used to make sense of the information. Neither the rational model nor the bounded rationality model takes these influences into account.

The bounded rationality model of decision-making provides a useful, but narrow lens, through which to view the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. The model takes into account the constraints time and limited resources place on information collection, processing and evaluation. However, it does not provide a complete picture because, like the rational model, it assumes decision-making is a technical matter involving incontrovertible information. None of these reflects reality because they take inadequate account of the significance of the personal interactions within the group.

In a classical article Lindblom (1959, p. 84) argues the rational model is not realistic because "it is impossible to take everything important into consideration". Lindblom (1959) argues, therefore, decision-makers are

most likely to make incremental decisions. These are decisions that do not vary greatly from the *status quo* because it is easier to evaluate the impact of marginal changes than of more radical alternatives. Decision-making is seen by Lindblom as a process of muddling through assessing what it is possible to achieve taking into consideration the political reality of the situation. The use of this approach is more likely to avoid conflict or resistance to a more radical decision. As discussed already in this chapter, Lindblom (1968) applied this notion to policy arguing policy-makers rely on an incremental style of policy development in an attempt to avoid conflict.

Lindblom's refinement of the rational and bounded rationality models informs the present study of decision-making by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education because it is a closer reflection of the decision-making occurring in the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Lindblom's model is valuable in the present study, because it takes into consideration the political context in which the decision-making is occurring. The political context is a particularly significant element in the decision-making of Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education.

3.5.3 The garbage can model of decision-making

Another model of decision-making, the garbage can model (Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972), challenges the assumption decision-making is a series of sequential steps beginning with a problem and ending with a solution. According to this model, decisions result from a complex interaction between four independent elements: problems, solutions, participants and choice opportunities. Kreitner and Kinicki (1995, p. 195) suggest the interaction of the elements of the garbage can model creates "a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision-makers looking for work". Groups, therefore, can be viewed as a collection of resources and perspectives available and keen to show what they can do. Cohen et al. (1972) argue often there already exists a predisposition towards certain answers. The decision then is already waiting to be mobilised once the problem or opportunity has been found. Cohen et al. (1972, pp. 2-3) contend "occasions when [a group] is expected to produce behaviour that can be called a decision" can be seen as "a garbage can into which various types of problems and solutions are dumped". This model implies decision-making is more a function of random chance than a rational process.

The garbage can model informs the current study because as will be described in more detail in the following chapters, the fledgling Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was established and was poised ready to be mobilised once there was an opportunity. The Consortium, with its collection of resources and perspectives was actively seeking opportunities to be included in decision-making. It was keen to show what it could do. Moreover, it is posited the Consortium had a predisposition towards certain answers.

3.5.4 The top decisions model of decision-making

Dunford (1997, p. 274) maintains the top decisions model (Hickson et al., 1986) is "likely to become a classic study in decision-making". The study on which the model is based involved 150 cases of decision-making in thirty organisations, but its conclusions have relevance for small group decision-making, too. Central to the top decisions model is the view "an organisation is established and sustained by a dominant coalition of powerful stakeholders" (Hickson et al., 1986, p. 2). The coalition determines the organisation's basic purposes, the matters for decision-making that are included on the agenda and how those decisions are processed. "The organisation is the framework (the rules of the game) for decision-making which fixes what topics are allowable and which are not" (Dunford, 1997, p. 274).

Although the top decisions model had its genesis in a study of organisational behaviour, it illuminates the group decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, if 'group' is substituted for 'organisation'. As will be detailed later in this study, the Consortium was established by a small, but powerful coalition, of dominant stakeholders - the universities - who dominated the agenda, the discussions and the decision-making throughout the life of the Consortium.

The top decisions study (Hickson et al., 1986) is significant, too, because it highlights once the matter for decision-making has been determined, the decision-making process must be understood in terms of both the complexity and politicality of the decision. The complexity of the decision-making process is affected by four components. The first is the rarity or frequency with which similar decisions are made. The second is the consequentiality of the decision in terms of the extent of change that may or may not occur, the longevity of the consequences, and the impact of the decision if the consequences are negative. The third component of the complexity of decision-making is the precursiveness or the extent to which the current decision might constrain subsequent decision-making. The final component is the number of people or agencies involved in the decision-making - the more people involved the more complex the decision-making process (Hickson, 1986).

The politicality of the decision-making process is the extent to which people or groupings - both inside and outside the organisation or group - exert influence through the decision-making process. According to Hickson (et al., 1986, p. 93) the politicality of decision-making means the decision-making process is such "a hubbub of pressure and contention" that "trying to define the decision as due to an identified individual seems an inadequate approach if one is actually trying to understand the real process of decision-making" in groups.

It is argued the relatively straightforward nature of the task- undertaken by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, and the relatively few people involved mean the decision-making was not especially complicated, so Hickson's concept of complexity is not highly relevant to the present study. However, his concept of politicality is relevant because the Consortium members represent a range of agencies and as the study reveals there are others outside the immediate group who influence the decision-making in significant ways.

3.5.5   Structuration theory and decision-making

Hannula (1992, p. 177) notes "historically social psychologists have relied on two different approaches to study group dynamics, one in which the individual serves as the primary unit of analysis and the other in which the group functions as the primary unit". The final model of

decision-making informing the current study attempts to marry these approaches. It is the structuration approach to group decision-making as proposed by the work of Poole et al. (1986). Poole et al. (1986, p. 240) contend "a real theory of decision-making processes has to be a theory of interaction between members of the group". They refer to Homan's (1950) theory of the group system, Thibaut and Kelly's (1959) exchange theory and Davis' (1973) theory of social decisions as examples of research which advance "explicit formulations of the nature of interaction" but which do not adequately express or explain the complexities of group interaction (Poole et al., 1986, p. 241).

Poole et al. (1986) contend any explanation of group interaction must "mediate two overarching theoretical tensions arising from the complex intersection of determinants in group interaction" (p. 241). The first tension recognises group interaction is conducted by individual members each with particular traits, values, experiences and skills, who operate within structural parameters such as norms, decision rules and networks, which are system-level properties. It is difficult to specify how these individual and system levels intersect, so that much group research bifurcates them. Poole et al, state:

> *Most often [individual and system properties] are treated*
> *simply as parallel causes which may interact. This is*
> *unfortunate because it ignores the mutual interpenetration of*
> *agent and system. System properties only exist by virtue of*
> *members' actions ... and in turn structures enable and*
> *constrain member activity. An adequate theory must provide*

an integrative account of the mutual determination of member behaviour and systemic properties. (Poole, 1986, p. 241)

This supports Bonner's (1959) observation neither the individual nor the group has a separate existence. Each implies and functionally depends upon the other.

Poole et al. (1986) identify a corollary to this tension between individual and system. They claim group researchers neglect social institutions, studying groups as if they were isolated systems, independent of the larger society. They go onto to say this is unrealistic, because almost all groups are imbedded in institutions. Poole et al. (1986, p. 241) assert "a powerful group theory must address institutional features and how they affect group systems and member activity".

The second tension, to which Poole et al. (1986) refer, is the relationship between two aspects of the group structure itself. The first of these aspects is the structure as a stable, given aspect of the group with which members work and to which they adapt. The second aspect is the structure as negotiated and created, as the emergent creation of member activities. "Structure consists of both these aspects, but what is not clear is how structural stability and structural emergence articulate and what determines the ratio of stability to change" (Poole et al.,1986, p. 242). Again much group research tends to bifurcate these aspects. Poole et al.

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(1986, p. 242) assert "an adequate theory should use the same approach to studying both stability and change".

The theory of structuration, therefore, offers a framework for the study of group decision-making that satisfies the conditions specified by Poole et al. (1986). They explain :

> *Structurational theory provides the resources for a unified theory of individual and systemic processes in groups; for an account of how institutions figure in group processes; for an integrative explanation of structural stability and change; and for an explanation of stability and change in the processes governing stability and change.* (Poole et al., 1986, p. 243)

The structuration theory analyses practices as defined by group members; by distinguishing system (observable patterns of behaviour) from structure (unobservable rules); and acknowledging structures are both a medium and an outcome of action. Structures are produced and reproduced by members (actors) using them in interaction. This continuous and interrelated process is structuration. Structuration takes place through the interaction and interpenetration of group members' actions. Members control interaction through reflexive monitoring and rationalisation, but they are limited by unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of action. The structuration theory takes into account the importance of social institutions and the role of the members in appropriating and adapting institutional structures. (Poole et al., 1986, p. 245).

The structurationl theory has been used to inform the present study because, as a theory rooted in social psychology, it takes into account social-psychological elements and the complexities of the interactions constituting group decision-making. Rather than a simplistic, linear model, it is a complicated theory. This is because it attempts to capture the intricacies and dynamic nature of the interactions constituting group decision-making. As well, it recognises decision-making does not occur in a vacuum. The members' actions are shaped by their predispositions, values and experiences and their actions occur within the context of a social institution. During these processes both the group and the institution change. The structuration theory informs the current research because of the policy-induced nature of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. A structure is imposed from outside the group. This politicised the Consortium and effectively undermined its deliberative curriculum decision-making.

3.6 Politics, power and conflict in group decision-making

One of the shortcomings of the models of curriculum planning and decision-making discussed above is they fail to capture the political nature of decision-making. As Hickson et al. (1986, p. 188) assert there is "no sign of decision-making concerned only with the technicalities of the matter and not with the politicalities". Stephenson (1985) argues the skills involved in group or organisational decision-making are substantially political. He emphasises the

centrality of negotiation and bargaining, urging and cajoling, coping with resistance, assessing the power of the opposed forces, forming coalitions, choosing optimal timing for actions and using the threat of coercion. However, the political nature of decision-making is often overlooked perhaps, because as Dunford (1997, p. 194) observes, "any hint of power or politics has immediately been associated with the undesirable, with inefficiency". Politics and power are seen as indicative of intrusive vested interests and/or irrationality into what should be a rational objective process. Kanter (1979) comments "power is [the] last dirty word. It is easier to talk about money – and much easier to talk about sex – than it is to talk about power". Drory and Romm (1990) suggest where there is contestation and conflict, there is politics. Therefore, group curriculum decision-making is a political process because there is contestation and sometimes conflict. Contestation occurs in group curriculum decision-making because of the values people bring to the process and because of resource limitations.

The politicality of decision-making implies there is contestation and conflict. Again many of the rational models of decision-making imply there is little contestation about decisions as the group searches for the most rational decision. This does not reflect the humanness of group decision-making. Therefore, a brief overview of conflict in groups and the ways in which groups handle conflict informs the analysis of the work of the Western Australian Consortium as there as some points of conflict as the group engages in its decision-making.

As Dunford (1997) explains conflict in groups can be viewed from different perspectives. A common frame for dealing with these issues is the distinction between the unitary, pluralist and radical perspectives on conflict (Fox, 1973; Edwards, 1986; Morgan, 1986). From the unitary perspective, conflict is abnormal. It arises from poor communication, poor leadership or inadequate procedures, for example. From the pluralist perspective conflict is as normal as harmony. It is a result of the diversity of interests and values represented in a group. This perspective suggests conflict can be either destructive or constructive in its consequences. The radical perspective applies more to larger organisations than small groups. It "treats conflict in work situations as an inherent characteristic revolving around the divergent interest of those who are the owners and those who rely on their returns as employers" (Dunford, 1997, p. 217). It is the fundamental conflict on which all other conflict may build.

Thomas (1976) provides some perspectives on conflict that are useful in the context of the present study. Some conflict occurs in the early in the deliberations of the consortium, which it is posited have repercussions for the subsequent decision-making of the consortium. Thomas (1976, p. 895) proposes a process model of conflict which focuses on the sequence of five specific events that occur once a conflict episode is underway. These events are: *frustration* where one party has concerns or feels misunderstood; *conceptualisation* where the frustrated part explains the nature of his/her concerns and possible solutions are considered; *behaviour* where different

approaches are taken to handle the conflict; *reaction* where modification to the original action or problem may occur; and, *outcome*. Thomas (1976, p. 900) describes five approaches to handling conflicts, which characterise the behaviour phase of the conflict episode. These are competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance and accommodation.

Pondy (1967) observes whatever the outcome of the conflict in terms of agreement or otherwise, there will be a "conflict aftermath". Dunford (1997, p. 228) describes the aftermath "in terms of feelings of elation or depression, stereotypes which have been formed or reinforced or shattered, and a climate of trust or hostility, which will provide part of the environment for future conflict episodes". Certainly, this is the case for the conflict episodes in the Consortium as the analysis in Chapter Six illustrates.

3.7   Conclusion

In conclusion, it is argued theories of implementation of change, models of curriculum planning and models of group decision-making that take into account the chaotic, political and, sometimes, irrational nature of these processes are the most useful in analysing the dynamics of the Consortium's decision-making, which is at the core of this research. An adequate theory must capture the interconnected nature of deliberation as the basis for group curriculum planning occurring in the context of social institutions. As Schwab implies, any theory that is to adequately reflect the practicalities of curriculum

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planning must be eclectic in approach. It is posited in the present study one of these practicalities is curriculum decision-making is a political process involving values, power and conflict. Reid (1981, p. 14) rejects rational or scientific theorizing about curriculum development and highlights the need to search "for alternative ways of constructing the principles that guide the study of practical affairs". The present study aims to contribute to an alternative explanation of the processes of group curriculum decision-making.

This chapter has drawn on a wide-ranging selection of literature, which has been used to inform the present study. Literature concerning citizenship, its evolution and constructs and citizenship education; the nature of public policy; implementation studies and the process of change; models of curriculum decision-making; the nature of groups and group decision making; and power and conflict has been considered. Key points emerging from this literature review have been used to construct a conceptual framework for the current research. This framework is provided in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER 4: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

A review of the literature was conducted in the preceding chapter in order to develop the rationale for this study. A number of pertinent assertions emerge as a result of the literature review. These assertions are discussed in this chapter and form the basis for the conceptual framework underpinning the current research.

4.2 Citizenship, civics and citizenship education

Citizenship is a contested term for two chief reasons. First, citizenship has had a long evolution from Ancient Greece to the present. Over time the meaning of citizenship has broadened. The second reason for citizenship being a contested term is because attitudes to citizenship are based on values. For example, debates about the balance between personal freedoms and obligations to the wider community are based on values. Because citizenship means different things to different people, the nature of civics and citizenship education is also contentious. As well, there is not ready agreement about the goals of citizenship education. For example, the emphasis in citizenship education could be on either the study of a nation's history as a foundation for an understanding of national identity or on empowering citizens to engage in community processes to bring about change. There is a relationship between

the long evolution of citizenship and values and the contested nature of citizenship, civics and citizenship education. This relationship is represented in Figure 4.1 below. The assertion, therefore, is that there is no ready agreement about the nature of citizenship, civics and citizenship education.

Figure 4.1: Citizenship, civics and citizenship education
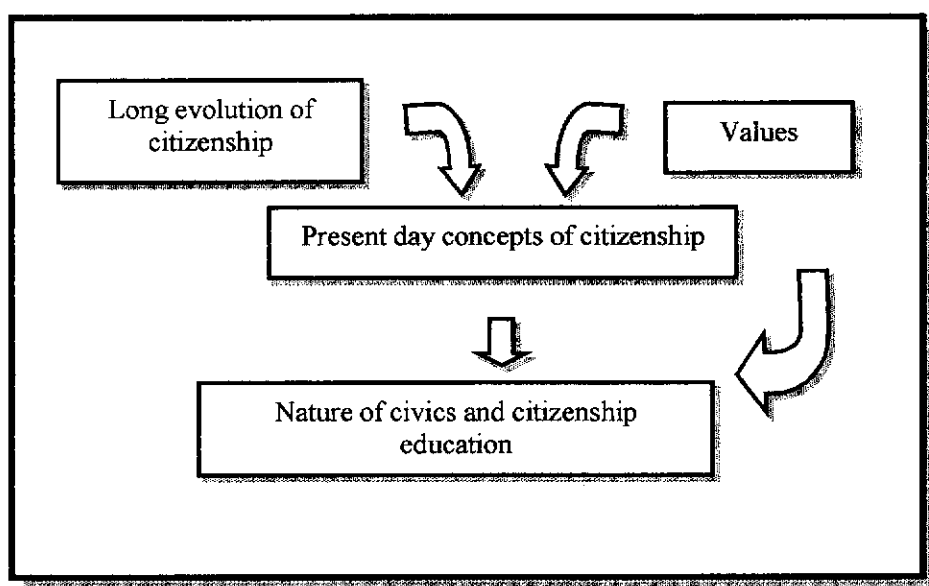
4.3   Civics and citizenship education policy

In recent years, the Commonwealth government has used policy-induced consortia to implement its innovations in education. For example, in the 1980s the Commonwealth government funded various consortia to provide professional development for teachers as part of its attempts to introduce a national curriculum. The formation of policy-induced consortia is a mechanism by which the Commonwealth government is able to work around

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state government departments of education and perhaps exert more control over the implementation of its policies and other innovations.

The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training was involved in the implementation of the *Whereas the People....* report on civics and citizenship education through its fostering of policy-induced consortia. These consortia were funded by and accountable to the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training. It is posited that the use of policy-induced consortia made the implementation of the policy more complex as it increased the number of linkages in the implementation process. Members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education were individually accountable to the institutions that they represented on the consortium. As well, members of the Consortium were accountable as a group to the Commonwealth government through the Department of Employment, Education and Training. These relationships are shown in Figure 4.2 below.

The *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* policy was initiated by the Commonwealth government, when it established the Civics Expert Group to make recommendations pertaining to civics and citizenship education. The resulting report became 'policy' when the government endorsed its recommendations and allocated funds for the report's recommendations to be implemented. The government invited consortia to make submissions for grants to implement the recommendations. The Commonwealth government, therefore, became involved in curriculum

development, in this instance, through the formulation of a policy on civics and citizenship education.

The *Whereas the People...* policy itself was a 'soft' innovation lacking clarity. The policy-makers, the Civics Expert Group, attempted to address the competing interests involved in the debates about citizenship and citizenship education, but in doing so confused the debate even more. Because the policy lacked clarity it was subjected to a variety of interpretations in the implementation process. The members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education constructed their meaning of the policy as they implemented it. As will be discussed in the following chapter, their meaning did not necessarily match the intentions of the policy-makers. Some of the members of the Consortium were more in agreement with the thrust of the earlier policies, *Active Citizenship* (1989) and *Active Citizenship Re-visited* (1991) than with *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* (1994). There was a residual effect of these previous policies, which affected the ways in which the members of the Consortium translated and implemented the *Whereas the People...* policy. These relationships are summarised in Figure 4.2 below.

As discussed already the involvement of the Commonwealth government through the promotion of policy-induced consortia made the implementation of the policy more complex. Another assertion underpinning this study is that the

policy lacked clarity. Its ambiguous nature meant that it was interpreted variously as part of the implementation process.

**Figure 4.2: Commonwealth government policy
on civics and citizenship education
and its implementation**
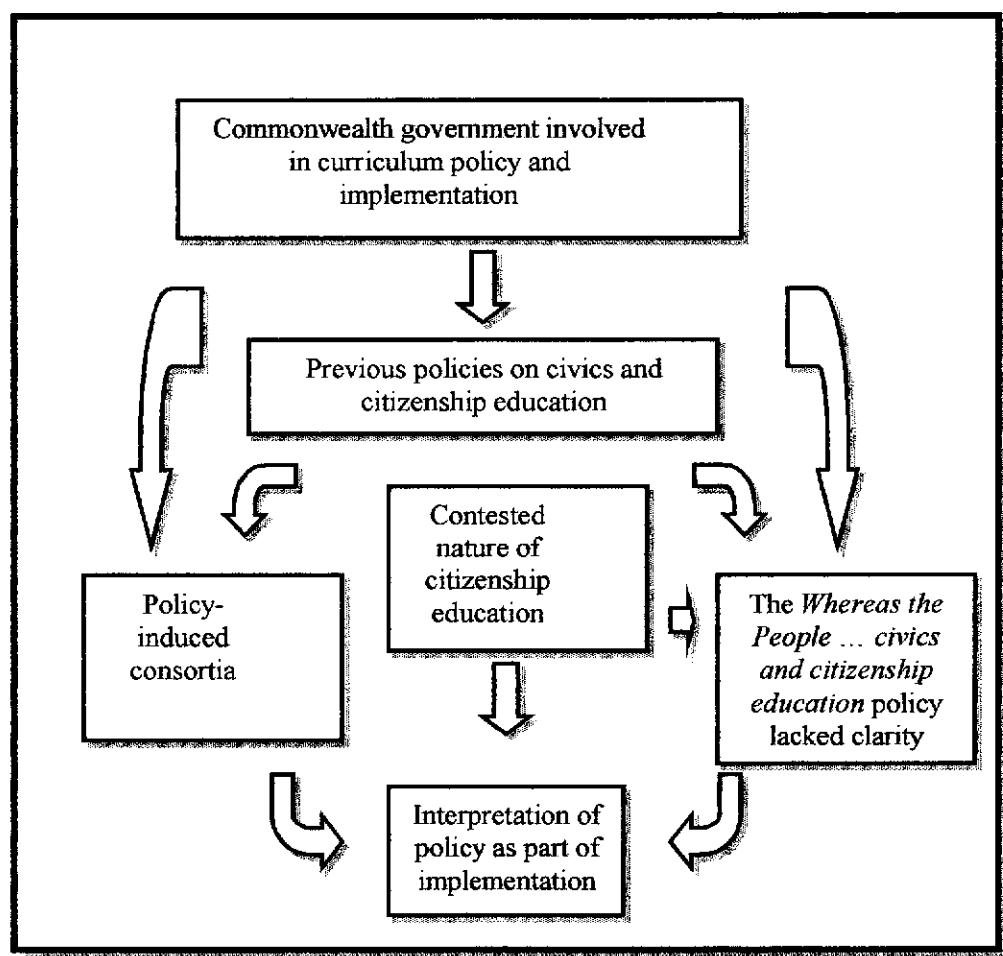
4.4 Curriculum decision-making in groups

Rational models of curriculum decision-making do not take into account the context or socio-political aspects of curriculum decision-making. It is asserted that group curriculum decision-making is a 'political' process involving iterative deliberation, persuasion, influence, contestation and conflict. Figure 4.3 illustrates the elements of this political process.

Figure 4.3: Group curriculum decision-making as a political process
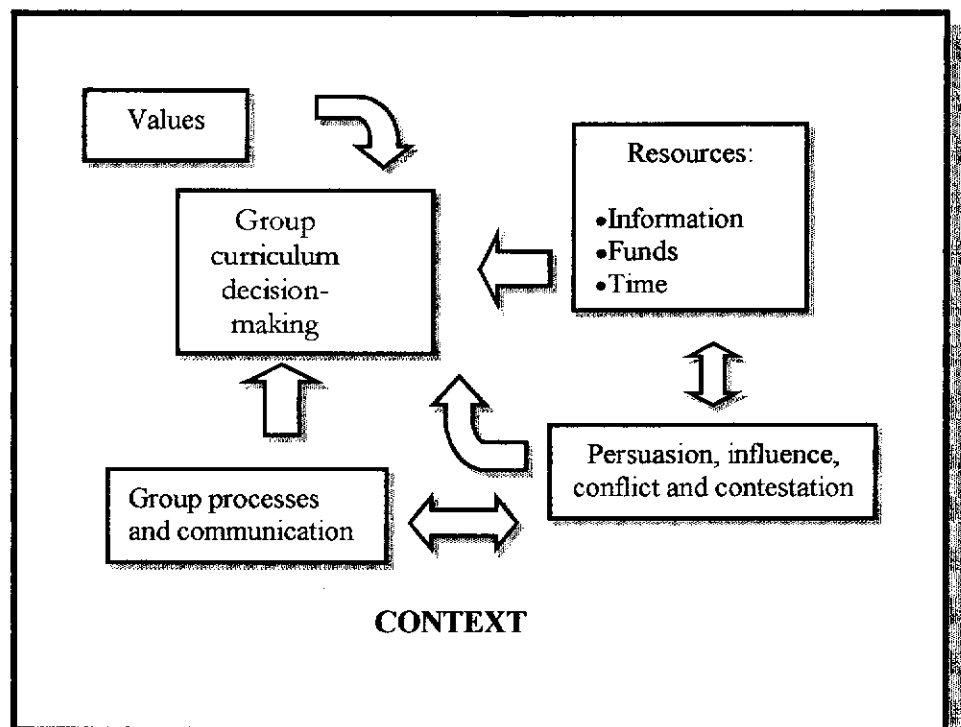
Curriculum decision-making is a political process because it involves beliefs and values about the goals of the curriculum, about what should or should not be included, about what strategies are most appropriate and about how it should be evaluated. It is a political process because decision-making is constrained by the allocation of resources, including time, and by incomplete or inadequate information. One consequence of this is that those who manage the resources and those who have access to the most complete information are often the most powerful or influential in the group. Another consequence of limited resources is that decisions are based on what is good enough rather than what is ideal. Often decision-making is as much a process involving persuasion and influence than it is a process of gathering and evaluating information as the rational models of curriculum planning suggest.

Therefore, the politics of group curriculum decision-making are often more significant in the decision-making process than the decisions about what is educationally sound. It is posited that often this is overlooked in theories of group curriculum planning.

4.5   Conceptual framework for the study

Several broad 'clusters' of ideas emerged during the present study. These provide the conceptual framework for organising the description of the case study of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education

Figure 4.4: Conceptual framework for the study
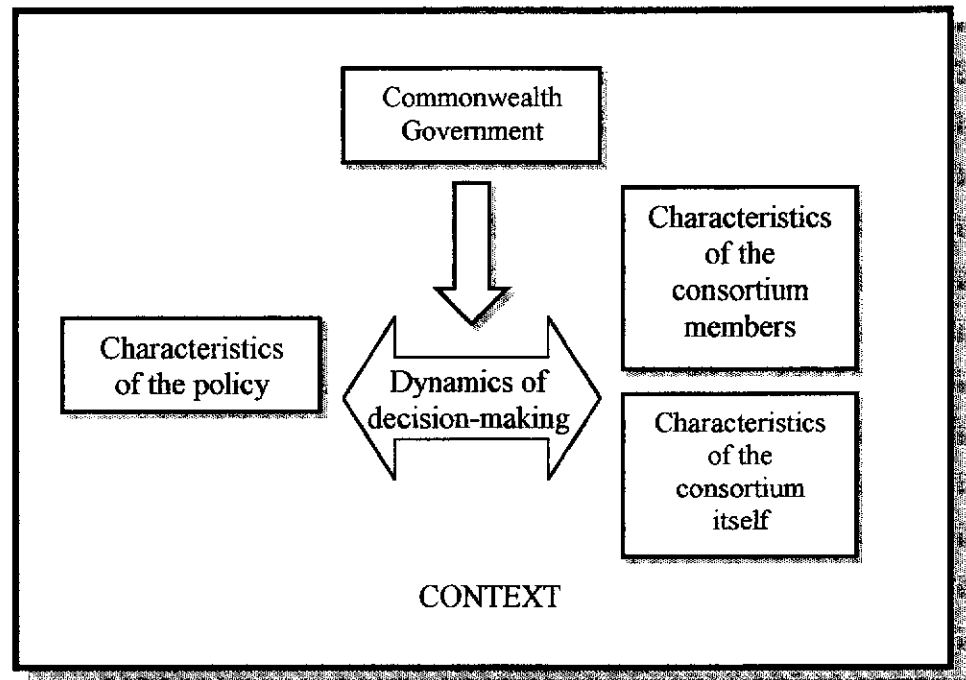
provided in Chapter Six. Each 'cluster' has been informed by the review of pertinent literature provided in Chapter Three. As illustrated in Figure 4.4 above these 'clusters' are the characteristics of the policy; the characteristics of the consortium members; and, the characteristics of the consortium itself. The separate focus on the members of the consortium and on the consortium itself emerged from the structuration theory of group decision-making discussed in the literature review. The curriculum decision-making carried out by the group is the dynamic interaction of the members with each other and the effect on the group structure as they interpret the policy. This involves political processes such as persuasion, contestation and confrontation. The role of the Commonwealth government has been outlined already in this chapter. It

initiated the policy and encouraged the formation of policy-induced consortia. The context of the decision-making is fundamental, as clearly decision-making does not occur in a vacuum. It is suggested that the work of the consortium must be considered against the background of other developments in the social science curriculum area in Western Australia.

4.6 Conclusion

The assertions made in the present study and the development of the conceptual framework were guided by the literature review undertaken in the previous chapter. The assertions and framework highlight the need for the political processes of decision-making to be taken into account when developing theories about group curriculum planning.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the salient literature on research methodologies and methods pertinent to this research. It justifies the methodological paradigm and research approaches underpinning and used in the present study. As well, it describes and justifies the choice of the methods used to collect and analyse the data. Finally, it discusses the steps taken in the present study to ensure its rigour, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

5.2   The methodological paradigm

Any inquiry is shaped by the choice of paradigm guiding the investigation of the research questions. The picture of group curriculum decision-making, in the context of citizenship education, which emerged from the literature review, prompted the adoption of a research approach that could provide sufficient scope for understanding it in all its complexity. It is asserted this study with its focus on the commonplaces and humanness of curriculum decision-making needs a research design that "gets to the bottom of things, dwells on complexity, and brings us very close to the phenomena we seek to illuminate" (Peshkin, 1993, p. 28). This study, with its focus on the stories of the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, highlights the complexities of group curriculum decision-making. The study, therefore, is

premised on a qualitative paradigm as it seeks to capture and interpret the humanness of the socio-political interactions between the members of the Consortium as they translate government policy on citizenship education over an eighteen month period.

Educational research has traditionally relied on a quantitative approach (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1991), but relatively recently some researchers in education have denounced the positivistic or scientific method (Borg and Gall, 1989; Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte, 1991). Their criticisms have been on the grounds the quantitative paradigm makes use of preconceived ideas and hypotheses which result in categories that are imposed on the observations of an event prior to the event itself and prior to the discovery of the meaning of the event to the participants themselves. Hitchcock and Hughes state:

> *Researchers argue that the hard, often mechanistic, and calculating view of research cannot be squared with the fact that human beings may be said to exercise choice and express their individuality in many different ways. Anti-positivists and interpretative social scientists ... take issue with the tendency of positivism and the implicit assumptions of the scientific method with its emphasis on correlation, laws, and objectivity, to make human beings out to be 'things' whose actions are unproblematic, clearly self-evident, quantifiable, and able to be objectively investigated.* (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989, p. 22)

As a result of these criticisms, more studies in education are using qualitative methods. Ilett (1995, p. 1) asserts "qualitative research creates new options" and can result in "experientially rich, highly productive, descriptive data,

enabling researchers to gain some understanding of the motives, beliefs, attitudes and commitments which lie behind the events that are observed - an understanding which could not be elicited by other means".

Qualitative research is well suited to studies "concerned with process rather than outcomes" (Cresswell; 1994, p. 145). The present study with its focus on the dynamic processes of small group curriculum decision-making is clearly a study where the concern is on process rather than the outcome or product. As discussed in Chapter Three, it is considered the rational models of decision-making and curriculum planning do not adequately capture the complexity of curriculum decision-making so it is considered inappropriate to use a positivistic approach to this study. The deliberative or naturalistic models of curriculum decision-making seem to best capture the complexity of the curriculum planning process, so it is asserted a naturalistic or qualitative approach to this study is the most appropriate.

Qualitative research methodology is well suited to the study of groups especially naturally occurring groups as described in Chapter Three. Both the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the smaller Project Management Committee are naturally occurring groups rather than experimental groups because they were established to achieve a shared purpose or task and included people who have similar interests and goals in relation to citizenship education. They were not created because of the research.

Qualitative research reflects a tradition in social science that depends fundamentally on observing people in their own territory and on finding the meaning behind these empirical observations. The observations and interpretations are enhanced if the researcher is able to interact with the members of the group in their language and on their terms (Kirk and Miller, 1986). The researcher in the present study was in the privileged position of having worked already with most of the members of the Consortium and all of the members of the Project Management Committee in other contexts pertaining to social science education in Western Australia. As a result, she had a positive working relationship with the members and had built up trust over a period of several years with some of the members. Moreover, she was a member of the Consortium and the Project Management Committee in her own right. This meant she shared the territory and the language of the group being studied. The combination of these circumstances meant the researcher was in a unique position whereby she was able to elicit much rich data and to gain particular insights into the decision-making processes of the group.

The qualitative paradigm has been chosen over the quantitative paradigm in this study because the former is more adaptable to deal with multiple realities and because it is more sensitive to the many mutual shaping influences and value patterns that may be encountered during the investigation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The current study, with its emphasis on the complex interactions among the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the Project Management Committee, is premised on the

epistemological axiom there exist multiple constructed realities that can only be studied holistically. The social world - in this case, the Consortium and the Management Group - is a meaningful world where members constantly construct and reconstruct the realities of their own contributions. It is the members themselves who create the meaning, order and sense by utilizing concepts, rules and interpretations. It is the personal frameworks of beliefs and values that are brought to bear on the situation that are so imperative to an understanding of how the policy is interpreted (Clarke, 2000).

5.3 The case for case studies

A case study approach employing qualitative methods was used in the current research. Definitions of a case study vary greatly. They range, for example, from Denny's 1978 (quoted in Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 214) definition of a case study as "an intensive or complete examination of a facet, an issue or perhaps the events of a geographic setting over time" to Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis' (1980, p. 48) definition of a case study as "an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on inquiry around an instance". As well, there are a variety of inexact, but typical statements like a case is "a snapshot of reality", "a slice of life" or an "episode" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, pp. 370-371).

The definition that shapes the present study is Stake's namely, "a case study is a way of focusing on a bounded situation to discover patterns which have

meaning to the researchers and the readers" (1988, p. 255). An essential element of Stake's definition is the concept of a bounded system or entity that has clearly defined boundaries. In the present study, the boundary of the case is the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and its members and the decision-making associated with the project entitled, *Citizenship Education: A project of national significance* in which the members engage.

Another essential element of Stake's definition of case study is the concept of focusing, whereby the researcher changes 'lenses' and, therefore, focuses differentially throughout the course of the investigation. To continue the photographic analogy, the initial observations use a wide-angle lens to capture the big picture of the case. As the inquiry progresses, salient elements begin to emerge and insights begin to grow. As a result the researcher changes to a telephoto lens to magnify and focus more finely on the emerging key elements - the focus becomes more specific. In the initial data collection phases of the present study, the researcher attempted to capture all aspects of the interactions and work of the Consortium. Questions and possible explanations began to emerge as the researcher engaged in continuous data analysis. As a result, the research questions were frequently redefined and refined so subsequent data collection was more finely focused. This demonstrates the dynamic and grounded nature of a naturalistic study such as this.

The consequence of the progressive focusing, which occurred during the course of the present inquiry, was the design of the study evolved as the inquiry was conducted. This evolving nature of the research design throughout the actual conduct of the study underlines the strength of the qualitative paradigm for an investigation such as the present one. As Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 235) explain, the qualitative researcher usually approaches a study with a posture of "not knowing what is not known" in contrast to the quantitative researcher who usually approaches a study "knowing what is not known".

The case study approach is not new. It has antecedents in the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, history and psychology and in the professions of law and medicine. The use of case studies in education is a relatively recent development as researchers have recognised the value of the case study to examine complex organisations (Simons, 1980). Hamkin claims:

> *Case studies are a useful design for research on organisation and institutions in both the private and public sectors, and encompass studies of firms (including very small firms), workplaces, schools, trade unions, bureaucracies, studies of 'best practice', policy implementation and evaluation, industrial relations, management and organisation issues, organisational cultures, processes of change and adaptation, extending to comparative studies of nations, governments and multinationals.* (Hamkin, 1994, p. 69)

Adelman et al. (1980, p. 47) state case studies "are often regarded with suspicion and even hostility. Their general characteristics remain poorly understood and their potential underdeveloped". Nevertheless, a case study

approach has been employed for the present study because as Adelman et al. (1980, p. 47) also observe, "case studies have made a considerable contribution to the corpus of knowledge and practical wisdom about education".

The paper by Adelman et al. (1980) helps to justify the choice of a case study approach in the present study. It lists six "advantageous characteristics that make [case studies] attractive to educational ... researchers" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 59). One of these characteristics is case studies are "strong in reality. This strength in reality is because case studies are down-to-earth and attention holding, in harmony with the reader's own experience, and thus provide a natural basis for generalisation" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 59). This builds on Stake's concept of naturalistic generalisations whereby the reader understands the case tacitly by transferring the particulars of the case to a familiar situation.

Another strength of case studies identified by Adelman et al. (1980, p. 59) "lies in their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right". This attention to the subtlety and complexity makes the case study approach pertinent for the underlying purposes of the present study as it attempts to capture the subtleties, complexities and nuances of curriculum decision-making, which have been often overlooked in other studies.

Case studies recognise the complexity and embedded nature of social truths by paying particular attention to social situations (Adelman et al., 1980). The recognition of the significance of social truths and social settings is pertinent to

the current study with its exploration of the psycho-social and political elements of curriculum decision-making.

Another characteristic of case studies identified by Adelman et al. (1980, p. 60) justifying the appropriateness of a case study approach for the present study is case studies "form an archive of descriptive material sufficiently rich to admit subsequent re-interpretations". Case study reports present research data in a more accessible form than some other kinds of research reports. Adelman et al. (1980, p. 60) argue "...the language and the form of the presentation is hopefully less esoteric and less dependent on specialised interpretation than conventional research reports" therefore a case study can "serve many audiences and their conclusions and insights can be put to a variety of uses". Case studies begin in "a world of action and contribute to it" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 60). This is pertinent to the present study as its focus is on a real situation rather than a situation contrived for the purpose of the research. It is also pertinent because the insights gleaned from this case study may shed light on others' experiences in similar settings.

The strength of the case study is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence. Yin (1984, p. 20) argues a "case study has a distinct advantage when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control". Burns (1994, p. 238) promotes the use of case studies when the purpose of the research is to answer 'how, why or what'. A case study approach, then, is appropriate for the present research

where the research questions are: what happened; how did it happen; and, why did it happen? As well, a major appeal of a case study using qualitative methods, as in the current research, is " it can construct better than any other type of research, a richly detailed picture ... a picture that is interesting, informative and potentially filled with implications" (Charles, 1995, p. 150).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) present an argument for the use of case studies employing qualitative or naturalistic methods. They argue the case study is the approach most responsive to the qualitative paradigm. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 214) write, "multiple realities are difficult to communicate in a scientific report form". They assert the positivistic paradigm cannot describe adequately the interactions of the investigator and respondent, the values of the investigator, the context of the research or the "many mutual shapings that are seen to occur" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 214).

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 359) provide a very useful summary of the "advantages of the case study reporting mode for the naturalistic inquirer". These advantages are:

1. *The case study is the primary vehicle for emic inquiry.* This characteristic is relevant to the present study where the participants construct the outcomes of the study (emic) rather than the researcher constructing the outcomes prior to the study (etic).

2. *The case study builds on the reader's tacit knowledge.* A case study provides an ideal vehicle for communicating with the reader because:

> *It provides [the reader] with a vicarious experience of the inquiry setting. The aim of the case report is to so orient readers that if they could be magically transported to the inquiry site, they would experience the feeling of déjà vu - of having been there before and of being thoroughly familiar with all the details. For the reader, the case study report is likely to appear grounded, holistic and lifelike. And perhaps, most important, the case study report provides the reader a means for bringing his or her own tacit knowledge to bear; if the description is sufficiently "thick", then reading is very similar to being there and being able to sense elements too nebulous to be stated propositionally.* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 214)

3. *The case study is an effective vehicle for demonstrating the interplay between inquirer and respondents.* This characteristic is relevant to the present study where the views of group participants are germane to the study.

4. *The case study provides the reader an opportunity to probe for internal consistency.* This characteristic is relevant to the present study where steps have been taken to ensure trustworthiness. (These steps are described later in this chapter.)

5. *The case study provides the "thick description" so necessary for judgements of transferability.* A criticism sometimes used against case study reporting is their findings cannot be generalised to other situations. If a detailed description is provided in accessible language then the reader is able to transfer the findings of a particular case study

to other situations. Writing of this need for a "thick description" Lincoln and Guba argue a case study:

> *... may read like a novel, but it does for the same reasons that novels read like novels - to make clear the complexities of the context and the ways these interact to form whatever it is that the case report portrays.* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 214).

6. *The case study provides a grounded assessment of context.* This characteristic is relevant to the present study in that it is asserted context is a key element when examining decision-making processes. Hence the reader should receive an adequate understanding of the context. (Chapter Two sets out to do this.)

Burns (1994) justifies the use of case studies by listing their purposes. One purpose he identifies is, "a case study may refute a universal generalisation or it may represent a significant contribution to theory building and assist in refocussing the direction of future investigations in the area" (Burns; 1994, p. 314). This is particularly relevant to the present research. The underlying purpose of the present study is to make a contribution to theory building about group curriculum decision-making through an examination of the decision-making processes undertaken by the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. It is contended a case study using qualitative methods is an appropriate approach to employ for this study.

5.4 Symbolic interaction

The present case study draws on the concept of symbolic interaction to understand the multi-faceted dynamics and political nature of the curriculum decision-making in which the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education take part. Symbolic interaction focuses on the nature of social interaction and the ways in which meaning arises from that interaction (Blumer, 1969). The basic premises of symbolic interaction are: first, people "act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them"; second, "the meaning of such things is derived from or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows"; and, "these things are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). According to this perspective, then, interaction is a creative process in which meanings are assembled as determined by the individuals' interpretations of their intended actions and the actions of others. Clarke explains:

> The actor in a given situation ... assigns meaning to the acts of others so as to enable himself/herself to engage in appropriate action. This meaning is defined by the attribution of intention to other actors and the interpretations of the implications of such attributed intentions. The assessment of a situation from this perspective is influenced by personal experience in what are perceived to be similar circumstances and specific goals. Hence ultimate understanding will differ between individuals. (Clarke, 2000, p. 3)

Symbolic interaction is appropriate in guiding any research activity where the emphasis is on illuminating the subjective world of human experience by discovering participants' construction of meaning. This approach is well suited to a "lived experience in a real situation" (Woods, 1992, p. 348). It is asserted the curriculum decision-making of the members of the Project Management Committee was a lived experience in a real situation.

The employment of a symbolic interaction perspective is useful in the present study because it is cognisant of the complexity of human interactions. It has been asserted already many current theories of curriculum decision-making do not adequately capture this complexity. It is possible to identify aspects of the curriculum decision-making process undertaken by the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, which lend themselves to exploration from a symbolic interaction perspective. First, individuals in the Consortium held differing views about the meaning of citizenship, the preferred approach to citizenship education and about the nature of the materials to be developed. It was important to discover what these initial views were as they were likely to influence the dynamics of subsequent interaction. As well, individuals held different views about their motives for their involvement in the process and about the roles they and others should play in decision-making. As Mangham (1979) observes frequently, individuals working in groups are unable to perform their ideal role, or comply exactly with the role that others have assigned them. It is possible in the present study to identify the issues that evolved which were problematic for the

members of the consortium. It was also possible to identify the strategies and techniques employed by the members, which allowed the curriculum decision-making process to proceed. Mangham (1979, p. 65) observes, "at the very heart of human behaviour is struggle and resolution, negotiation, process and flux". This captures the essence of the political behaviour, which the current research aims to show, is involved in group curriculum decision-making.

Symbolic interaction is an appropriate framework for the present study because as Clarke contends:

> ...a research program which is committed to symbolic interaction should endeavour to be as open as possible to alternative constructions of reality and to many different explanations of observed phenomena, none of which can be eliminated prior to the study. It is therefore logical and epistemologically sound for research enterprise to develop a theory which is grounded in reality of the situation under question and fits the data that have been generated. (Clarke, 2000, p. 4)

This mirrors very closely the way in which the present study has been conducted. The emphasis is on contributing to theory building by describing and explaining the complex and multi-faceted nature of the commonplace.

5.5   The case

The case study was located in Perth, Western Australia. Its boundaries are clearly and readily defined. The broad focus of the case study was the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the finer focus was on

reality is that if the universities get DEET funding they get higher up the pecking order. So it is no longer easy to say 'just have it at X'. or 'just have it at Y'., the way we used to. I mean it didn't matter then – but now it actually means a lot. (Interview, November 1997)

A non-university member of the Consortium, who was to work closely with the university members as part of the Project Management Committee, observed:

I think that it got down to a bit of university politics ...The decision-making got shared between M. and C. and I think there was a little bit there where E. got a bit miffed that he wasn't actually one of the key players - that it wasn't a trilogy of decision-making. It was really the two where the money had been lodged. All those sorts of issues came through. Not intentionally and not in a nasty way. It was all in the way of the culture of the university which is based on you've got to have these points and all these sorts of things; where the dollars are and being able to quote grants won, papers written and conferences that you've made presentations at. It's that sort of culture. (Interview, 20 April 1998)

The decision to conduct the professional development activities at Y. University was to have consequences for the nature of those activities and most especially for the content for the Winter Institute, the five-day intensive workshop. These are described in more detail below.

Again, this division of the spoils created by the intervention of the Commonwealth Government in the process, highlights the politicised nature of the decisions made in the establishment phase of the Western

the Project Management Committee. The Consortium consisted of representatives from each of three Western Australian universities, representatives from the private and public sectors of education, teacher professional associations, the Parliament of Western Australia, the Western Australian Electoral Education Centre and the Francis Burt Law Education Centre.

The first formal meeting of the Consortium was held in December 1995. Another seventeen meetings of the Consortium were held between December 1995 and June, 1997. Over that period, sixteen people attended the Consortium meetings, but as will be described in Chapter Six some attended only one or two meetings. In late December 1995, the Consortium learnt its application for a grant under the Strategic Initiatives Element of the 1996 National Professional Development Project from the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training was successful. The grant was for $120 000 for a professional development project to be developed and conducted over eighteen months.

As a direct result of winning the grant, a Project Management Committee was formed in December 1995. It consisted of one representative from each of the three universities and the Education Department of Western Australia. The researcher, who was a member of the Consortium, was invited to join the Project Management Committee. A Project Officer was appointed in March 1996 and joined the Project Management Committee, too. This group of six

and a Minute Secretary met separately from the full Consortium meetings on fourteen occasions from February 1996 to February 1997 including a two-day planning workshop held on 31 March and 1 April 1996.

The focus, then, of the present case study is firstly on the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the decision-making in which its members engage. Secondly the finer and more detailed focus is on the decision-making of the members of the inner circle of the Consortium, the Project Management Committee.

5.6   Methods of data collection and analysis

Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis are appropriate for the present study with its focus on the empirical social world. A strength of the case study approach using qualitative methods is the use of a variety of methods of data collection and analysis in order to capture the multiple realities constructed by the participants and by the researcher.

5.6.1   Phases of data collection and analysis

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) description of three phases of data collection guided the design, nature and underlying purposes of data collection and analysis in the present study. These phases are orientation and overview, focused exploration and member check. In the current research, the

purpose of the orientation and overview phase was to gain a sense of what was important enough to follow up in detail. During this initial phase the researcher sought and gained consent from Consortium members to record the proceedings of the Project Management Committee and to make observation notes at all meetings. She worked to build trust with members, especially with those with whom she had little past contact. Policy and other documents pertaining to the formation of the Consortium were studied. Three pilot interviews were conducted with people who had made significant contributions to Social Science Education in Western Australia. Two of these people were from the central office of the Education Department of Western Australia and the other was a prominent Member of Parliament with a particular interest in citizenship education. None of these people was directly involved in the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. These interviews had two purposes. The first was to explore leading educators' perceptions of citizenship and citizenship education. The second was to gather information about developments in Social Science Education in Western Australia in order to build a more complete picture of the context in which the recommendations of the *Whereas the People ...* report were being implemented. Preliminary research questions were drafted at this stage. Throughout this and the subsequent phases of the study, the researcher used a journal as a tool to explore her evolving ideas.

The purpose of the second phase was to obtain in-depth information about the decision-making processes of the group by focusing on those elements deemed to be most salient. This period of focused exploration involved sustained data collection and ongoing data analysis. This included making, transcribing and analysing audio recordings of Project Management Committee meetings and observation notes of Project Management Committee and Consortium meetings. As well, audio recordings of unstructured 'conversational' interviews with Consortium members and accompanying observational notes were made, transcribed and analysed. Agendas, minutes of the Project Management Committee and Consortium meetings, the Project Officer's monthly reports, correspondence and documents pertaining to the professional development activities for teachers, the curriculum materials produced as part of the project and the independent evaluator's report were analysed. Again the researcher used a research journal in which to refine her ideas and to re-work the research questions guiding the study.

The purpose of the final phase of data collection and analysis was to check the trustworthiness of the data. This was achieved by providing transcripts of the interviews and relevant parts of the draft report to members of the Consortium for their scrutiny. Modifications were made to reflect their input.

5.6.2   The researcher as instrument

Frequently, the primary instrument of data collection in qualitative studies is, as in the present study, the researcher. This is considered to be a strength of the present study because as Sands (1990, p. 117) writes "humans studying other humans can perceive and adapt to the demands of a situation flexibly, can identify problems in the context in which they occur, and can ask questions to clarify what is happening". In his cleverly titled paper, "The Imagination of the Case and the Invention of the Study" Kemmis (1980) highlights the essential cognitive and cultural processes of case study research, its grounded nature and, very importantly, the centrality of the researcher as the major actor in the research.   While it is recognised that some researchers from a conventional paradigm may argue there are limitations of the human as the data collection instrument – for example, such data collection is not systematic - Guba and Lincoln (1981) highlight the advantages. These advantages, which "uniquely qualify the human as the instrument of choice for naturalistic inquiry", include responsiveness; adaptability; holistic emphasis; knowledge base expansion; the immediacy of processing data; and, opportunities for clarification and summarisation and for exploration of atypical or idiosyncratic responses (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 193).

It is contended these characteristics of the human as the instrument of data collection were further enhanced in the current study because the researcher has a shared history and strong working relationship with many of the Consortium members and especially with the members of the Project Management Committee. As a participant observer she was able to explore issues, to bring an understanding of nuances and gain insights into the group decision-making processes, which another researcher might not be able to achieve. Through rigorous observations and interaction with the other members of the Consortium the researcher was able to penetrate the experiences of those inside the group (Clarke, 2000).

5.6.3 Sources of data

While the major instrument of data collection was the researcher, the sources of data were varied. A perusal of the literature reveals a variety of attempts to categorise types of data. For example, Lincoln and Guba (1985) make a distinction between 'human' and 'non-human' sources of data. This distinction is not all that useful as 'non-human' sources of data (documents and other written materials) are generated by people. Preissle-Goetz and Le Compte (1991) use the term 'artifact' to describe documents and other written materials. Strauss (1994) makes a useful distinction between sources of data that helps to inform the present study. He notes:

While some materials (data) may be generated by the researcher – as through interviews, field observations, or videotapes – a great deal of it already exists, either in the public domain or in private hands, and can be used by the informed researcher provided that he or she can locate and gain access to the material. (Strauss, 1994, p. 3)

Therefore, two terms are used in the present study to describe and differentiate between data sources. The first, 'researcher generated' data, includes the data, which were created by the researcher as a result of the study. The second, 'naturally generated data', includes those data which emerged as part of the life and work of the Consortium and would exist whether the researcher had carried out the study or not.

The 'researcher generated' sources of data used in the present study were taped interviews and observation notes of the interviews, audio tapes and observation notes of the Project Management Committee meetings, including the two-day planning workshop, and observation notes of the Consortium meetings. The observation notes focused on the things the tape recorder was unable to record and which are necessary for the researcher to further enhance the sense she made of the group members' perspectives (Maykut and Morehouse, 1993). The 'naturally generated' sources of data used in the present study were documents including the grant application, the grant contract, agenda papers and minutes for all the Consortium and Project Management Committee meetings, the Project Officer's monthly reports to the Consortium, materials from the professional development activities for teachers, letters and notices to the

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teachers in the citizenship network, the curriculum materials produced as a result of the project and the independent evaluator's report.

5.6.4 The interview process

The interviews in the present study might be described as conversations with a purpose (Dexter, 1970). An unstructured approach was used focusing on the exploration of topics (Appendix A). It is asserted because of the long term working and professional relationship the researcher had with the respondents the interviews can be categorised as either 'depth' interviews, in which interviewer and respondent are peers, or 'phenomenal' interviews in which both interviewer and respondent are caring companions with a commitment to an empathic search (Massarik, 1981). A major advantage of the unstructured interview is it allows the interviewer and respondent to move back and forth in time - to reconstruct the past, interpret the present and predict the future. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The premises of symbolic interaction, described above, were used to guide the framing of the topics for discussion in the interviews. Therefore, topics which promoted reflection about members' beliefs and values, their understanding of citizenship and citizenship education, their perception of their role and the role of others in the decision-making processes and their perceptions of the experiences encountered in the

curriculum decision-making of the Consortium were included in the interviews.

The eight unstructured interviews were conducted after the conclusion of the project. This retrospectivity is advantageous because it enabled reflection about the complete process. The five members of the Project Management Committee and three other members of the Consortium who had been present for most meetings, and who were key players were interviewed.

Initial contact was made by telephone in order to seek consent for the interview, to arrange a date and place for the interview and to outline its nature and purpose. At the interview, the interviewee was given a Research Consent Form (Appendix B) and permission was sought to audiotape the interview. The interviews varied in duration from approximately forty five minutes to over one and half hours. There was little need for the researcher to establish rapport with most of the interviewees, especially those who were members of the Project Management Committee, as she had spent over eighteen months working with them as a peer. As well, all were aware of the study she was conducting and many were very supportive offering suggestions and providing resources. The interviews were sufficiently long for there to be a congenial and relatively relaxed atmosphere. There was sufficient time for interviewees to have the freedom to recall and reflect on events and to

expound on ideas from their perspective. All but one interview was conducted at the interviewee's place of work.

The researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim on the premise this would provide fertile data for analysis. As well, it was considered this involvement in transcription would enhance the researcher's understanding of the data. This data combined with the observation notes of the interviews provided a rich broth of information. This richness was only possible because of the very humanness of the researcher and her relationships with the respondents. It is asserted any other instrument would not have been as effective.

5.6.5 Observations

It is asserted observation is a very powerful tool. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue a major advantage of direct observation is it provides here-and-now experience in depth. They summarise the methodological arguments for observation in the following way:

> ... observation maximises the inquirer's ability to grasp motives, beliefs, concerns, interests, unconscious behaviours, customs and the like; observation allows the inquirer to see the world as [her] subjects see it, to live in their time frames, to capture the phenomenon in and on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its own natural, ongoing environment; observation provides the inquirer with access to the emotional reactions of the group introspectively - that is, in a real sense it permits the observer to use [herself] as a data source; and observation allows the observer to build on tacit

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knowledge, both [her] own and that of members of the group.
(Lincoln and Guba, 1981, p. 193)

In the present study, the researcher made observation notes during the unstructured interviews described above and during Consortium and Project Management Committee meetings. Notes were made about non-verbal communication, seating patterns and 'side conversations' between members at meetings and emerging themes and links between them. The observation notes made at the Consortium meetings were especially valuable as there were too many participants in these meetings for clear audiotapes to be made.

In the present research, the researcher played the dual role of observer and that of legitimate and committed member of the group. This dual role is difficult to play chiefly because of logistical reasons; but as Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 274) observe, the dual role may be best conducted by an observer "who has been historically part of the local context". As stated already, the researcher in the present study was in a privileged position of being part of the local context and of having shared a variety of professional experiences with other members of the group. In addition, it is asserted because of her familiarity with the group members, each member acted 'naturally' in they did not behave differently or specially because they were being studied.

5.6.6 Naturally generated sources of data

Preissle-Goetz and Le Compte (1991) use the term 'artifact' to describe the assortment of written and symbolic records, which are kept by the members of a naturally occurring social group. There are advantages of using 'artifacts' or 'naturally generated' sources of data such as the minutes of the Project Management Committee meetings and Consortium meetings, the grant documents, correspondence, and reports to the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training.

An advantage of using documents and records as data sources is they are readily available. They are a stable source of data, which reflect past situations and which can be analysed and reanalysed without being altered. Documents and records are in the natural language of the setting, are contextually relevant and grounded in the contexts they represent. Usually they have authority and legality, especially in the case of records, through their formal or official representation of the situation. In the present study, the researcher was in the privileged position of having access to all the documents and records generated by the work of the Consortium in her role as a member of the group. Unlike 'researcher generated' sources of data, documents and records are non-reactive, although some type of interaction occurs as the researcher interprets and analyses them (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, pp. 276-277). Finally, the use of both 'researcher generated' and 'naturally generated' sources of data

enabled triangulation of data in the current study as discussed later in this chapter.

5.6.7 Methods of data analysis

It must be emphasised in a qualitative case study as in the present study, data analysis is an ongoing process. Strauss (1994, p. 26) suggests "at first the data collected may seem overwhelming and confusing, the researcher flooded by their richness and their often puzzling and challenging nature". He counsels the researcher should not remain confused for long because data analysis begins soon after the first of the data are collected. Subsequent data collection is guided by analytical questions and hypotheses, which either emerge or are framed as data analysis occurs. This highlights the grounded nature of the present case study.

Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte (1991, p. 56) claim the key to qualitative or interpretive research is "what the researcher makes of the data and finds in the material gathered". Woods (1985, p. 86) writes "imagination lies at the heart of data analysis". He argues "the ability to perceive interconnections and associations amongst data, to provide explanations for them, and to see further ways forward" is not "given in the material of our research" and therefore "has to be invented on the basis of various clues given by the research and our knowledge of other studies" (Woods,

1985, p. 86). Kaplan (1964, p. 385) observes, "data are the product of the process of interpretation".

In the present study, the imagination, inventiveness and interpretive abilities of the researcher were tested as the constant comparative method developed by Glasser and Strauss (1967), and modified by Lincoln and Guba (1985), was employed to analyse the data. Figure 5.2 below summarises how the data were examined and analysed. In the first instance transcripts, documents and observation notes were analysed to identify 'units' or 'incidents'. These 'units' were compared, grouped and re-grouped until categories either emerged or were framed. This was an ongoing and two-way process between 'incident' and category. The conceptual framework for the study outlined in the previous chapter guided the creation of these categories. As indicated already, the research questions were re-defined during this process of data analysis.

Figure 5.1: Constant comparative method of data analysis
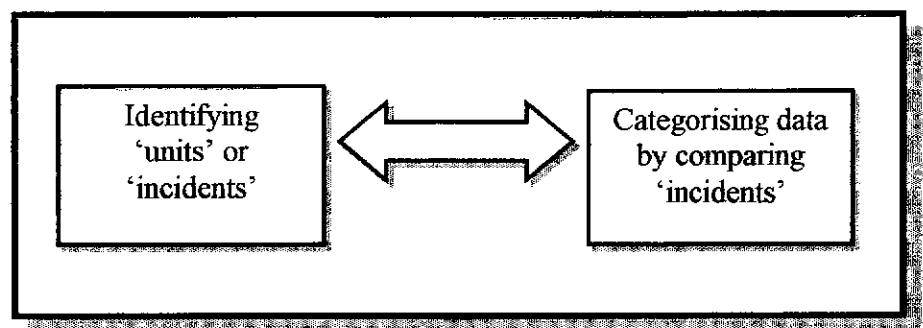
A 'unit' or 'incident' has two characteristics. First and most simply, a unit is the smallest piece of information that can stand by itself. Second, the purpose of a unit is to provide some understanding of the questions being researched so the identification of units is shaped by the research questions themselves. Data that do not inform the research questions are not unitised - that is, they are put aside. At first this may seem like a simple task. It was not. The grounded nature of the present study, and the emerging and changing shape of the research questions throughout the course of the study meant that some data which were put aside in the provisional phases of analysis were unitised in subsequent phases. Conversely, some data that were unitised in the initial phases were set aside in subsequent phases.

The second part of the data analysis process was to organise the units into categories. The categories were not pre-determined, instead they were assigned after the units were grouped on the bases of shared characteristics. Glasser and Strauss (1967) indicate categories emerge, but Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 340) claim this is "an enormous underestimate of the effort, ingenuity, and creativity that are involved". Some categories are descriptive of process or behaviour and others are explanatory. The choice of characteristics deemed relevant and the framing of categories was shaped by the 'ability' of the reconstruction of the data to address the research questions.

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It is recognised the categories that emerge are not the only categories that could emerge. Lincoln and Guba note:

> ...the category set that emerges cannot be described as *the* set; all that can be reasonably required of the analyst is that he or she produce a set that provides a 'reasonable' construction of the data. 'Reasonable' is most easily defined as a judgement that might be made by [another] reviewing the process. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 347)

This highlights the interpretive nature of this method of data analysis. The results of the data are dependent on the researcher's interpretation of events, interactions and processes.

The constant comparative method of data analysis in which the researcher compares unit for unit in the data to determine conceptual categories, which serve to explain the data, is premised on Glasser and Strauss' (1967) notion of the generation of grounded theory. Strauss (1994, p. 22) states "grounded theory is a *detailed* grounding by systematically and intensively analysing data". Clearly, this occurs in the constant comparative method employed in the present study. The purpose of analysis is not simply to collect or order a mass of data, "but on *organising many ideas* which have emerged from the analysis of the data" (Strauss, 1994, p. 23). Grounded theory, then, is theory, which is discovered and formulated developmentally as the result of intensive data analysis.

5.7 Steps taken to ensure rigour of study

Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte (1991) state qualitative researchers must build system and rigour into their methods of data collection. Kemmis (1980, p. 137) states a case study "cannot claim its authority; it must demonstrate it". Therefore, steps have been taken as an integral part of the current research to demonstrate its authority. The study sets out to demonstrate its rigour by showing it addresses the trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability and dependability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Strauss and Corbin, 1990 and 1994). The techniques, which were employed in the present study to ensure credible findings and interpretations were produced, were prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, member checking and peer debriefing.

The advantages of prolonged engagement include having sufficient time to collect a variety of data to inform the research questions guiding the study. As discussed already in this chapter both 'researcher generated' and 'naturally generated' sources of data were collected as part of the present study. Prolonged engagement means the researcher has time to learn the 'culture' of the group or organisation being studied. As explained already, the researcher was part of the natural group, the Consortium, at the centre of the present study, so it is argued she was familiar with and part of the culture of the group. It is suggested, however, the length of the observation of the Consortium and Project Management Committee over eighteen months meant the tape

recordings and note taking in which she engaged became less intrusive as the study progressed. Another advantage of prolonged engagement is it enables trust to be built between the participants and the researcher. In the present study, as detailed already, the researcher had worked with most of the members of the Consortium in other settings. However, long engagement meant she was able to establish trust with those two or three members with whom she had had limited previous contact. A final advantage of prolonged engagement is it enables the researcher to identify and take account of distortions that may appear in the data, including those of the researcher herself. The present study was conducted over four years, including data collection and analysis. This ensured there was adequate time for a great deal of rich data to be collected and for the researcher to reflect on it.

The requirement of persistent observation aims to prevent early closure of data collection, which may obscure particular actions or behaviours. Early closure, for example, may hide any deceptions being practised. The present study was conducted for a period of time exceeding the life of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and of the Project Management Committee. As described already, the researcher was a part of the fledgling group, which met prior to the formation of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Similarly the researcher was present at the final meetings of the Consortium and the Project Management Committee. The eight interviews were conducted after the completion of the project. Therefore,

the requirement for persistent observation was clearly addressed in the present study.

Triangulation was the third technique employed in the present research to ensure credible findings and interpretations have been produced. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1990) identify and describe four different modes of triangulation: These are data triangulation where a variety of sources of data is used in a study; investigator triangulation where several different researchers are used in the study; theory triangulation where multiple perspectives are used to interpret a single set of data; and methodological triangulation where multiple methods are used to study a research question.

The first of these types of triangulation was the type employed in the present study. Multiple sources of data including audio recordings of meetings; observational notes, audio recordings of semi-structured interviews, journal entries and document analysis were used in the present study enabling the researcher to verify and cross-check findings. Clearly, each type and source of data has its strengths and weaknesses. Using a combination, as in the present study, increases the credibility of the study and its findings as the strengths of one approach compensate for the weaknesses of another.

Member checking was the fourth technique employed in the present study to ensure credible findings, interpretations and conclusions have been produced. The member check, whereby data, interpretations and conclusions are tested

with the study participants from whom the data was obtained originally is, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 314), "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility". If the researcher is to claim her reconstructions are recognisable to the study participants as a reasonable representation of their own multiple realities, then it is paramount the participants have the opportunity to react to them.

In the present study, member checks occurred both formally and informally. A transcription of his/her interview was forwarded to each participant with a request they amend or add anything to better reflect their views. As well, sections of the final report, which were based on data from particular participants, were forwarded to them. The participants were requested to amend or provide their interpretation of any events particularly if it differed to the researcher's. Informal member checks occurred throughout the duration of the study through informal conversations before and after meetings and through other contact in the work setting. The researcher had ongoing contact with all members of the Project Management Committee in other work-related settings for the duration of the project itself and for much of the duration of the current research.

The fifth method employed by the researcher to ensure the credibility of the study was peer debriefing. The researcher was privileged to be able to have ongoing discussions with a colleague, who is well-informed about curriculum planning and decision-making, who is an active player in the Social Science

curriculum area in Western Australia and who was a member of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the Project Management Committee. His expertise and working knowledge, combined with the researcher and him having worked together on several previous projects and tasks over three years prior to the present study, meant these debriefings were invaluable. The debriefings challenged the researcher's thinking; forced her to examine her assumptions and underlying values; enabled the exploration of ideas that might not otherwise have been articulated; provided the opportunity to refine the research questions informing the study; and, provided for the discussion of the various ways in which the data might be interpreted.

The naturalistic researcher's task to establish transferability is very different than that of the positivistic researcher establishing external validity. As discussed already in Chapter One, the task for the naturalistic researcher is to provide a "thick description" or "rich broth of meaning" (Charles, 1995 p. 150). Such description is considered essential for facilitating transferability. The description must provide everything a reader may need to know to understand the findings - this is sometimes called the "melange of descriptors" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 125). By providing such descriptions, readers can apply or transfer the findings to situations with which they are familiar. This is the sense of déjà vu referred to earlier in this chapter.

This study, then, has set out to provide a rich description of the decision-making processes of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship

Education and the Project Management Committee in a form that is familiar to readers so they can derive meaningful naturalistic generalisations from it and transfer its findings to familiar situations. It has been guided by the list of "guiding conventions" which "the case writer might keep in mind" provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 365-366). The first of these is the writing should be informal, sufficiently detailed and readily accessible to the readers so it is effortlessly transferable. Second, the writing should not be interpretative or evaluative except in those sections explicitly intended for such purposes. The writer must distinguish clearly between the participants' interpretations and the writer's own re-interpretations. Third, the writing should err on the side of over inclusion in the first draft of the report. Finally, the writer should scrupulously honour promises of confidentiality and anonymity.

The researcher used a reflexive and reflective journal for the duration of the study as another technique to ensure the study's trustworthiness and dependability. The researcher used her journal to record impressions, reactions to readings, insights, and possible explanations and to explore the emerging research questions guiding the study. Sometimes these jottings formed the basis, and, often emerged as a result of the peer debriefing sessions described above.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter, then, has described and defended the qualitative or naturalistic paradigm underpinning the study. It has described the use of a qualitative case study, the research design and the methods used to collect and analyse the data. As well, it has detailed the ways in which the study's rigour and trustworthiness were addressed through measures to ensure its credibility, transferability and dependability.

Chapter Six presents a rich description of the case study. It provides the context for the work of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and details the decision-making of the members of the Consortium, and especially the Project Management Committee.

CHAPTER 6: THE DATA

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description and analysis of the case. It focuses on the decision-making, which occurs in the policy-induced Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, and especially in the sub-group of the Project Management Committee. It sets out to provide a rich description of the case to enable each reader to construct his/her meaning.

Four premises underpin this chapter. The first premise is all decision-making occurs in a context. The context is critical and should not be overlooked. Any decision-making occurs against a background of related activities and is influenced by the experiences of the decision-makers themselves in those activities. The chapter highlights how the decision-making of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education is influenced by the past experiences of members. Moreover, the group's decision-making cannot be understood without a consideration of the shared experiences, which the members bring to the Consortium, and the ways in which this influences the context in which subsequent decisions are made.

The second premise is all decisions have consequences, some of which are intended while others are unintended. Decisions have consequences not only in terms of the *actual* decision itself, but also in terms of *how* subsequent

decisions will be made. Sometimes decisions result in constraints, which restrict the scope of subsequent decision-making. Sometimes a pattern for how subsequent decision-making will occur is established early in the life of a group.

The third premise is that decisions modify the context in which subsequent decisions are made. The context in which the decision-making occurs evolves as a result of previous decisions. The context, therefore, is not static.

The fourth premise is that the policy-induced genesis of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education is germane to understanding the group's decision-making. The parameters set by the Commonwealth government politicised the group from its beginning. The far-reaching consequences of these parameters on the group's subsequent decision-making are highlighted in this chapter.

The description of the Consortium's decision-making is divided into two distinct phases: the establishment phase in which the Consortium is formed and shaped; and, the subsequent phase in which the project, *Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners,* is implemented. These phases are used as an organisational framework for this chapter. The establishment and the subsequent phases are characterised by a series of critical decisions. These issues, which were developed from a thorough analysis of the data sources described in Chapter 5, are critical because they illustrate key elements of the

decision-making processes, which were employed by the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. Each issue is analysed in the following way: its context; the issue; the decision-makers and their motivations; the decision-making process; the decision itself; the rationale or justification for the decision; and, the consequences of the decision. Each decision modifies the context in which subsequent decisions are made. The context in which the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education made its decisions evolved throughout the period of the study because of the consequences of each decision.

6.2   The establishment phase

The establishment phase includes the activities associated with writing the grant application, the formation of the Consortium itself and the decisions about the management of the implementation of the project. This phase was characterised by the consequences of the Commonwealth Government's criterion that a variety of partners be included in the grant application. The policy-induced nature of the Consortium was critical because the Commonwealth's attempt to be inclusive created an overtly political environment in which institutional politics became paramount. Many of the early decisions were made for reasons of power and prestige rather than for educational purposes. The partners' loyalties were to their institutions rather than the Consortium, which was to prove very short lived.

6.2.1 Issue: Pooling the expertise

Citizenship education is linked with the Society and Environment Learning Area,[1] in Western Australia. The status of the Society and Environment Learning Area, especially in secondary schools, has been eroded since a major re-organisation of the curriculum, known as Unit Curriculum, in the late 1980s. The, then, Ministry of Education Social Science Consultant, Kathy Cook noted the Unit Curriculum dealt lower secondary Social Studies "a crippling blow" and that Social Studies "struggles to retain the integrity of the syllabus with reduced time..." (Cook, 1991, p. 4) and, therefore, by implication, status.

As well, Social Science Education was, and still is, under threat from the growing emphasis on vocational education in the post-compulsory schooling years, despite arguments calling for units of study focusing on 'cultural understandings'. The then Director of the Social Science Association of Western Australia, Gil McDonald observed:

> ...the [Commonwealth] policies of economic rationalism
> have emphasized the importance of literacy and numeracy,
> skills and vocational training ... what does worry me is the
> way in which the narrow focus on such areas has devalued
> other parts of the school curriculum ... even of more concern
> is the tendency to think of essential knowledge purely in

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[1] Society and Environment Learning Area is the term used in Western Australian Schools since 1997 for social studies or social sciences.

terms of English and mathematics because with this kind of
thinking social studies is nice to know rather than necessary
to know. (McDonald, 1991, p. 25)

These threats to Social Science Education in schools resulted in the formation of the Social Science Association of Western Australia in 1991. It was a federation of teacher professional associations in the Social Sciences formed to promote and represent the interests of the Social Sciences. The formation of the Social Science Association of Western Australia was a significant development because it represented the politicisation of Social Science Education in Western Australia. As well, it marked a period when partnerships, especially among peak bodies, were encouraged by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training to apply for grants. The Social Science Association of Western Australia was a partner in a policy-induced consortium, which won a grant for a project known as the National Professional Development Project. This is relevant to the current study because it was through their involvement in the activities associated with the Social Science Association of Western Australia and/or the National Professional Development Project in the Society and Environment Learning Area that many of the people, who were to become members of the Project Management Committee for the Western Australia Consortium for Citizenship Education, were either acquainted or re-acquainted. As well, the cooperation of these people in the National Professional Development Project meant that they had a shared

experience of working in planning and providing professional development for teachers.

Two trends, therefore, characterise this period. There was a growing trend for the Society and Environment Learning Area in Western Australia to become politicised as part of its fight to improve its status. As well, there was a growing trend for the use of policy-induced partnerships, particularly in the provision of professional development for teachers. This is the context, therefore, for the genesis of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education.

As has been discussed in Chapter Three, the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* Report (1994) triggered great interest in civics and citizenship education throughout Australia. Educators and academics recognised funding opportunities were likely to flow from the then Prime Minister's endorsement of the Report's recommendations. Keen to win grants and for Western Australia's voice to be heard in the discussion about the nature of any materials to be produced or any professional development to be conducted, four representatives from X. University, one from Y. University and one from Z. University met informally several times during 1995. The person, who was instrumental in calling these informal meetings, was to become the Interim Director of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, and

subsequently the Project Coordinator. He reflected on the purpose of these meetings:

> *I think that the purpose was to pool expertise in the area of citizenship education in Western Australia. Western Australia has a relatively small population and to have people competing in the area just seems to be self defeating ... the purpose of the group was, I guess, to apply for grants.* (Interview, November 1997)

The person, who was to become the Director of the Consortium, reflected on these early beginnings of the Consortium confirming the underlying belief that a united effort was most likely to succeed:

> *...we decided that this was an area in which the Federal Government was interested and that it would be useful for us to have some collaboration in the area and then if anything was going on we would have a network already in place... It was just a very loose alliance ... we were interested in this area if there was anything going for Western Australia. We wanted to make sure that we were in on it.* (Interview, March 1998)

Clearly, at least some of the members of the 'loose alliance' were motivated by the opportunity for personal recognition by their universities if any grant application were successful. Another member of the group has a long history of involvement in political and citizenship education well before it attracted the attention and funding that it has since 1994. He reflected:

> *Twenty years ago such a small minority were interested and one felt that it was almost an exercise in futility ... and then*

*all of a sudden it became the in thing ... people who I
discussed it with in the 1980s saying that it should be given
more emphasis said we're not interested. Not because they
didn't think it was important, but it wasn't funded. It wasn't
fashionable. ... I have been making those submissions for a
long time and been on those committees and have never been
able to get other people to do it ... and then all of a sudden
there are new opportunities. It has been great with a whole
lot more other people taking it on...* (Interview, April 1998)

Another motivation for at least some of those involved in the fledgling group
was to improve the flagging status of the Society and Environment Learning
Area. In an address to the Social Science Association of Western Australia
Conference of 1997, the Society and Environment Learning Area
Superintendent, Glen Bennett, stated:

*... the recent re-birth of civics and citizenship education has
provided a new emphasis and importance for the social
sciences in times that are increasingly unfriendly to their
incorporation as part of a broad school education. One
person, perhaps overdramatically, has described civics and
citizenship education as being like a life raft in an
increasingly rough and unfriendly sea for the Society and
Environment Learning Area.* (Bennett, 1997, p. 1)

The member who was instrumental in instigating the informal meetings of the
'loose alliance' reflected on the way in which developments in civics and
citizenship education were used to lift the status of the learning area. He said:

*... citizenship came along like a tattered standard on a
stricken field. It certainly was a stricken field. We sort of
waved this flag as hard as we could because it gave us a very
real message that we could pass onto people. It's very hard
to argue against people who are saying that kids need to
know about citizenship.* (Interview, November 1997)

The highly motivated members of the fledgling Consortium were poised for action when in September 1995 the then, Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training called for submissions from universities as part of the Strategic Initiatives Element of the 1996 National Professional Development Project. The universities were invited to provide courses to renew the subject knowledge of Society and the Environment teachers about citizenship education.

The 'loose alliance' met at X. University and made three critical decisions, which were to influence the subsequent decisions of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. These decisions, which were made collaboratively, were to invite other partners to join the university group to add weight to the application; to use a successful grant application from another project as a template for preparing the Consortium's application; and to have two members of the group, who were actively involved in the National Professional Development Project, write the grant application.

The documentation from the Department of Employment, Education and Training provided a list of the criteria for assessment of grant applications. One of the criteria was "the highest priority for funding will be given to proposals which involve collaborative partnerships between at least three of the following: education authorities; university faculties/departments or TAFE; teacher organisations (unions,

professional associations, Commonwealth Education Centres, the Australian Teaching Council or other teacher organisations); and, parent/school council organizations" (DEET[2], August 1995). Guided by this criterion, the members of the informal university group contacted others through their existing professional networks to be included in the grant application. Hence representatives from the Western Australia Parliamentary Education Office, the Western Australian Electoral Commission, the Francis Burt Law Centre, the Education Department of Western Australia, the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia and the Social Science Association of Western Australia agreed to be included in the grant application. This contact was expedited because the members of the informal university group either were members themselves of some of these organisations or had working relationships with others from these groups. The ease of this contact highlights the strength of relationships that had been built during the various activities in the Society and Environment Learning Area outlined in the first section of this chapter. One of the members of the university group reflected on his relationship with a person associated with a prospective Consortium partner:

> *F. was a student of mine, then she was later a member of the Syllabus Committee with me ... I have been down to the Francis Burt Law Centre a couple of times and I think when*

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[2] Department of Employment, Education and Training

the Consortium was set up I actually rang her and said, 'Are you interested?' (Interview, April 1998)

Despite the network and existing working relationships, there was some reservations on the part of some agencies when they were approached to join the fledgling policy-induced Consortium. The comment that 'it was tricky' approaching the Western Australian Parliamentary Education Office because they "certainly immediately saw it a mechanism for universities to get money" shows that some had reservations about joining the fledgling Consortium (Interview, April 1998). However, when the representative from the Western Australian Parliamentary Education Office was asked how he felt about his office being invited to be part of this policy-induced partnership, his answer seems to suggest pragmatic acceptance of membership:

> *... right from the start we were aware ... of the credibility that Parliament gives, but at the same time it is my opinion that is appropriate that Parliament have some sort of link in this sort of thing. It is only logical when you are talking about citizenship ... that the Parliament does get involved.*
> (Interview, June 1988)

Others had reservations for longer. A representative from one of the other agencies recalled during his interview that "there were times throughout the project when I thought ... perhaps we have been invited as part of this Consortium as just a name to give the Consortium clout" (Interview, May 1998).

The rationale for including all government and non-government systems and sectors of education, the Western Australia Parliamentary Education Office, the Western Australian Electoral Commission, the Francis Burt Law Centre and the Social Science Association of Western Australia in the application was to suggest it had widespread support from employer and employee associations and involved expertise from the universities and other highly respected institutions. Without a doubt, some of the institutions were included to give the Consortium's application 'credibility' and 'clout'. This decision to include a variety of partners in the grant application politicised the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education from its foundation. The inclusion of a variety of partners was to result in benefits as well as dissension as the Project Officer later observed:

The notion of partnership has been essential to the project. Not only has there been the sense of partnership between the teachers [involved in the project], *but also among members of the Consortium who have been involved in the project willingly. In addition, the management team has supported and assisted the Project Officer in the work at hand. ... the monthly meetings of the Consortium and the frequent meetings of the management team have contributed to a partnership which has inspired an atmosphere of professionalism and trust.*

On the other hand while the Consortium offers a range of services and expertise ... the very size of the Consortium has, at times, been difficult to manage. Some members have felt that their services were peripheral or that it was not important to attend the monthly meetings. Encouraging Consortium members to feel a part of the project has, at times, been an exercise in diplomacy. (Project Officer's

Report to Advisory Committee Meeting in Melbourne, December 1996)

6.2.2 Issue: The power of the pen

As the discussions with the partners-to-be took place, the six members of the informal university group met at X. University to discuss the broad nature of the grant application. To expedite the process, it was determined that the two of the members from X. University would write up the submission. At that time, one of these members was the Director and the other the Project Officer for the National Professional Development Project in the Studies of Society and Environment Learning Area in Western Australia. The representative from Y. University provided a copy of a successful grant application for funding from the Asia Education Foundation as a model. In her interview, she recalled:

> *I think some of us had models already in our heads or we had gathered ideas from various places and other involvements so that was one thing we drew on for the proposal* [grant application]. *I suggested that we use some of the things from the Asia Education Foundation Project.* (Interview, March 1998)

A comparison of Figure 6.1, which provides an overview of the Asia Education Foundation project and Figure 6.2, which provides an overview of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education project, shows the similarities between the two professional development projects.

Figure 6.1: Phases of the Asia Education Foundation project
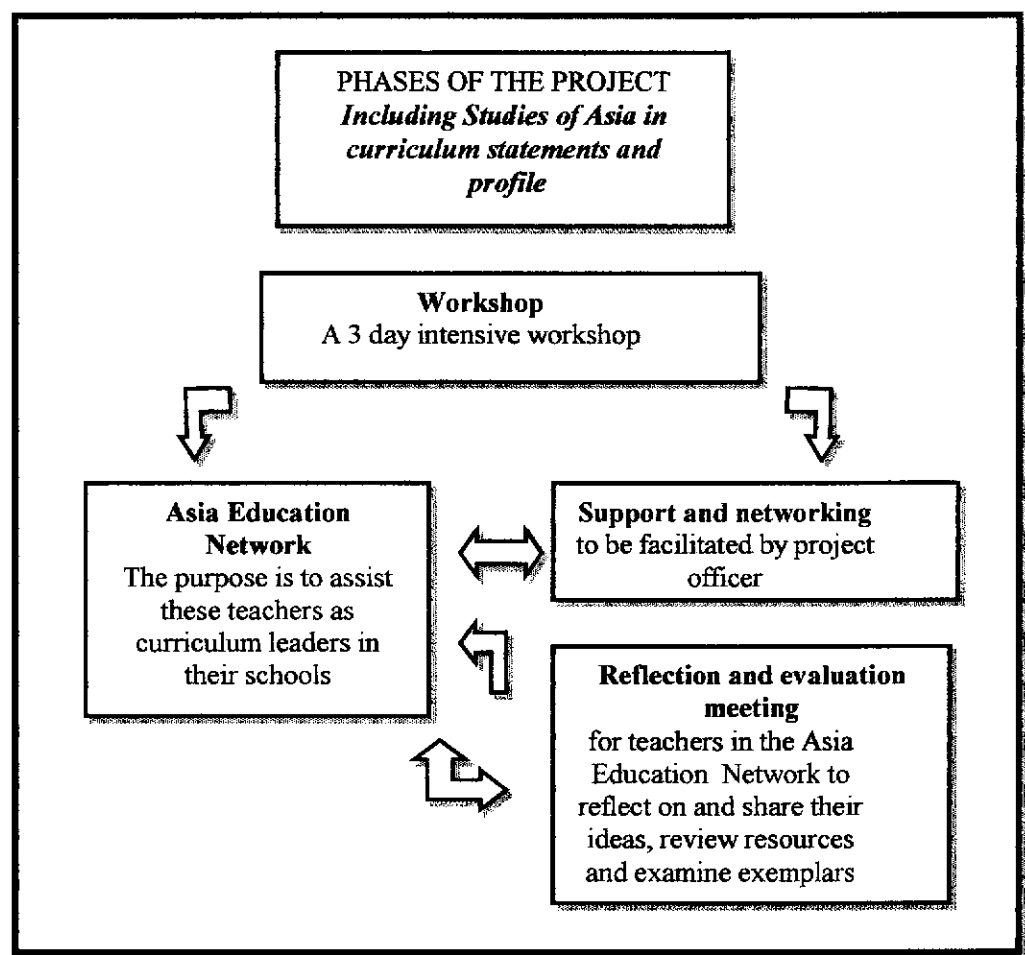
Both projects began with intensive workshops for teachers and other curriculum leaders. As a result of the workshops, networks of participants were established. A project officer supported each network. The participants in both projects were regarded as curriculum leaders with the task of involving others in their schools in the project. Partway through each project, participants met again to review their progress and to evaluate material.

Figure 6.2: Phases of the project for which the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education received a grant

PHASES OF THE PROJECT
Studies of Society and Environment:
Informed Citizenship

The Winter Institute
A 5 day intensive workshop to be held in July 1996 to enhance teachers' understanding of citizenship education

Teachers of Citizenship Network
The purpose was to assist these teachers as curriculum leaders in their schools

Support and networking
to be facilitated by project officer from August to October, 1996

October Meeting
for teachers in the citizenship network to reflect on and consolidate their ideas

Social Science Association of Western Australia Conference
with a focus on citizenship education. in May 1997

Dissemination of materials
November 1996 to April 1997

The suggestion to use an already successful grant application as a model or template for the Consortium's application was readily agreed to. There was no debate about whether this was the most appropriate model

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to follow or not. If anything it was regarded as a generous contribution. None of the members of the informal group had much time to prepare or critique the application, and, as so often happens the date for submitting the application was imminent. The use of the Asia Education Foundation grant application as a template was a convenient way to expedite the grant writing process. A copy of the Asia Education Foundation application was faxed to the application writers on 12 September 1995. The other members of the fledgling Consortium did not see the Asia Education Foundation grant.

The suggestion that the two people actively involved in the National Professional Development Project in Society and Environment write the grant application was critical. Once again, there was no debate about whether the two members were the most suitable to write the application. They were simply available to write it by the deadline. The shared experiences of those writing the application, and particularly their work together in the National Professional Development Project, were to shape the nature of the application. Not surprisingly, there are close parallels between the Consortium's application and the Society and Environment National Professional Development Project. The National Professional Development Project also included an intensive workshop and network meetings to support curriculum leaders trialing materials in schools. In the case of all three projects – the Asia Education Foundation Project, the Society and Environment National Professional Development Project and

the proposed citizen education project – participants who attended the intensive workshops could gain credit for some postgraduate university courses, with obvious benefits for the universities involved in these projects.

Although the decisions to use the Asia Education Foundation application as a template and to have the two members associated with the National Professional Development Project write the Consortium's application were made collaboratively, it is argued that there were three constraints on the decision-making. The decision about who should write the application was constrained by one of the writers being the highly respected person who was instrumental in calling the informal meetings. Moreover, he was the Director of the Social Science Association of Western Australia and had excellent networks with teachers in the Society and Environment Learning Area, which would benefit the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. No one was likely to challenge the decision to have him as the coordinator of the writing process. The decision-making was constrained by the time that the other members had available. Another constraint was that four of the members were from X. University, the meeting was held at X. University and the instigator of the meetings was from X. University. Therefore, although it was never stated, X. University was 'in control' of the proceedings. It was to be expected that the writers would be from X. University.

The proposal entitled *Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners* was written. The title for the project; the name for the group, Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education; and, the initial letterhead were 'invented on my computer" recalled the member who typed the application (Interview, June 1998). These were unilateral decisions. The application was for a grant of $120 000. It included the advice that the Project Coordinator and Interim Director of the Consortium was the X. University representative (this was the same person who had been instrumental in getting the group together) and that the Consortium's address was c/- Faculty of Education, X. University.

The grant application was faxed to the members of the university group for comment and endorsement. None made any suggestions for change. This process of seeking suggestions from others once documents have been prepared is significant especially if the documents are not discussed in an open meeting. It constrains decision-making because it assumes that everyone will read it, which does not always happen. Moreover, if there is no open discussion members are less likely to clarify any reservations they may have about the proposal. As one of the members of the initial university group observed in his interview "we were all so busy ... I didn't think that I had the right to say too much because if you start complaining, you have got to start delivering yourself and that is one of the problems" (Interview, April 1998). It is argued that it is pragmatic

and expedient to accept what others have written. This increases the influence and power of the writers. Essentially, the writers become *the* decision-makers.

The framing of the grant application in this manner is crucial because there was none of the deliberation favoured by Schwab and Walker. There was no time for rational well-considered discussion or democratic debate. Furthermore, the way in which feedback was sought from the other partners ensured that no deliberation occurred. By the time the partners, who were invited to add 'clout' to the application joined the university group, the critical decisions had been made. Moreover, the environment in which the subsequent decisions were made was not the perfect apolitical environment suggested by the theories of curriculum decision-making.

None of the non-university partners included in the application received a copy of the grant application until it was tabled at the first meeting of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education in December. This was after the grant application was submitted. And then only those who were at the meeting received a copy (Minutes of Meeting, 1 December 1995). This supports the contention one agency made that they and other partners were included "as just a name to give the Consortium clout" (Interview, May 1998).

These decisions pertaining to the grant application were germane. Once the application was funded, the phases of the project outlined in the application were designated as 'the deliverables' by the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The Consortium was accountable to the Department of Employment, Education and Training for its progress and expenditure on the deliverables. The model for professional development was beyond debate. It was set. Even the project's title, *Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners*, was set. These decisions, then, were to shape the very nature of the professional development activities provided for the duration of the project. The project was to become the platform for all subsequent decision-making. Indeed, the project, as outlined in the grant application, became a constraint on subsequent decision-making because it could not be substantially changed.

6.2.3   Issue: Changing chairs

The newly created Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was hopeful, but not optimistic about winning the grant. The representative from Y. University recalled:

> ...*we never expected to get the grant ... not because it wasn't necessarily a good application but just that we didn't expect to win it against the bigger groups on the east coast. I know when C. 'phoned to tell me* [the application was successful] *he was absolutely in a state of surprise.* (Interview, March 1998)

The fate of the grant application was unknown when the inaugural meeting of the newly created Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was held at Y. University on 1 December 1995. The change of venue from X. to Y. University was significant because it signalled that some 'behind the scenes' decision-making had taken place. The X. University representative, who was at that time the Interim Director of the Consortium, opened the meeting and immediately called for nominations for the position of Director of the Consortium. There was no discussion and the Y. University representative was elected unopposed. The Interim Director, who instigated this change of leadership, reflected, "it is corridor politics ... never go into a meeting unless you have the numbers ...you don't go out to buy the vote you just sell the thing" (Interview, November 1997). He explained his motivation for initiating the change:

> *I wanted M. to take the Chair* [of the Consortium] *for a number of reasons. I think at that stage I was chairing and was expected to chair almost every group that came together in terms of the* [Society and Environment] *learning area. I strongly felt that a learning area is strong if it has a number of people taking leadership roles because you get different ideas, you get different interactions and you get different strengths ... so I needed to convince people that there are others that they can call on. And I will be frank from a gender point of view, I think that it was necessary that part of that leadership is seen with someone like M. as opposed to looking for another male ... my basic motivation was not as much gender as it was that the learning area needs other people drawn into leadership ... there comes a point where you have got to step back and say 'Hey! Listen! I have done*

my bit! Not that I'm going to step out altogether, but I have done my bit and I'm going to let someone else run it ... Also I had a strong belief that M. had the ability to do it. I haven't been proved wrong. (Interview, November 1997)

M., who was now the Consortium Director, reflected on this change of leadership early in the life of the Consortium:

I appreciated him asking me, because the idea was that even if we didn't get the grant then we would have this loose confederation of people and we would have names on paper if opportunities arose because it was obvious at that stage that there was going to be lots of money spent in the area. (Interview, March 1998)

The decision to change the Consortium chair, which was made in the corridors and simply endorsed by the other partners, was critical in the life of the Consortium. It was to change the executive leadership of the Consortium, and therefore of the project, from X. to Y. University. It changed the context in which subsequent decision-making was to occur. It was crucial to the future direction of the work of the Consortium when it won its grant.

6.2.4 Issue: Fighting over the spoils

The consequences of the having the weight of the Consortium partners behind the grant application and of the change of Consortium Director were manifested when the Consortium won the grant. The X. University representative, who was listed as the Interim Director of the Consortium

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and Project Coordinator in the grant application, received a 'phone call late in December advising the application was successful. He recalled:

> *The grant came to me and it came as a surprise ... The fact that I was down as the Project Coordinator and Interim Director of the Consortium in the grant* [application] *and that in the interim the chair had changed to Y. created an interesting problem, and had other ramifications ... It created institutional problems, not between M. and myself. We were caught between the two institutions.* (Interview, November 1997)

The turmoil, tension and negotiations that followed highlight that the decision-making was based on institutional politics rather than educational outcomes. Moreover, the events reveal that the members of the Consortium were caught up in a process, which was beyond their control. M., the new Director from Y. University, reflected:

> *I think that C. and I had a good enough working relationship by that stage, that we felt that we could overcome it. But there was tension certainly between the Deans. It wasn't overt but it was sort of 'we can do it and they can do it and where is it going to be?' I know C. and I both felt pretty fraught about it. C. was feeling sort of, in a way, guilty about it. I think because he signed the documents and so it was going to go to X. and it wasn't necessarily meant that that was what was going to happen. It was supposed to be a Consortium project. If it was awarded, it was going to be awarded to the Consortium rather than to one of the institutions.* (Interview, March 1998)

However, the fledgling Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education could not be a signatory to any contract with the Department of Employment, Education and Training because the Consortium was not an incorporated body. Although three universities were included in the

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grant application, the Department of Employment, Education and Training insisted that only one university could be a signatory to the contract. This caused tensions between the universities, especially between X. and Y. Universities. The grant stated that the Interim Director and the Consortium were located at X. University, but meanwhile the directorship had moved to Y. University. This change of directorship gave greater weight to Y. University's claim to be considered in the subsequent negotiations with the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

The locus of the decision-making shifted from the members of the Consortium to the administrators of the universities during this 'storming stage'. The institutions fought over the spoils. Each wanted the prestige and profile that went with winning such a grant. These negotiations between the universities were conducted against a background of preparations for the end-of-year close down and festive season functions. There was a sense of urgency because the Department of Employment. Education and Training had imposed a deadline requiring the signed grant contract be returned by Christmas Eve. The X. University representative on the Consortium, who had been the Interim Director, described this stage:

> *The heavyweights were starting to grumble up the hill because everyone had got wind of the fact that we had got a teacher* [professional development] *project. All delighted, so*

that nobody was going to let go of it. But, of course, Y.
wanted to grab it. Eventually the two Deans [of Education at
X. and Y. Universities] *had to thrash out a deal whereby it*
would be centred here [X.], *the money would be here* [X.],
but the centre of activity would be at Y. That is one of the
problems with partnership funding - that is where is the
money going to be sent ... that has implications for the
universities and for the individuals involved in terms of
promotion and terms of prestige. (Interview, November
1997)

The compromise decisions for X. University to manage the grant money;

the Interim Director, who was at X. University to remain the Project

Coordinator, the yet-to-be appointed Project Officer to be located at X.

University; the meetings associated with the management of the project

be chaired by the new Consortium Director at Y. University; and, the

professional development activities planned for teachers, which were a

key element of the proposed project, to take place at Y. University were

to have significant ramifications for the project. One consequence was

that the day-to-day management of the project was physically separated

from the executive decision-making. The Project Coordinator reflecting

on how dividing the project across X. and Y. Universities for institutional

reasons affected the decision-making process said:

I think we had a very good little group in this office at X. and
we all worked well together ... people working together,
people who relied on one another ... From that point of view
it worked well. In many ways it would have been easier if I
had still been Director of the Consortium because the
problem was that when M. [the Director] *had to make*
decisions about something ... sometimes there were urgent
things that had to be done and we had to contact M ....
sometimes it made things very frustrating. Sometimes I had

to make decisions and cross my fingers and hope that M. wouldn't be offended. I was very conscious that M. was the Director ... that came from the real problems we had before Christmas ... I think M. and I worked well together and there was no problem in that ... the original problem was institutional, not a personality problem. (Interview, November 1997)

Moreover, the decision to share the spoils between two of the university partners resulted in there being a small and powerful group within the Consortium. Even at this early stage in the life of the Consortium, two of the partners were more influential than others. Of the original 'loose alliance', Z. University did least well in the division of the spoils. Reflecting after the conclusion of the project, the representative from Z. University said:

> *... most of these things you never basically speak about. What happened with the Consortium was only natural. P. and C. and M. were all party to [the decision-making]. They were party to it. They were there. It was the only way to run it ... it really couldn't have been any other way, in a practical sense. If it had been centred here [Z. University] or if had been centred at the Education Department, it would have had a different dynamic.* (Interview, 21 April 1998)

The representative from X. University made the following observations about Z.'s minimal direct involvement in the administration and management of the project:

> *It wasn't a deliberate thing to keep E. out of it. It was just the way things went... E.'s comments were fairly neutral. He just felt as long as Z. University got acknowledgement, and obviously it needed to get some share of the funding. So the*

reality is that if the universities get DEET funding they get higher up the pecking order. So it is no longer easy to say 'just have it at X'. or 'just have it at Y'., the way we used to. I mean it didn't matter then – but now it actually means a lot. (Interview, November 1997)

A non-university member of the Consortium, who was to work closely with the university members as part of the Project Management Committee, observed:

I think that it got down to a bit of university politics ...The decision-making got shared between M. and C. and I think there was a little bit there where E. got a bit miffed that he wasn't actually one of the key players - that it wasn't a trilogy of decision-making. It was really the two where the money had been lodged. All those sorts of issues came through. Not intentionally and not in a nasty way. It was all in the way of the culture of the university which is based on you've got to have these points and all these sorts of things; where the dollars are and being able to quote grants won, papers written and conferences that you've made presentations at. It's that sort of culture. (Interview, 20 April 1998)

The decision to conduct the professional development activities at Y. University was to have consequences for the nature of those activities and most especially for the content for the Winter Institute, the five-day intensive workshop. These are described in more detail below.

Again, this division of the spoils created by the intervention of the Commonwealth Government in the process, highlights the politicised nature of the decisions made in the establishment phase of the Western

Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. There was little, if any, regard for the educational outcomes of the project at this stage.

6.2.5 Issue: Creating circles

The first meeting of the Consortium after winning the grant was held on 21 December 1995. Only the university representatives, the representative from the Education Department of Western Australia and the researcher were present. (The representatives from the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia and the representative from the Francis Burt Law Centre tendered their apologies. The other partners neither attended nor tended their apologies.)

The management of the *Active Citizenship Project* dominated the agenda. The grant application, which was distributed to the one non-university partner at the meeting, outlined the management structure for the project. It proposed that each of the original partners, included in the grant application[3], contribute to the overall management of the project through representation on the Project Management Committee. This did not eventuate. Instead, at the meeting of 21 December 1995, a motion was accepted that a representative from each of the three universities and the Education Department of Western Australia form the Project

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[3] The Western Australian Chapter of the College of Education and the One World Centre joined the Consortium as partners early in 1996.

Management Committee along with a yet-to-be appointed project officer. The motion also included a clause that the Project Management Committee might "co-opt other members of the Consortium as necessary". It was through this clause that the researcher was invited to be a member of the Project Management Committee. This decision meant everyone who attended the meeting was included in the Project Management Committee and anybody who was not there was excluded.

The meeting did not intentionally ignore the grant application thereby deliberately excluding other partners from the Project Management Committee. Instead, nobody thought to read the grant application with reference to the management of the project. Indeed, if they had they were likely to have decided that the Project Management Committee proposed in the grant application was too large, and, therefore, would have been inefficient.

The composition of the Project Management Group is not surprising. Clearly X. and Y. Universities had to be included as a result of the compromise decision made by the university administrators. The representatives of X. and Y. would not exclude their colleague from Z. University because of their respect for his expertise in the areas of political and citizenship education and their friendship with him. The members of the three universities were the instigators of the project and the Consortium. They wished to retain their close involvement in the

project. This wish was motivated by a genuine interest in civics and citizenship education and in the Society and Environment Learning Area; by a strong sense of ownership of the project; and, by the university culture which requires the winning of grants, membership and chairing of committees and contributions to the wider community.

Although the inclusion of partners from the agencies in the Project Management Committee was not discussed at the meeting, there was a tacit understanding amongst the university members that people from the agencies had narrower and more specific interpretations of citizenship. (This highlights how the contested nature of citizenship itself was an important factor in the group's decision-making.) The justification for the inclusion of the representative from the Education Department in the Project Management Committee was that his support was required to identify and contact teachers to be included in the project. Moreover, he was well known and highly regarded by the university members through shared involvement in other projects, including the *Society and Environment, National Professional Development Project.*

This decision about the membership of the Project Management Committee resulted in the formation of an inner circle and an outer circle within the Consortium. The inner circle was actively involved in decision-making pertaining to the project whereas more often than not all the outer circle could do was to react to decisions. There were fewer

opportunities for those in the outer circle to have their ideas included. This resulted in dissatisfaction on the part of some of the members of the outer circle. For example, a Consortium member who was not part of the Project Management Committee observed in relation to his involvement in the decision-making process that he had sometimes thought "I'm getting a bit frustrated here... we've got a fair bit to offer and I'm getting a bit disillusioned ...Things are done and we are not part of it. What are we doing here? Are we wasting our time?" (Interview, May 1998). A member of the Project Management Committee who had contact with some of the partners in the Consortium through other forums observed: "I know some of the others said it's just a little group of mates down there who are sort of running this along" (Interview, April 1998).

One member highlighted the missed opportunities for his organisation:

> *We could have participated a lot more. Maybe coming up with some educational programs. We have the people here to develop materials ... the resources to do that here, the expertise. That certainly wasn't used by the Consortium. I don't know if it's true ... but I think that the agencies were a part of the Consortium mainly because of who we are. I don't think our expertise was used. But then again, perhaps I should have jumped on the table and said 'Here listen, this is what we are good at doing it. Let's do it!' I think that there were some very concrete ideas put in place very early in the piece and that's just the way it was followed.* (Interview, May 1998)

The same person went on to say later in his interview "we all have our barrows to push to a certain extent and I guess some got pushed further

than others". Another member of the outer group had some major concerns:

> *No I didn't feel adequately involved in the decision-making. Lots of decisions were made into which I had no direct input. I know that W. shares the same feeling, too. An example that comes immediately to mind is the Winter Institute. The visit to Parliament didn't fit in with the agenda, and they didn't spend long enough I think with the Parliament or the Electoral Education Centre. I think that they spent too long at the City of Melville and in a way I see that the project's results [publication] looks at local government ... I feel quite dissatisfied with the arrangement to visit Parliament that week, the amount of time given to it and the rather unfortunate lack of participation from those people who actually came here.* (Interview, June 1998)

The Consortium Director reflecting on whether the formation of the Project Management Committee meant that the agencies felt excluded from the decision-making observed:

> *I do think it was a necessary structure in order to run the project, and it did make an inner and an outer group. I think that the people in the outer group may have felt that they weren't valued ... I thought that the agencies were important and I valued their contribution. But that's what I thought it should be, a contribution towards the overall .. the bigger picture of what citizenship education could be in Western Australia. Not particularly looking at what the Parliament is doing in this area or not really participating at all like the W. Centre.* (Interview, March 1998)

Several incidents illustrate the consequences of the decision about the membership of the Project Management Committee. The limited involvement in proactive decision-making for the agencies created some

tension. The first incident relates to some of the materials used to publicise the Winter Institute, the five day intensive course for classroom teachers. One of the pages of the publicity package sent to schools states 'The Consortium *represents* [emphasis added] the following organisations'. A list of the partners of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education follows. Dissatisfaction with this generated correspondence from two agencies that were keen to correct any misunderstanding that the Consortium *represented* them. The minutes of the Consortium meeting of 25 June, 1996 do not include any reference to this incident, although the researcher recorded the tabling of the letter and noted there was "real tension in the room" (Observation notes, 25 June 1996).

The member from one of the two agencies recalled this incident:

> *I did express to* [a superior in the organisation] *in writing my concern that the outside perception of the Consortium representing the* [organisation] *may tie the* [organisation] *to an undesirable project .... Hey we've got our integrity to maintain ...for example, sponsorship from a private company, they cannot claim to represent the* [organisation].
> (Interview, June 1998)

The Consortium Director saw it as an incident that was to have consequences for subsequent communication with the representatives of the agencies. She noted:

> *... it was in a letter that was sent out to schools ... It seemed to me that while they were correct, that we didn't represent them, that they had representatives on the Consortium, which I tried to point out, and which I was careful always to write in my letters, it was a bit of a storm in a tea cup really. I think that there were a couple of fragile egos operating at that stage, people who were worried about their status ... They might be quite right about it, maybe it was not a professional thing to do, but it wasn't done with any malice or anything like that. It was just an oversight really. I was really quite cross with the agencies... All the time after that, I kept feeling as if we had to keep on being nice to them and making sure that they felt comfortable. Patting them sort of thing.* (Interview, March 1998)

The second incident, which illustrates that the membership of the Project Management Committee created an inner and outer group within the Consortium and which in turn caused some tensions, concerned arrangements for the Winter Institute. The Project Officer reported on the planning for the Winter Institute to the Consortium Meeting of 25 June 1996. She advised that part of the program on the fourth day included lunch and visits to four so-called 'sites in citizenship education'. One of these sites is located in Fremantle and the others in the city centre of Perth. Less than four hours was allocated for all the visits and lunch. As well, a representative from the Parliamentary Education Office in Canberra had been invited to present a session at the Winter Institute. The minutes of the meeting indicate that not everyone was pleased by these arrangements.

[The representative from the Parliament of Western Australia[4]] *expressed concern that the Parliament of Western Australia was relegated to a minor role in the Winter Institute program.* [The Director] *explained that the Institute is classroom focused and that site visits were not seen as a sideline but as a valid resource for teachers. As discussed previously the agencies could then work with teachers to develop materials. She expressed regret that the PEO (WA)[5] was unhappy with the program and reiterated that it was in no way a token appearance on the program.* [The representative from Z. University] *explained that the Winter Institute was just one aspect of the Consortium's work and that once it was over the Consortium could look at broadening links between agencies.* (Minutes of meeting, 25 June 1996)

The researcher's observational notes of the same meeting record that the discontent was even deeper than the minutes suggest. The representative from the Parliament made his points very "adamantly and forcefully". He delivered a lecture arguing "the project is bigger than *just* schools". He went on to suggest that the Parliament is an "active learning centre". He used the words "dismayed", "offended" and "alienated" to describe his feelings about the Parliamentary Office from Canberra being invited to participate in the program for the Winter Institute. The Consortium Director tried to reassure him that there was no intention to upset people. The representatives from X. and Z. Universities tried to 'patch things up' by offering comments like "perhaps we have interpreted the project in a limited way"; "it's true that the Parliament does give weight to the Consortium" and "our main focus is the project at the moment because

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[4] There were two people who represent the Parliament – they alternated from meeting to meeting. One left Parliament during the life of the Consortium and therefore ended his relationship with the Consortium.
[5] Parliamentary Education Office, Western Australia

the amount of time is critical". At this point the representative from another agency expressed her concern "diplomatically and quietly" that there was no visit to her agency scheduled as part of the program for the Winter Institute. The Project Officer placated her with a reminder that her agency had decided against a site visit and, as well, the program included a speaker with strong connections to her agency (Observation notes of meeting, 25 June 1996).

These tensions may not have occurred if the membership of the Project Management Committee had been different and more inclusive nor if the timeline for the project, imposed by the Commonwealth, enabled more time for effective deliberation. The reflections of one of the members of the outer group suggest that the active involvement of the university dominated Project Management Committee was inevitable.

> [It] *is only natural in a way. You can't say we weren't involved because it is just the dynamic of the group that C. was at X. University. Then there is the university connection and that is just logical. It is nothing to be critical of, because that is the natural dynamic of the group. You had some who hadn't had any project involvement together. They were brought in. And then you have this coordinated group who have worked together before ... so naturally there is a difficulty to break down barriers. The Consortium was organised how it had to be to operate. It had to work towards that final date.* (Interview, June 1998)

The same member observed that the agencies were like "satellites circling the fringes" of the decision-making.

The Project Management Committee was established to expedite the implementation of the citizenship education project, in the time frame required by the Commonwealth Government. This was achieved, however, an unintended consequence was the creation of an inner circle and outer circle of decision-makers. In turn, this had ramifications for the relationships with the project partners.

6.2.6   Issue: Appointing an outsider

The grant application included provision for the appointment of a Project Officer. One of the decisions made as a result of the inter-institutional struggle over the spoils of winning the grant was the Project Officer would be located at X. University and work with the Project Coordinator there, but be accountable, as well, to the Consortium Director located at Y. University.

The position of Project Officer for the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education was advertised in the *West Australian* newspaper of 13 January 1996. The university representatives of the Consortium prepared the selection criteria without consultation with the other Consortium partners. Underpinning the selection criteria was an unwritten, but essential quality required of the successful applicant. This quality was the successful applicant must be acceptable to all Consortium partners. Clearly, an applicant who was perceived as having loyalties to

one of the university partners or one of the agencies at the expense of the others was unacceptable. This was especially so because of the struggle that had already occurred between the universities. Similarly, the applicant had to have credibility in schools if teachers were to be persuaded to participate in the project. The affiliates of the Social Science Association of Western Australia were central in that the appointment could not be seen to favour one social science discipline over another. The selection panel, which was comprised of a member from each of the university partners, had to take these competing interests into account when making its selection.

The Project Coordinator reflected that the appointment of the Project Officer was a 'critical decision' in the life of the Consortium. He went on to observe that it was significant that the person who was appointed as the Project Officer had recently arrived from the eastern seaboard. She was well qualified, appropriately experienced and had excellent communication skills. Very importantly, she was acceptable to all partners in the Consortium because she was 'an outsider' and therefore regarded as neutral. She had no particular loyalties to any institution or association in Western Australia. Her appointment was non-controversial (Telephone conversation between Project Coordinator and researcher, December 1999).

The consequences of this appointment for subsequent decision-making were substantial because as often occurs in such roles the Project Officer was to become increasingly influential as the project unfolded. In the first instance, this occurred because she was immersed in the project. She was working on the project for three days a week whereas other members of the Project Management Committee and Consortium were adding their involvement onto their other work. The Project Officer's observations reflect this:

> *I really enjoyed working on the project. You look back on your work history and think 'Thank God I don't have that job any more', but I liked working in one spot and knowing I'm there three days a week and getting paid ... I really enjoyed organising the Winter Institute. That was great. I knew what I had to do. It was in manageable chunks and there was a big sigh of relief when that was all over and then I knew there was a different focus. I really liked that... And then when I was working with the teachers and going into schools. I loved that part and then working with the teachers' materials and the October Meeting. I liked the fact that there was a lot of variety in the work. Lining up the reports ... That appeals to me. I am not doing all the same thing all the time because I hate only writing or only whatever. I enjoyed it because I could use my initiative and because I felt I had some flexibility. The Management Group was there and the broad boundaries were there, but I felt that there was flexibility.* (Interview, December 1997)

The second reason for the Project Officer's growing influence as the project progressed was because she established credibility with the Project Management Committee and was trusted to make decisions. Her comments about her relationship with the Project Management Committee reflect this:

...sometimes you'd be doing your job and OK [the Project Coordinator] *was there to bounce back ideas and that was fine, but sometimes decisions did need to be made and it was just up to me to make them ... the Management Team supported me ... like being on a string bridge. They were there to support you. They weren't like a huge scaffolding that overwhelmed you. It was just there as a support to guide.* (Interview, December 1997)

The third reason for the growing influence of the Project Officer was because of the relationship that she built with the teachers participating in the project. The Project Management Committee generated a list of teachers, who were regarded as appropriate to participate in the project. The Project Officer contacted and invited teachers from the list to join the project. After the Winter Institute, she visited the teachers in their schools to support and encourage them as they designed, implemented and wrote their teaching/learning programs. The Director commented on the Project Officer's significant input:

Once P. came on board, lots of decisions that were made about how the individual teacher projects developed were made by P. after working with and talking to the teachers ... I think that was an important basis that P. had first hand knowledge of what was the situation of each different teacher and how they might be able to work to develop different projects. The role that P. played in terms of her one to one contact with the teachers in the project became very, very important in terms of what the final product was ... so in a sense it didn't matter whether the members of the Consortium actually shared the same vision of active citizenship or even the same models of what the product was going to look like at the end. If I think about it now [the consortium members] *were presented with a* fait accompli. *They were asked to comment on it, but not so much at input, more at the output*

stage. This is not intended as a criticism; to me it was just a practical thing that happened. (Interview, March 1998)

Indeed the project became the Project Officer's project.

This demonstrates the significance of the choice of Project Officer because the Project Officer played such a pivotal role in the project. Much of the work of the project was shaped by her efforts, input and interpersonal skills. Arguably, if another person had been appointed as Project Officer, the outcomes of the project would have been different, possibly substantially different. The following discussion with one of the university members of the Consortium, who was on the interview panel for the selection of the Project Officer, shows the potential influence of the person in that role:

> *E.: She had the skills. She was able to be there as sort of a central person. If she hadn't come along and we hadn't been so lucky ... if we had got one of the others appointed, it could have then easily I think been crashed.*
>
> *R.: P. was definitely crucial to the whole thing.*
>
> *E.: She was able to pull everything together and then in the end it produced more than I thought it would. At one stage I thought 'Oh goodness me!' Getting these people [teachers] in and getting up to schools and all that. To me it was looking like a recipe for disaster.* (Interview, April 1998)

Ultimately, it was not 'a recipe for disaster' because as will be described the power and influence of the Project Officer grew through the life of the project.

6.3 The subsequent phase

This phase of the life of the Consortium was characterised by the decisions that were made as the project deliverables, as outlined in the grant contract, were implemented. The work of the Consortium during this phase focused on the planning and delivery of professional development activities for the teachers involved in the project and on the preparation of a resource manual based on their work in schools. Much of the decision-making in this phase was shaped by decisions made during the establishment phase. It is posited that the project, as defined by the project deliverables, obstructed effective curriculum decision-making. Decision-making was contrived rather than democratic. There was very limited deliberation about curriculum issues, instead much of the decision-making focused on the details of the management of the project.

Again the inner circle was instrumental in this phase of the work of the Consortium. However, any attempts to deliberate about contentious issues in the inner circle were curtailed by the socio-political relationships among its members. The maintenance of social harmony took precedence over curriculum decision-making. This resulted in potentially divisive decisions being avoided or deferred. Eventually this meant the Project Officer had to

make unilateral decisions to ensure that the Commonwealth's timelines were met.

6.3.1   Issue: Agreeing to disagree

The grant for a professional development project titled, *Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners* was won, a new Consortium Director appointed, the inter-institutional issues resolved, the Project Management Committee established and the Project Officer appointed. It was time to begin detailed planning for implementing the Winter Institute, the first phase of the project. The six members of the Project Management Committee including the Project Officer, met for a two day Planning Workshop in Fremantle on Sunday, 31 March and Monday, 1 April, 1996. The Minute Secretary, who was well known to three of the members through their involvement in the *Studies of Society and Environment National Professional Development Project* was present to take notes of the proceedings.

The Consortium Director opened the workshop by explaining: "We need to do some detailed planning for the Winter Institute because of its immediacy, but also I think that we need to think of the bigger question, the bigger picture of the whole project... To a large extent what we decide for the Winter Institute will carry on through the rest of the project". (Audio tape, March 1996). Indeed, as will be described, it was

what was left undecided that was to carry on for the rest of the project. A little later in her introduction to the Planning Workshop the Consortium Director went on to say:

> *I think arising from or perhaps preceding everything we really need to have some agreement ... what do we actually mean by active citizens? At first I thought how can we possibly decide that? But I think we need to decide within the parameters of the project what we mean by it. Because if we are not sure about what we are trying to do ; what we want the project to achieve in schools, then I think that we are going to be sort of rudderless. ... We've actually got the title Active Citizenship and I think that's the idea that we have to work on.* (Audio tape, March 1996)

Next the Consortium Director shared her understanding of active citizenship:

> *To my mind active citizenship implies they have knowledge of various different processes, but as well, it goes beyond that. It implies that we are thinking of student-centred approaches to learning. We're thinking about the wider involvement of schools in their wider communities ... and we're thinking about issues based content.*
>
> *So there are various aspects to this. Everyone knows the debate between the wide version and narrower version of citizenship education and I don't think that's the way we need to go. I think that we all agree that there does need to be a knowledge base.* (Audio tape, March 1996)

At this point, the Consortium Director distributed an exercise about the qualities of active citizenship (see Figure 6.3 below). She asked members of the Project Management Committee to complete the exercise as the basis for a discussion about citizenship. The discussion about this

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exercise was very significant because it highlighted the contentious nature of the concepts of citizenship and active citizenship. It was at this point that the Project Management Committee was poised to build the platform for its curriculum decision-making.

Figure 6.3: Exercise on active citizenship used in the Planning Workshop

Statements about 'active citizenship'   Your responses

Being an active citizen means:	Agree strongly				Disagree strongly
Knowing a lot about the political system	5	4	3	2	1
Showing care and consideration for others	5	4	3	2	1
Being active in community life	5	4	3	2	1
Supporting the government	5	4	3	2	1
Exercising your civil rights	5	4	3	2	1
Carrying out your civic responsibilities	5	4	3	2	1
Becoming a citizen of Australia	5	4	3	2	1

This exercise is also significant because it was the only time in the eighteen months of the life of the Project Management Committee that its members attempted to define the key terms used in citizenship education. During the life of the Project Management Committee there were over ninety hours of formal Project Management Committee meetings and over forty hours of formal Consortium meetings. This discussion about the qualities of active citizenship generated by the completion of this exercise lasted for seventy minutes.

There were heated and unresolved debates about two of these items in particular. These debates about the key terms are significant to the present study because of the ways in which decision-making was avoided.

The first item about which there was a lively and unresolved debate was about 'being active in community life'. This often intense and heated discussion is very significant for the decision-making of the Project Management Committee because, as one of the members reminded the group during the debate, the project itself was called *Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners*. As has been described already, this title was a consequence of a unilateral decision made by the grant writers – a decision about which there was never any discussion, but which was now part of the context in which the debate took place. The following extract from the audio tape captures some of the discussion:

> *E.: It depends on what you mean by active. I think that you can be active and at home just contemplating issues. Active doesn't necessarily mean getting flags and waving them outside Parliament.*
>
> *M.: (Voice rising) You can be actively involved without actually taking any action? Don't you think?*
>
> *E.: Yep! Active doesn't necessarily mean running around doing things. It can be reflecting on government decisions. You are ..*
>
> *C.: Coming to a judgement ...*
>
> *E.: Coming to a judgement on you own ...*

P.: ...and talking about it with other people so that it becomes part of what you do in society. It's issues that you are interested in.

(General murmured agreement that issues are important.)

R.: To me a minimum would be voting in local government elections.

E.: Well, I haven't always voted in local government elections ... I just feel that there are a lot of people in society who can be very informed and aware but not necessarily doing anything. But in a sense that is a contribution to society ...

C.: But surely ...

M.: I was just wondering how ... if you've got someone who's interested, but they're not actually getting out and doing anything ...

E.: That's a contribution ... That's tacitly consenting to what's going on.

N.: The intention is there ...

E.: Locke! That's Locke!

N.: If the issue or situation actually was in agreement with the person's values then they are not going to immediately come to a position of: That's terrible! That's horrible! We can't have that! ... they're actually coming to it from a base of having kept up-to-date and they've thought about issues, discussed issues ... so when it comes to a point when they become active they are in a position where they can apply quite a bit of information they have obtained. They've thought about issues.

E.: Yes.

C.: In a sense are you saying E. that the silent majority is active?

E.: It can be. I don't think society would ever work without a silent majority or without tacit consent.

N.:   *They are active in their minds.*

P.:   *There's a borderline ... between tacit consent and just...*

R.:   *Apathy.*

E.:   *There is, but I'm not suggesting...*

R.:   *Being active in community life implies all sorts of things to me ... helping at the school* (P. agrees in the background), *with the swimming team ... It's not only about the political or parliamentary system. It's that whole notion of community life* (P. continues to agree) *... and I don't know that you can just sit around and contemplate your community and do nothing.*

M.:   *It's being involved.*

C.:   *Does active mean ... in a sense what you have said is that you don't vote in local elections.*

E.:   *Mostly, occasionally I haven't.*

C.:   *When you get turf wickets at Southern Park to protect you've got to be active in local government elections. In a sense I'm active in that I'm supporting a particular candidate for a particular reason. I'm active if I know that the local government elections are on, but I'm not really interested in the issues so I shall remain silent. The silent majority. Is that what you're saying?*

E.:   *Well you might be satisfied with what's going on ... I just think that the word 'active' frightens people. We make a rod for our own back when most people see 'active' they see flag waving and strikes and that type of thing ... I don't want to make a big issue out of it. It's just that I think being active is a broader concept than what we normally associate with it.*

M.:   *But we have said that our project is Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners so we do have to take on board the idea of active.* (Audio tape of meeting, 31 March 1996)

Significantly, this discussion about the term active citizenship, which is used in the project title, did not take place when the grant application was written. Neither had any of the documentation from the Department of Employment, Education and Training clarified these terms. The discussion continued:

E.: (Talking over M.) *I'm not denying that ...*

M.: (Talking over E.) *It doesn't mean ...*

E.: (Talking over M.) *I'm just saying that there's another component ...*

R.: (Talking over E. and M.) *But I also believe if we don't take on that, then really we are not going to break any new ground. At the present there is in the syllabus and there are lots of materials out there that already exist in terms of political systems, parliamentary education and so on. The resources are there. Certainly people may not use them as well as they might but if we don't take them onto the next step ... which to me is like the social action dimension.*

E.: *I think we are breaking new ground by comprehending that it's broader too, instead of saying that it's about ...*

C.: *I'm not disagreeing with E. ... I'm just saying that I think we need to be clear that active can be sitting down and being reflective and the difference between that and apathy is an interesting one.*

N.: *It's taking cognisance of people's life situations. If you're working you can't be involved in school ... you can respond to the school if they request it...*

R.: *But what if everyone just sits at home and contemplates, although obviously there's a place for that, ... we wouldn't have a community.*

(A long silence followed.)

E.: (Mutters) *If everyone was waving flags we wouldn't have community life either...* (Audio tape of meeting, 31 March 1996)

This variety of understandings of active citizenship is reflected, too, in the interviews of the members of the Project Management Committee. The member of the Project Management Committee, who had defended his notion of a contemplative active citizen, recalled:

> *I remember that discussion ... I don't see active as someone who is necessarily doing it all. To me an active citizen may be a well-informed citizen who just votes and does things in their normal way in life. You have to let a lot of things pass to the keeper. You just see what is going on. But I had the feeling that there are some members who want active citizenship to be part of school governance ... but in reality schools don't run that way. The teachers don't want them to run that way. I didn't want that to ever be at the core of active citizenship education. ... I saw active as not even a necessary word. It's just a bit of a catch phrase. Whereas I thought that most of the others in the Project Management Committee took the word active to be fairly essential and important.* (Interview, 21 April 1998)

He continued:

> *My understanding of citizenship really goes back to what I call the Aristotlean position and that is a person's engagement with the state. It is their responsibilities and action in relation to the state. And, I would argue, the state, essentially the government structure, has obligations to the citizen, too. To me it is a political notion that is the primary essential facet of it. And is where I think that the citizenship debate has become so expansive that basically anybody can take on citizenship. It's just I think that it has lost its original meaning.* (Interview, April 1998)

Contrast E.'s more precise definition with the Consortium Director's explanation of active citizenship:

> *For me active citizenship is really a very wide term in that I think it involves processes, pedagogies, it involves some knowledge, it certainly involves values and attitudes ... I think that it is important that kids do know about the structures and institutions of power and how decisions are made formally and the processes by which decisions are made, but I think to start at that point is fairly unrealistic if you are taking a classroom perspective. For instance I think that you should start encouraging students to become active citizens from the minute they go to school ... it starts just with their relations with their other class members, the way that they interact with those class members ... and then broadening out to understand the school within the community, how they might interact within the community, how they might interact with different organizations that they may be involved in the community such as scouts .. and then of course looking at the broader scene, state scene, unions, national scene and global - a globally active citizen ... I think it* [active citizenship] *is a term which embraces a very wide perspective of actions or possible actions and possible fears and influences.*
> (Interview, March 1998)

The Project Officer described active citizenship in the following way:

> *... people being involved in their local community decision-making ... There were some members who saw active citizenship more in terms of an understanding of the political process consistent with some who have a good knowledge of the political process, the fundamentals of democracy and how the government is structured ... I think it's more than that.* (Interview, December 1997)

The Education Department representative on the Project Management Committee had another view of 'active citizenship':

... active citizenship is working with children in a school setting and where I am trying to promote within them a concept of what it means to be a person worthy of the society in which they live. Worthy in the sense of having contributed to other people in the community in a way which is not necessarily for personal gain. It is an empathy that they have with their fellow citizens and that can be manifested in actual physical action, but it can also be manifested in the fact that they think about other citizens ... if they are driven to action ... they are people who will think what is best for the collective society. (Interview, April 1998)

The following anecdote given by the Project Coordinator illustrates his view of 'active citizenship' being about community participation:

In September of every year the cricket club holds its general meeting to set fees. Collecting fees from cricketers is the same as all sporting associations; it is incredibly difficult. Every year we do it. We'll set the fees for $200 this year and everyone has to pay $60 to start with before they can be selected and then $120 by the end of November. And every year that I was president someone would come to me, just before the second payment was due and say, 'How come these fees are so high?' And invariably I would say to them, 'Did you come to the September meeting?' And they would say, 'No.' I would say, 'Well I didn't set those fees. Your colleagues did that. They came and they voted. You didn't.'

To me this is the essence of citizenship. It is being there participating and making decisions ... I see the study of institutions as only a small part. You study institutions, not for the sake of studying institutions, you study them to see what role they have in the decision-making process and how you go about influencing that decision-making is important. (Interview, November 1997)

These explanations highlight the varied understandings that the members of the Project Management Committee had of the key terms underpinning

their curriculum decision-making. The varied understandings help to explain why there was disagreement in the Planning Workshop.

It is noteworthy that during the course of the two days of the Planning Workshop none of the members of the Project Management Group consulted the six copies of the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* report, which were stacked in the centre of the table around which the members sat. The reports were not opened. Instead the members relied on their own constructs of citizenship, which had been shaped by their experiences, beliefs and values.

The values-based nature of people's perceptions about citizenship was very evident in the second item about which there was an unresolved debate during the Planning Workshop. The debate was about whether 'becoming a citizen of Australia' is a quality of an active citizen. This generated a vigorous debate, which was of particular personal significance for one member. The following excerpt captures some of the debate:

> R.: *Well I know someone who's not* [an Australian citizen] *and he's a very well informed and active member of his community. So I put it as 1.*
>
> C.: *I think there's confusion there between nationalism and citizenship... It's me!*
>
> N.: *I thought that the body language showed that. I recently saw something that not only is Deakin* [University]

involved in this, but the Department of Immigration is heavily involved in this too. They sent out to schools this information on how to become a citizen ... if you're born here it's something you are given at birth. It's not something that you even have to necessarily think about. But a person actually going to a ceremony actually has five or six things that they have to pledge allegiance to .... there needs to be a thinking about it in some way... because its just taken for granted.

C.: *But you see I belong to a generation where Australian citizenship was taken from us. When they stopped dual citizenship for British citizens. I could have had an Australian passport at one stage, but now I have to go and get...*

M.: *When did they stop that?*

C.: *In 1970. In fact, a friend of ours, a Scots woman who came out when she was three, went to get an Australian passport and visa when she was 76 Been here, married, brought up kids, had become a grandmother - you know the whole thing - now my point about that is that its based on a national identity not on a contribution to citizenship.*

P.: *What other different categories are there - like there's residents?*

C.: *You've got to have resident status which is what I've got because I came out when I was seven. Nearly all of my schooling and certainly all of my working life and contributions to the community have been here - so I'm Australian ...When I go back to Scotland I would say that I'm Australian.*

M.: *What kind of passport do you have?*

C.: *A British one - but I can have a British passport even if I become an Australian.*

E.: *I think that this nation is incredibly generous to people who won't take out citizenship to be honest. I look at Canada and I know the tremendous disadvantages that were imposed on people who weren't Canadian citizens. You couldn't get a job in a university. (Looking at C.) You couldn't have your job in Canada. It is very tough.*

R.: Is there dual citizenship?

E.: They have landed immigrant status ... The problem is that most other nations in the world are much stricter than we are. Now we have maintained in my opinion an incredibly generous and fair version of citizen status for our residents.

N.: That's my opinion, too.

C.: I would disagree with that. I think basically the British are much more open about citizenship than the Australians are. I speak as someone ...

E.: I couldn't go and get a job in England now.

C.: A British person can't get a job here either without getting a working permit.

E.: It works both ways.

C.: My point is that in the process of doing this there are people who have been disadvantaged by it who feel Australian in terms of nationality...

E.: But Australians are being disadvantaged too because we've been more generous that most other nations.

C.: How have we been disadvantaged?

E.: Well because we give everyone who comes full slather without having to necessarily sign up and make a commitment to the laws of the nation.

C.: In terms of the time that people have to be here yes I can agree - what is it two years that you have to be here? It's seven years in Singapore....

E.: It's a very delicate one but in a sense it flows into this notion of world citizenship...

C.: I remember a young Aboriginal women at the Australian Curriculum Studies Conference in Melbourne last year ... she was actually talking to McIntyre who'd just been making statements at the national level about Australian citizenship and she said 'there are certain things that I am born to. I am a daughter, I am a sister, I am an aunt

> *and I am an Aboriginal, but I become a citizen and an*
> *Australian citizen if I want to be.'* It's a matter of choice.
> (Audio tape of meeting, March 1996)

This debate further underlines the confusing and contested nature of citizenship. This extract highlights two of the many constructs of citizenship. The first focuses on nationality or membership of a nation state. The second focuses on the civic republicans construct whereby passive forms of participation are inadequate.

The very personal nature of this debate is shown in C.'s recollections of it more than a year later. He recalled:

> *E. and I had a heated debate about the notion of Australians*
> *and their nationality and citizenship; and that you had to be*
> *an Australian to be a citizen of Australia. To me that is a*
> *very old fashioned 19th century belief based on nationalism,*
> *your national identity of being a citizen. I feel very strongly*
> *about the work and the contribution that I have made as a*
> *citizen to Australia.* (Interview, November 1997)

When E. was asked during his interview whether he recalled the interchange between C. and himself about becoming a citizen of Australia, he replied:

> *I do remember it. From then on I have played that one very*
> *close to the chest ... I suppose I want the Aussie component to*
> *be fairly strong and C. wants retention of some of the*
> *symbols that I don't think fit easily with Australia. He wants*
> *the flag and God Save the Queen, probably the monarchy,*
> *those sort of things ... I don't drastically want a new system*
> *of government. I just want our symbols to be right and he*
> *wants a set of symbols that I don't think are applicable ...*
> (Interview, April 1998)

The debates about these two items are significant for two of reasons. First it highlights that people's values and experiences underpin their views on citizenship. This in turn makes the debate a very personal, and sometimes, emotive one. The Consortium Director provided the following explanation for the different views that members of the Project Management Committee had of citizenship:

> *I think that people were coming from different bases and I think that was reflected partly in whether they were essentially teachers or had a background in teaching at high school level or whether they were essentially academics.* (Interview, March 1998)

Certainly people's views on citizenship are shaped by their values, their knowledge of political theory and their experiences. Some of the members of the Consortium reflected on their childhood when asked what they considered shaped their views on citizenship. For example, one spoke of the influence of her father. "My father always talked politics around the table. His view was very, very one sided though ... DLP [Democratic Labor Party], Catholic Church ...' (Interview, December 1997). The same member reflected on the influence of her student days:

> *There was more of a left focus at uni. I didn't study politics ... I had a lot of friends who were heavily involved in university politics ... National Union of Students ... It was the 70's and it was very active. There were sit-ins and marches and things like that. My friends were active ... I was a bit too afraid.* (Interview, December 1997)

Another reflected on the influence of his father and student days, too:

> *My father instilled in me, probably not deliberately, but by watching his actions. He was someone who didn't just say things. He got things done ... through the church that he belonged to. He built a lot of aged people's homes. He gave a lot of his time. It was a within thing.*
>
> *... Even in my university days I did things rather than talk about them ... I was involved in a group called Volunteer Task Force, which was a group of young people. We'd do basic tasks for people who couldn't afford to ... removal, clean up a garden ... In my student days I became involved in the city council ... I was publications editor at college. We did things. We just didn't fly the flag stuff.* (Interview, April 1998)

Another member referred to the influence of being "brought up as a strict Presbyterian ... there's a very strong sense of individuality; individual rights ... the responsibilities of the individual as well. I always believed an individual needs to be able to make his own decisions" (Interview, November 1997). He went on to describe how his study of Political History, and in particular of the Indian National Movement, shaped his understanding of citizenship. Studies at school and university shaped another member's understanding of citizenship. "I see [citizenship] a bit more narrowly because I grew up learning about it, not only civics at school, but at university, too. We did Aristotle, Locke, Hobbes, Mill. They were all on about what a person did in relation to government" (Interview, April 1998).

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One member referred to her experiences as a Social Studies teacher as being an influence on her understanding of citizenship. She explained "... being involved with kids at school ... my understanding of what education is about ... also from my reading and research" (Interview, March 1998).

The second reason for the significance of the Project Management Committee's debate about citizenship to the present study is that it highlights the importance of group cohesiveness. The Committee did not make a decision on these issues despite the Consortium Director arguing in her introduction to the Planning Workshop for the need to have agreement about the meaning of the project. The reason the debate was left unresolved is because it was potentially too divisive. As discussed, already all of the members of the Project Management Committee, except the Project Officer, had worked in other contexts together. It was likely that they would do so again after the completion of the project. Therefore, it was important to maintain the working relationship beyond the life of the project. To continue the debate about these contentious issues may have adversely affected future working relationships.

Another factor contributing to the cohesiveness of the group is that there are shared interests amongst several members of the group. E. observed in his interview "we have similar interests, sporting and writing histories" (Interview, April 1998). Often there were references to these topics during the social 'chit chat' prior to the commencement of meetings.

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Frequently the topics were E.'s West Coast Eagles Football Club and Tennis Federation of Australia neckties or the performance of the Western Australian teams in the Australian Football League especially in relation to the performance of teams from the Project Officer's home state (Observational Notes of Project Management Committee meetings). The Project Officer's view confirmed the significance of group cohesion. She observed:

> *When we had that discussion about citizenship at the Trade Winds[6] ... when we disagreed about something we really just agreed to disagree. ... there was a quite a lot of difference ... but the differences weren't that great that they caused disharmony. It was just a general respect ... everybody is going to have a different point of view. We really didn't want to upset each other because we liked each other.* (Interview, December 1997)

This illustrates the need to maintain social harmony was very important to the group. The Project Coordinator referred to the consequences of the importance of maintaining cohesion in the group:

> *... the debate got very heated at the Trade Winds and we all pulled back. Why did we pull back from it? We pulled back from it because socially we liked the people we were arguing with and we didn't want to disrupt that social cohesion. Social cohesion became more important to the group than thrashing out the issues of citizenship. That really was what became the important issue. So social cohesion was what kept us together but it was also a barrier in making decisions.* (Interview, November 1997)

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6   The Trade Winds Hotel in Fremantle was venue for the Planning Workshop.

As the Project Coordinator observed, the cohesion of the group became a constraint on decision-making. The issues were left unresolved or officially deferred to another time. In reality, the deferment meant the Consortium Director and Project Officer were left to make more and more decisions. The decisions were reported to the Project Management Committee and the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship, but rarely debated. This resulted in fewer people being included in the decision-making. A circle within the inner circle was created. Significantly, most of the content of Project Management Committee meetings subsequent to the Planning Workshop was of an uncontroversial administrative or organisational nature. Not only had the grant contract become the blue print – the platform - for the project, but also there was tacit agreement to avoid controversial discussions within the Project Management Committee.

6.3.2 Issue: Agreeing on professional development

The focus of the second day of the Planning Workshop was the Winter Institute. Some of the details were in place already as the consequences of earlier decisions. The grant contract described this first phase of the proposed professional development as a "five day intensive program on citizenship education". It was part of the 'deliverables' and was non-negotiable. X. and Y. Universities had agreed that the Winter Institute would be conducted at Y. University.

The debate about citizenship was sidelined by tacit consent after the first day of the Planning Workshop. Professional development took its place. Several of the members of the Project Management Committee had been involved in the planning and presentation of a similar professional development workshop in January 1996. As the Project Coordinator observed there was a shared experience of the provision of professional development.

> *I think that there was a culture of professional development in this state that the project sort of latches onto. We have had three years under National Professional Development Projects funded by DEETYA. There was Y. University and M., in particular, who had very strong involvement with the Asia Education Foundation. In fact we used the model in our project – the Asia Education Foundation model. There was a very strong culture in professional development. There was also shared culture and experience and therefore it was non-divisive. It is very comfortable to talk about professional development because we all believe in professional development. We might disagree about some strategies but you don't disagree about the need for it. The thing that we could discuss comfortably was professional development. I dare say that most of the discussions we had were about the nature of professional development rather than citizenship for that reason. I think that the culture of professional development was there given the political circumstances were there. It became a safe haven to discuss. I don't think it was conscious but I think it was there amongst us.*
> (Interview, November 1997)

The atmosphere was congenial as the members of the Project Management Committee contributed suggestions about the structure and organisation of the Winter Institute. Suggestions for possible speakers and presenters were made in an open forum. As well, suggestions on

broad topics such as 'Perspectives on Citizenship', 'Values and Citizenship', 'Youth Perspectives' and 'Where does Citizenship Fit in the Curriculum?' were made. The meeting however, avoided any discussion of the actual content of the proposed sessions. The potentially controversial content could be left to the presenters. Even the final choice of speakers and presenters was left chiefly to the Consortium Director assisted by the Project Officer (Minutes of Planning Workshop, April 1996). In part, this was a pragmatic decision as speakers had to be contacted and their participation confirmed. As well, there was an acceptance that this was to be Y. University's 'show'. Eventually many of the speakers were people known to the Consortium Director through her professional networks. This in turn shaped the nature, direction and content of the Winter Institute. This illustrates how decisions made early in the life of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, such as the change of the Director of the Consortium from C. to M. and the location of the Winter Institute at Y. University had long term consequences.

6.3.3   Issue: Maintaining the cohesion

The Project Management Committee had deferred the discussion about citizenship because, as has been discussed, it was potentially divisive. It was June and the Winter Institute was approaching. The Consortium Director and Project Officer needed a clear explanation of active

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citizenship to guide the teachers in their work following the Winter Institute. The Consortium Director sought input from the Consortium.

The Agenda for the Consortium Meeting of 25 June, 1996 included 'Active Citizenship Statement' as the final item. All the members of the Project Management Committee, members of two of the agencies and the member representing some of the non-government schools were at the meeting. Within the last five minutes of the meeting the Director tabled the 'Rationale of Citizenship' (Appendix C) and asked if any comments could be sent to her as soon as possible "so we can head into the Winter Institute with a clear agreement on how we view citizenship" (Minutes of meeting, 25 June, 1996 and Observational Notes). It is unclear from where this 'Rationale of Citizenship' came. The opening statement of the rationale, "within the parameters of the current project, the management committee has agreed on the following statements to define our view of active citizenship", is clearly not true. The Project Management Committee had not reached any agreement, but perhaps the Director and Project Officer had. The 'Rationale of Citizenship' was not discussed at this meeting or at any subsequent meeting. Furthermore, members' written comments, if they were made, were not circulated. There was no subsequent opportunity for any comments to be discussed for there to be a clear agreement in time for the Winter Institute. It seems that this strategy did not result in a decision. Furthermore, there was no statement

about the Consortium's view of active citizenship provided during the Winter Institute.

This 'strategy' to invite written comment on a potentially contentious subject was employed to avoid conflict. It suggested there was agreement in the Project Management Committee. To some extent it includes those from the outer circle, because at least they have been consulted. However, this strategy avoids the possible divisive consequences of an irresolvable debate being held in an open forum. The members of the outer circle did not have the same loyalties to each other as the members of the inner circle. They did not share the same sense of ownership of the project or the Consortium. If the debate had been held in an open forum it may have been more rigorous and, therefore potentially more divisive, than the debate in the Project Management Committee.

The Project Coordinator explained what might have happened if the issues of citizenship had been debated within the broader Consortium:

> *I don't think that the gloves would have been on for long. Some of the issues are quite contentious ... It would have been interesting if we had opened it up to the whole group. I think if the whole group had been there we might not have got the project together. I think the project got together because it was the inner group that did it and that inner group needed to stick together to keep the whole thing functioning.* (Interview, November 1997)

Clearly, it was important to maintain the cohesion of the Consortium and to give the impression that there was accord in the Project Management Committee.

6.3.4 Issue: Deciding not to decide

The Project Officer was immersed in preparations for the Winter Institute, as well as being mindful of the activities that were to follow. The intention was to encourage teachers to design and implement teaching/learning programs in citizenship education in their schools or classes as a result of their participation in the Winter Institute. Later in the project, the teachers were to write up their teaching/learning programs for inclusion in *Active Citizenship: A Resource Manual for Teachers*. This was to be the end product of the project. The Project Officer was keen to include a framework for the development of curriculum materials in the Winter Institute program. She tabled a draft format for the proposed curriculum development at the Project Management Committee Meeting of 2 July 1996. One of the university representatives was opposed to it arguing "the format would stifle creativity". The member of the Project Management Committee, who was opposed to the proposed rational approach to curriculum development, recalled in his interview "I don't think that you can talk about curriculum like that ... you're actually using a dictatorial method of implementation. I think that there is a contradiction in terms, but I don't think the others [in the Management

Committee] saw the contradiction, but I certainly saw it" (Interview, November 1997).

It was finally agreed "at this stage nothing will be handed out" (Minutes of Project Management Committee meeting, 2 July 1996). In developments that mirrored the debate about the definition of active citizenship, the decision was to make no decision. Again this was because of the importance of maintaining the social cohesion of the group. And, again the Project Management Committee neither discussed the curriculum development framework again nor made any subsequent decision about it. This was to have consequences much later in the life of the project.

6.3.5 Issue: Confusing or clarifying the debate

The chief focus of the work of the Project Management Group and the Consortium between April and July 1996 was the organisation of the Winter Institute and 'signing up' teachers to participate. The Project Management Committee meetings centred on administrative details such as who to invite as guests to the Winter Institute, format of participation certificates, receipts for registration fees, catering, accommodation, chartering buses, the purchase of gifts for speakers, and, product and resource displays. The Consortium Director and Project Officer made contact with the guest speakers and with teachers who expressed interest

in attending the Winter Institute. The Consortium Director and Project Officer finalised the content of the program. The agencies were invited to distribute publicity materials and to prepare for teachers to visit their sites as part of the program. This was the period in which the members of the outer circle had the most direct involvement (Minutes of Project Management Committee meetings of 13 June, 20 June and 2 July, 1996).

The participants in the five day Winter Institute were presented with multifarious constructs of citizenship and encouraged to explore a range of issues related to citizenship education. The first of the key-note speakers, the Chief Justice of Western Australia, David Malcolm, provided an historical and legal overview of citizenship in Australia and the second, the Honourable Fred Chaney, a former minister of a coalition government, explored the notion of social citizenship with an emphasis on active community participation. Associate Professor Harry Phillips, from Edith Cowan University, provided an overview of the evolution of citizenship. A panel presented views on environmental, indigenous, multicultural, women's and global perspectives of citizenship. A panel of young people presented their views on citizenship. As well, the program included presentations of resources and ideas for classroom activities. Other sessions included the exploration of where citizenship education 'fits' into the Society and Environment curriculum and the place of values in citizenship education. Participants also visited a number of sites with relevance to

citizenship education, most of which were associated with members of the Consortium (The Winter Institute Program of 15–19 July 1996; Project Evaluation Report, June 1997).

The participants at the Winter Institute were bombarded with a bewildering variety of perspectives and issues. They were told taxes buy us civilization; things can be changed by cooperation; equality does not mean that you treat all people equally – affirmative action is needed; citizenship is a male construct; the carer should be seen as the quintessential citizen; schools play very little part in active citizenship; citizenship is something we don't think about until we don't have it; direct experience is the way to go; respect and understanding makes people better citizens; there's a need to involve children in real decision-making; we cannot assume that we have a common values base; we need to re-structure schools and teach differently; the emphasis needs to shift from independent to interdependent; citizenship education is not about making decisions, it's about making informed decisions; citizenship is a mix of rights, obligations and responsibilities; having respect makes better citizens; don't sit back, stick your head out; humans have an obligation to look after the non-human world; and, even wombats have votes! (Researcher's notes, Winter Institute, July 1996). It is little wonder that some of the teacher participants noted that 'there was a lot of information' (Project Officer's Report, 30 July, 1996). This selection of statements from the keynote addresses and workshops highlights the

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diverse and sometimes radical interpretations of citizenship and citizenship education presented during the Winter Institute.

At no time during the Winter Institute nor in the subsequent curriculum development meetings was the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* report discussed with the participating teachers. Some speakers, including the Chief Justice made reference to it seeming to assume that everyone had read it. Instead most of the invited speakers and some of the members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education presented their interpretations of and visions for citizenship education at the Winter Institute.

The Committee left the decision-making on contentious issues pertaining to the Winter Institute to the Consortium Director and the Project Officer. This combined with the Institute being held at the university, at which the Consortium Director was employed, shaped the content of the professional development. Y. University is generally regarded as the least conservative university in Western Australia – the content of the Winter Institute reflected this. Another result of the Project Management Committee leaving more of the decision making to the Consortium Director and Project Officer meant that their profiles were raised. Increasingly, the project became theirs. The Project Coordinator, who had stepped down from chairing the Consortium,

recalled "I made tea in the background. The Winter Institute was M.'s show" (Conversation with the researcher).

The inability of the Project Management Committee to agree on a clear statement about active citizenship affected the breadth of the content included in the Winter Institute. Because the Project Management Committee avoided the issue, the participants were presented with a smorgasbord of constructs of citizenship and ideas about citizenship education at the Winter Institute. They were expected to make their selections.

A member of the Project Management Committee observed:

> *I had a sense that in the Winter Institute we started with what we knew and especially with what the people in the inner circle knew and then we explored other avenues, the Aboriginal perspective, the environment and citizenship, the female view of citizenship. We tried to take the teachers to a point, but they were starting at a different point ... I think we should have been starting with the classroom and debating concepts of citizenship. Even E. started with political theories. You probably needed to start at actual citizenship and move through Whereas the people ... I don't think there was a session on Whereas the people... That's what we should have been doing. We should have been starting where the teachers were.* (Interview, November 1997)

The Project Officer reflected on the content and outcomes of the Winter Institute:

Everyone had something different to give and that is why they were all included in [the Winter Institute]. *They were experts in their field so in a sense they were bringing their expertise .... but the teachers were coming in cold .... they didn't have the same understanding .... They didn't pick up on the pedagogical approaches that are appropriate for an active citizen. Some did, but there were a lot who didn't and the ones who didn't weren't ready for it. They just weren't ready for it ... I think, and this is not intended to be a criticism, we made a fundamental error when we planned the Winter Institute. We made the assumption that the teachers were at the same point as most of us were and so we explored various interpretations of citizenship and it happens at this sort of level. I don't mean this in an arrogant way saying that we know better than the teachers — it is just that we have been immersed in citizenship and active citizenship and immigration and all of that, probably much more than most in the project. I think that we expected the teachers to be where we were. We missed our target with many of them.* (Interview, December 1997)

The deferral or lack of decision-making on the part of the Project Management Committee was a constraint on the outcomes of the project. The Committee's unwillingness to clarify the issues and its failure to recognise that the teachers were unfamiliar with the debates about citizenship education, resulted in confusion about active citizenship. This confusion was to be reflected in some of the teachers' teaching/learning programs.

6.3.6   Issue: Incredible interpretations

After the Winter Institute, the participants returned to their schools to plan and implement their ideas, which had been generated by the Institute. They were encouraged to design and trial teaching/learning

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programs focused on citizenship education. The Project Officer

supported them through telephone contact and visits to the schools. This

contact nurtured a growing relationship between the Project Officer and

the teacher participants. At the end of this phase, the teachers were to

bring their programs and stories of their implementation in their

classrooms to a meeting in October.

The Project Officer described the purpose of the October meeting as:

> *...to bring back the teachers who were involved in the*
> *development of curriculum materials on citizenship*
> *education so that they had a sense of the larger project.*
> *Also, it was intended that the meeting increase teachers'*
> *motivation for the project by allowing them time to talk with*
> *others and to share ideas in an atmosphere that was removed*
> *from interruptions* [of a school]. [The Consortium Director]
> *also explained that this professional development model*
> *emphasised the importance of providing an opportunity for*
> *teachers to talk together and to allow time to write up*
> *materials connected with the project.* (Minutes of Advisory
> Committee Meeting between the Western Australian
> Consortium for Citizenship Education and DEETYA, 31
> October, 1996)

The so-called 'October Meeting', was held on 31 October and 1

November 1996 at a function centre in Cottesloe, a coastal suburb of

Perth. Thirteen of the sixteen teachers involved in this phase of the

project, six members of the Consortium, two people from one of the

agencies associated with the Consortium, two teachers from the School

of Isolated and Distance Education and a representative of the

Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs attended the October Meeting.

The teacher participants had not been given a clear explanation of active citizenship or any guidelines about how they were to write up their materials. This was despite the efforts of the Project Officer to obtain direction from the Project Management Committee. These decisions had been left to the teachers because of the socio-political dynamics within the Project Management Committee and the Consortium.

Through her visits to schools and telephone contact with the teachers in the project, the Project Officer had an overview of the variety of ways in which the teachers had interpreted citizenship education. Therefore, she began the second session of the two day October Meeting by describing that she was "blown away by the incredible ways that citizenship had been interpreted by the participants" in the project. The Project Officer needed to provide a clear explanation to the teachers because of the varied interpretations that they had made of citizenship education. Some of the teaching/learning programs the teachers had implemented were very broad interpretations of citizenship education. Some had interpreted citizenship education to be anything involving decision-making. Some programs did not reflect citizenship education at all. Therefore, if the collection of programs to be included in the resource manual were to focus on active citizenship, as required by the project

deliverables, the Project Officer had to seize the initiative. She had not been able to get direction from the Project Management Committee.

The Project Officer went on to suggest that it would be helpful to narrow down the interpretation of citizenship education without oversimplifying it. At this point in the October Meeting, she provided her explanation of 'active citizenship for teachers'. The Project Officer displayed an overhead transparency which described "active citizenship for teachers" as being about "arousing interest in citizenship issues; being informed about formal and informal decision-making structures that exist in Australia and globally; developing a critical understanding of issues related to citizenship; and, encouraging students to be active citizens" (Researcher's notes of 31 October 1996). No formal discussion of this explanation was invited.

None of the members of the Project Management Committee or the Consortium present at the October Meeting was likely to challenge the Project Officer's explanation of active citizenship in this open forum. Nor were they likely to challenge her on whether she had the power to make this decision. It was important to provide a united front in the presence of the teachers and, especially, with the representative from the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs present. One of the members of the Management Committee commented that he had been surprised when the Project Officer had

provided the explanation of active citizenship at the October Meeting (in a conversation with the researcher, November 1996). His surprise was not so much about the explanation itself, but rather that the Project Management Committee had neither sanctioned nor discussed it. Neither the members of the Project Management Committee nor the Consortium formally discussed the definition of active citizenship in any meeting subsequent to the October Meeting. It was a *fait accompli*.

Similarly, the Project Officer was concerned about the ways in which some of the teachers were planning to structure and present their programs. Again, she had unsuccessfully sought direction from the Project Management Committee Again the Project Officer seized the initiative. She presented the teachers participating in the October Meeting with a *Writer's Manual*. It included a framework for the development of curriculum materials. Again there was no discussion about this model at the October Meeting. It was important to present a united front.

A major consequence of the Project Management Committee's unwillingness to confront potentially divisive issues was an increase in the influence of the Project Officer. Through default, she was compelled to make unilateral decisions if the project were to deliver the appropriate product on time. The Project Officer had won the teachers' trust and respect through her support of them in their schools. She was very

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highly regarded by participants in the project (Independent Evaluator's Report, June 1997). The October Meeting clearly signalled that the project belonged to the Project Officer.

6.3.7 Issue: Confusion and disintegration

After the October Meeting the teachers participating in the program returned to their schools to complete writing up their teaching/learning programs. As before, the Project Officer assisted and supported them throughout this process. A meeting was held in April 1997 for Consortium members to review the draft programs. Copies of the teachers' programs, which had been amended and 'cleaned up' by the Project Officer, were distributed to members of the Consortium "for feedback about the proposed layout and any glaring areas that will need to be rectified" (Project Officer's Monthly Report, April 1997). Five members of the Consortium (all but one were members of the Project Management Committee) met to provide feedback on the teachers' programs. The Independent Evaluator for the project observed the meeting.

The meeting began with some humorous comments, but quickly settled to a discussion of each teacher's program. N. observed "these are interesting strategies, but they don't address the real issues. Some of these programs are about issues not about active citizenship". The

Independent Evaluator for the project commented "it is a concern that active citizenship has not been picked up by more of the teachers'. R. noted 'some [programs] are more civics than active citizenship". She asked whether a particular program was "*really* citizenship". The Project Officer suggested that it "passes the test" because it is based "on cooperation which is a cornerstone of citizenship". There was general agreement with the Project Officer. There was no attempt by any member at the meeting to explain his/her understanding of active citizenship. In effect the programs were being evaluated against an unspoken set of criteria. The mood of the meeting suggested the members present 'knew' what was needed "to pass the test", although it is likely it was not a shared 'knowing' (Observational Notes of Extraordinary Meeting, 30 April, 1997).

Part way through the meeting the Project Officer put her head on the table in mock despair in relation to one of the programs and the difficulties she had in assisting the teacher who had written it. The Project Officer reflected on her frustrations about the outcomes of the project in terms of the teachers' programs:

> *Yes, I think that we missed our target, probably with many – not with all – in fact there was a real range. I don't think we took L. beyond where she was... I think W. came along with us although she wouldn't say... There are quite a few others who I really don't think I've made much of a difference to at all. We weren't connecting enough. People say 'Yes, yes, I follow you,' but then they don't.* (Interview, December 1997)

The final resource manual of 214 pages contains "examples of the programs that fifteen practising teachers [two of whom worked in collaboration] have used with their classes on citizenship education. Each teacher has provided a program of what he or she did (or intended to do) with his or her class or school" (*Active Citizenship: A Resource Manual for Teachers*, 1997, p. 5). The manual is a well-designed package but it is contended only two of the fourteen programs reflect active citizenship. Some teachers constructed citizenship education as being formal civics with a focus only on content. Others constructed citizenship education as being the study of local issues or values education. Yet others focused on student-centred pedagogy and assumed this was citizenship education.

The failure of the teachers' programs to address citizenship is not surprising. It was a consequence of the Project Management Committee's avoidance of potentially divisive issues. The teachers were provided with a potpourri of ideas about active citizenship and citizenship education, but with no clear guidelines until the October Meeting. Most had trialed their programs by that time. The guidelines came too late for many. If the teachers had been provided with a clear statement of citizenship at the Winter Institute, it is likely that their teaching/learning programs would have better reflected active citizenship. The Final Report on the Project to the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs notes:

> *Teachers had a free choice of areas in which to develop their programs. The management group had made a decision that classroom teachers best know the needs and interests of their students. Therefore, while the management group could present a variety of perspectives on citizenship, ultimately the teachers decided on the perspectives they wished to develop. Thus while the teachers had a very positive response to the in-service initiatives that explored issues related to citizenship education, the programs they developed did not always reflect the range of issues that had been provided.*
> (Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners, Final Report, 1997)

There was never any discussion or deliberate decision by the Project Management Committee that the choice of areas should be left to teachers because they best understand the needs of their students. It was left to teachers because the Project Management Committee could not readily agree. The 'decision' to do nothing was a socio-political decision not a curriculum decision.

The publication of the resource manual containing the teachers' programs heralded the end of the Consortium's direct involvement in the project. The Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education contributed to the Social Science Association of Western Australia's conference in August 1997. The theme of the conference was Active Citizenship. Copies of *Active Citizenship: A Resource Manual for Teachers* were distributed to conference delegates.

The Consortium met for the last time in June 1997. This and the penultimate meeting were held at venues associated with two of the agencies, which were part of the outer circle of the Consortium. This was a conciliatory gesture toward these agencies and an effort, in what were to be the final days of the Consortium, to find a purpose and new direction for its continued existence. However, the end of the project proved to be the end of the Consortium. In his interview the representative from one of the agencies observed:

> *The project took over the Consortium rather than being something that has been produced by the Consortium ... does the Consortium still exist now that the project is completed? ... It existed to produce the project by a certain date... So now, what is it supposed to do?* (Interview, June 1998)

The Consortium Director reflected:

> *I feel a bit sad about the Consortium because it was not continued, but I did think that it got to the stage where it was a bit artificial to continue unless we had something specifically that we could do and I guess that was more because of the agency people. I thought I didn't want to be imposing on their time if we had nothing particularly to do that provided a focus. You don't want to go to a meeting for the sake of having a meeting. I would like to think that there was still that loose coalition there.* (Interview, March 1998)

6.4 Conclusion

The project was the impetus for the brief life of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education. On the other hand, it strangled the

Consortium, as it became almost the sole focus of its work. Perhaps, the Consortium did not live beyond the life of the funded project, because the process had revealed too many differences between the members. Perhaps, the Consortium did not live beyond the life of the funded project, because there were no funds to employ the Project Officer. Perhaps, the Consortium did not live beyond the life of the funded project, because the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship* report was overtaken by the next Commonwealth Government initiative in civics and citizenship education, *Discovering Democracy.* Or more simply, perhaps the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education had run its useful life.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

7.0 Introduction

The chief focus of this final chapter is the discussion and analysis of the research findings in relation to the research questions. The chapter substantiates the central argument of the present study that group curriculum decision-making is a socio-political process focusing on interpersonal relationships rather than a rational or deliberative process based on educational outcomes. It develops the thesis that the context in which decisions are made is crucial and that each time a decision is made or avoided the context evolves, thereby changing the context in which subsequent decisions will be made. A clear intention of the study is to contribute to more realistic theorising about the core nature of group curriculum decision-making.

The chapter begins with an overview of the contentions underpinning the study. It continues with a discussion and analysis of the findings in relation to each of the research questions used to frame the study. It concludes with a brief consideration of the implications of the findings of this study for group curriculum decision-making.

7.1 The contentions

Contention 1: The already complex implementation process has been further complicated by the increasing intervention of the Commonwealth Government in curriculum policy development.

The first contention on which the present study is premised is the involvement of the Commonwealth Government in citizenship education politicised the implementation process. Ultimately its intervention has undermined rigorous curriculum decision-making. The Commonwealth Government was a major player in relation to the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* report. The Commonwealth Government instigated and endorsed the report. It encouraged the implementation of its recommendations through funding of projects managed by policy-induced consortia. The provision of Commonwealth grants to policy-induced consortia complicated and politicised the implementation process, as many new players were attracted into the field. The nature of university culture, in which winning grants is valued so highly, resulted in people linking their projects, however tenuously, to citizenship education. Some of these new players had limited knowledge of citizenship. The deliberate fostering of consortia created a mezzo level in the implementation process. In turn this resulted in more people being included in the process, thereby increasing the likelihood of various interpretations of the policy, some of which were poorly informed. This was evident in the present study where only one member of the Consortium had a formal knowledge base and long association with citizenship education well before it was 'fashionable' (Interview, April 1998). This may account, in part for the inability of the

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Consortium to agree on a clearly defined platform as a basis for its curriculum decision-making.

The creation of consortia politicised decision-making. Members of the consortia represented institutions, and therefore had to ensure the interests of their institutions were promoted and protected. Their loyalty was to their institution rather than to an ephemeral consortium. This was evident in the present study in relation to the university administrators, who negotiated over the spoils of the grant and to the members of the outer circle, who were concerned their institutions were poorly represented in some of the professional development activities. In both examples, the motivations intensified the politicisation of the curriculum decision-making process.

The policy-induced consortia were accountable for the expenditure of their funds to the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training. The present study highlights how the involvement of the Commonwealth shifted the focus from curriculum decision-making to managerial decision-making to the detriment of the educational outcomes of the project.

Contention 2: The ambiguous and contested nature of citizenship means the policy itself is confused and confusing.

Civics and citizenship education provide the vehicle for the present study. While the broad focus of the study is group curriculum decision-making, the

finer focus is on the interpretation of the 1994 Commonwealth Government *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship Education* report and its recommendations. The second contention is that the report failed to give clear guidelines about citizenship education because of the contested nature of citizenship itself.

The term 'citizen' is contested and, therefore, interpreted in diverse ways because of the long evolution of citizenship. The concept of citizenship has evolved from a relatively simple one in the ancient world to one so intricate and broad in the post-modern world that it is often difficult to distinguish it from other social and economic policies. The fundamental difference centres on the relative emphases that should be placed on the public or common good as distinct from personal or private interests or freedoms. The debate is complicated further because attitudes towards citizenship are shaped by values. In Australia, debates about citizenship are complex because of the pluralist nature of Australian society. Discussions about citizenship have become entangled in other issues including national identity, republicanism, multiculturalism, reconciliation, gender issues and environmental protection.

As a consequence of the contentious nature of citizenship, the purpose of citizenship education, itself, is not clearly defined. The purpose may be to pass on information; to nurture community members who conform to the *status quo*; to foster social inquiry skills; to encourage a capacity to critique the *status quo*; or even to disrupt the *status quo*. The purposes of citizenship education

programs in Australia are manifold. Some aim to improve knowledge of electoral procedures and to increase the proportion of people voting. Other programs aim to address apathy and cynicism and to increase participation in community life. Yet others seek to create national identity or to foster national unity by identifying shared core values. The *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship* report was provided against this background.

The *Whereas the People...* report attempted to be all things to all people by reflecting the variety of approaches to citizenship education. In doing so, it failed to clarify the debate. Much of the policy consists of motherhood statements. Its underlying aims are broad ranging and even admirable, however, the broad recommendations lack detail and clear definition. The policy, then, was a loose bundle of components susceptible to various and varied translations. The subsequent reaction to and debate about the policy focused on who was included and, most importantly, excluded from the policy makers' version of citizenship. Rather than providing clear guidelines, the Civics Expert Group confused the debate.

Contention 3: The multi-faceted and multi-dimensional processes by which government education policies are implemented are poorly understood, and, therefore, often oversimplified.

The third contention on which the present study is premised is that the process by which government education policies are implemented is much more complex than many theories suggest. There is a yawning chasm between the

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intentions of the policy makers and the policy in use. Most theories pertaining to policy pay scant attention to the role of discretionary decision-making beyond policy development. The process of translation is the bridge between the policy development and policy in use. The decision-making role of those translating the policy into use, such as the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education, is often disregarded. In the present study, the policy is significant only in that it attracts funding for its implementation. The decision-makers, who rely more on their knowledge of earlier policies, largely ignore its content.

Another facet of policy implementation that is often disregarded is the context in which the policy is being implemented. The context evolves as the consequences, both intended and unintended, of each decision made or avoided during the process of implementation are realised.

Contention 4: The importance of the social dynamics of the group in curriculum decision-making is poorly understood.

The fourth contention is based on the assertion that group curriculum decision-making is more about interpersonal relationships than rational decision-making. The implementation of curriculum policy is dependent on the beliefs, values and individual and shared experiences of each person implementing the innovation. In the present study, the shared experiences of the members of the Project Management Committee were a uniting factor, which worked against making critical curriculum decisions. The social interaction, which occurred

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during the Project Management Committee's and the Consortium's decision-making did not reflect the logical, rational models nor the deliberative models of curriculum decision-making.

7.2 Research questions

The chief research question underpinning this study is: How did the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education translate Commonwealth Government policy on civics and citizenship education into a plan of action? The specific focus was on the way in which the Consortium translated the recommendations of the Civics Expert Group's report, *Whereas the People...* *Civics and Citizenship Education.* Four specific research questions emerged during the course of the study.

7.2.1 Research question 1: How did the group reconstruct the policy?

The members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the Project Management Committee did not reconstruct the policy. Instead, they ignored it. The recommendations of the *Whereas the People... Civics and Citizenship* report were not discussed in any of the Consortium's or the Management Committee's deliberations nor during any of the professional development activities for teachers. The Project Officer, who was central to the outcomes of the project, admitted that she had read the report "only initially when I was trying to get a handle on things, but then it was put away in the cupboard. It was

put away with the files" (Interview of December, 1997). Her explanation of 'active citizenship for teachers', presented at the October Meeting, did not reflect the thrust of the *Whereas the People...* report.

The Consortium did not reconstruct the policy because the policy confused rather than informed the debate. The policy became the impetus for a reawakening of interest in civics and citizenship education in Australia, in part at least, because projects were funded. The Western Australian Consortium's project, *Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioner* was one of these projects.

Moreover, once the Consortium won its grant, the focus shifted from the policy to delivering the phases of the project. As the Project Coordinator stressed: "When we got the funding, our brief was that. It wasn't *Whereas the People...*" (Interview, November 1997). The policy was redundant. It had served its purpose.

7.2.2 Research question 2: What were the critical decisions during the process of translation?

The members of the Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education and the Project Management Committee made many decisions as they prepared the grant application and implemented the project, *Studies of Society and Environment: Active Citizenship for Classroom Practitioners.* Some of these decisions were critical in that their

consequences on the outcomes of the project were substantial. Often the consequences of the critical decisions were unintended, and frequently unforeseen.

Several critical decisions were made at the meeting of the loose alliance of university representatives, convened to discuss submitting the grant application. The first was to invite other partners to join the university group. This was a critical decision because while it met the intended outcomes of adding status to the application and more readily meeting the grant guidelines, it had the unintended consequence of relegating the non-university members of the Consortium to an outer circle. The members of the outer circle were to have specific agendas associated with their institutions. They did not have the same loyalty to the Consortium, as did the university members. There were times in the life of the project when the outer circle created some moments of tension. In turn, these moments of tension made the inner circle all the more cohesive as its members closed ranks against the criticisms of the outer circle.

The next critical decisions were to use a successful grant application as a model; and, to have two members of the group, who were already involved in a professional development project for teachers, write the grant application. These were expedient decisions made to facilitate the writing of the application, but they were to have far reaching, and at the time, unforeseen consequences. Both of these decisions meant that the

grant application focused on the professional development of teachers reflecting the emphases of the model application and the professional development project with which the writers were associated. This was to become significant because, although the Project Management Committee did not agree on the meaning of key terms pertaining to citizenship, there was a shared culture of the provision of professional development. Hence, the Project Management Committee was able to focus on professional development. This was non-contentious. As the Project Coordinator argued:

> *I think that was a culture of professional development in this state that the project sort of latches onto... There was also a shared experience and therefore, it was non-divisive. It was very comfortable to talk about professional development because we all believe in professional development... most of the discussions were about the nature of professional development rather than citizenship for that reason. It became a safe haven to discuss.* (Interview, November, 1997)

Moreover, the writers unwittingly shaped the subsequent project much more than was realised initially. The phases of the project described in the grant application became the project deliverables in the grant contract drawn up by the Department of Education, Employment and Training. The Consortium was accountable to the Department on the basis of the project deliverables. As the Project Officer observed: "The most important thing was the project deliverables" (Interview, December 1997). The result of this focus on the project deliverables was the Project Management Committee meetings were not about curriculum content, but

on details such as procedures, timelines, numbers of participants from each school system and budgets. The focus was on administrative outcomes rather than educational outcomes. The project deliverables became the platform for decision-making.

The next critical decision was the change of chair of the Consortium from one university to another. The change was made chiefly to share the leadership opportunities in the learning area, but it had the unintended consequence of the universities debating where the project would be based. The compromise decision was to split the project across both universities. Most significantly the Winter Institute was conducted at the new Director's university. This had a major influence on the content of the Winter Institute and, therefore on shaping teachers' perceptions about citizenship education. There is no doubt the outcomes of the project would have been very different if the project had been located wholly at one university.

Another critical decision was about the composition of the Project Management Committee. None of the members of the agencies, other than the Education Department, attended the meeting at which this decision was made. Everyone at the meeting was included in the Project Management Committee, while everyone who decided not to attend that meeting was excluded. This decision formally created an inner and an outer circle. This inner circle was comprised of the major players, who

controlled the agendas for, and dominated discussions, at Western Australian Consortium for Citizenship Education meetings. The decision-making structures that evolved parallel Hickson's top decision model whereby the group is set up and sustained by a dominant coalition of influential stakeholders (Hickson, 1986). If the members from the agencies had been more directly involved in the management of the project and more able to share their knowledge and expertise the outcomes would have been different.

Possibly the most significant critical decision was to abandon the debates about active citizenship and nationality and citizenship. An attempt to force a decision would have undermined the unity of the group. This was the only time when the group deliberated and attempted to describe its philosophical platform (Walker, 1971). This decision is germane to the present study as it highlights the overwhelming importance of social dynamics over curriculum decision-making. Moreover, the decision to make no decision was critical because it set a pattern whereby other potentially controversial decisions were either deferred indefinitely or members were invited to make written input. These strategies to avoid conflict, arguably at the expense of the educational outcomes of the project, occurred several times during the duration of the project.

The selection and appointment of the Project Officer was another critical decision. The Project Officer's status and influence increased greatly

throughout the project as she won the trust and respect of the Project Management Committee and the teachers. Her authority grew because the Project Management Committee and Consortium often deferred discussion of potentially contentious issues. This forced the Project Officer to make unilateral decisions by default in order to meet deadlines for the project deliverables. There was never any open disagreement about her decisions once they were tabled or in print especially if members of the outer circle or a representative of the Department of Education, Employment and Training were present. It was paramount that the social cohesion of the Project Management Committee was maintained.

This analysis of the critical decisions made during the life of the Consortium highlights the way in which each decision affected subsequent decisions. Moreover, it underlines the effect of *how* decisions are made on subsequent decision-making processes. As well, this analysis exemplifies the changing nature of the context in which decisions were made. The context evolved throughout the life of the Consortium.

7.2.3 Research question 3: What were the external and internal influences on the decision-making process?

The chief external influence on the Consortium's and Project Management Committee's decision-making was the Department of

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Employment, Education and Training because the Consortium, through X. University, was legally accountable to it. The Consortium was required to report regularly on the basis of the project deliverables. As a consequence, much of the work of the Project Management Committee focused on management decisions in order to secure the next instalment of funding. This was to the detriment of curriculum decision-making.

The university administrators were another influence. They made decisions about how the project would be managed across the two universities. These were political decisions with a focus on prestige, management and funding rather than curriculum outcomes. Although these decisions were made early in the life of the Consortium, they had far reaching implications.

A less obvious influence on the decision-making process was the residual effect of previous reports on citizenship, such as *Active Citizenship* (1989) and *Active Citizenship Revisited* (1991). This was especially evident in the debate during the Planning Workshop where the emphasis was on active citizenship.

The strong relationships between the people in the Project Management Committee, in particular, were a very significant influence on the decision-making. The relationships had been established over long periods working on various committees and projects together in the

learning area and, in some instances, by sharing common interests. With the exception of the Project Officer everyone in the Project Management Committee knew each other prior to the project. There was a sense that each knew how the others were likely to think because of their shared history. The Consortium and the Project Management Committee had a predisposition to certain decisions because of prior shared experiences. There was a tendency to follow familiar patterns and processes of earlier project groups. This was evident in the way in which professional development became the cornerstone of the project. Several of the members of the Project Management Committee shared a history of the delivery of professional development, so this was safe ground. Professional development was an agreed platform. It was not contentious especially if the actual content were left to the invited speakers and workshop presenters. This avoided any disagreement in the group.

Members of the Project Management Committee enjoyed each other's company and respected each other. C. and E. in particular were highly regarded by the group. C. was described as "sort of like the grandfather ... the patriarch of the project" (Interview, December 1997). E. was described as "the gatekeeper of the knowledge", and as "a respected safe person in the area ... it would be silly not to seek his advice" (Interview, April 1998). For this reason, the debate between C. and E. about nationality and citizenship was especially meaningful. No one wanted to see a rift develop between them, so the debate remained unresolved.

Social cohesiveness was paramount. However, it proved to be an impediment to effective curriculum decision-making.

7.2.4 Research question 4: How did the group dynamics influence the decision-making process?

As has been described already, there was a very strong social dynamic within the Project Management Committee. Ultimately, the cohesiveness of the group worked against group curriculum decision-making. It was a constraint on decision-making because the maintenance of good relationships was so highly valued by the group. Consensus and avoidance of conflict were more important than debating the issues.

Potential conflict in the Project Management Committee and the Consortium was managed in a variety of ways. Humour was used to defuse a situation. C. was adept at this. The Project Officer commented, C. "had the ability to calm the waters if there were any ripples that needed to be sorted out ... he would make us laugh" (Interview, December, 1997).

Another strategy used to avoid conflict was to fax a document to members for their comments. This occurred with the draft of the grant application. None of the partners provided any feedback on that occasion. This was interpreted as meaning all partners were in agreement with the document. There were no checks to ascertain whether the faxed

document was received or whether members had read it. In Consortium meetings, where it was important for the Project Management Committee to be publicly united, a potentially contentious issue was often placed last on the agenda. Consortium meetings were held at the end of the working day so when the final item came up for discussion, time was limited. The Consortium Director would provide an overview of the issue before inviting members to provide written comments to her or the Project Officer. These comments, if they were provided at all, were never tabled at subsequent meetings. This, and faxing documents proved successful as strategies to avoid conflict. However, these strategies stifled debate because members did not have the opportunity to explore ideas together. There was none of the to and fro discussions of Walker's deliberation. If members had provided written comment, they had no ready way of determining whether their opinions were widely shared or otherwise. A discussion has the potential to raise issues, which a person working alone might not consider. As well, there was the likelihood when the members returned to their place of work next day that other business would take precedence over the business of the Consortium. Furthermore, as E. noted, "I didn't feel that I had the right to say too much, because if you start complaining, you have got to start delivering" (Interview, April 1998).

As already highlighted, the final way in which conflict was avoided was to defer decisions. The consequence of deferring such decisions resulted

in the Project Officer, in particular, and the Consortium Director, making curriculum decisions. In effect, this shifted the control of the project from the Project Management Committee to the Project Officer, especially in the latter phases of the project.

The reluctance of the members of the Project Management Committee to impose their opinions on others was carried through to the work with the teachers participating in the project. The teachers were given limited direction, and what they were given was provided after much of their work in schools was completed. This was manifested in the broad and unfocused content of the Winter Institute, which contributed to the nebulous nature of much of the work produced by the teachers.

7.3   Conclusion

This analysis of a policy-induced consortium has shown how politicisation has blurred and, indeed undermined the nature of group curriculum decision-making. It was particularly so because of the extremely contentious and volatile nature of the policy itself. In this context, the use of rational, logical or deliberative concepts of curriculum design is irrelevant to describing group dynamics.

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APPENDIX A

CHECKLIST OF QUESTIONS USED TO GUIDE INTERVIEWS

- o **These questions were used as a starting point for conversational style interviews.**

- o **Not all questions were asked of all interviewees.**

- o **Interviewees were encouraged to expand on their answers.**

- o **Other questions often came up during the conversations.**

1. Can you describe to me your view of active citizenship?

2. What shaped your views?

3. Do you think your view matches that of others in the Consortium? Who?

4. What do you see as the purpose of the Consortium?

5. Do you think that this was a shared view?

6. Who did you know in the Consortium prior to the formation of the Consortium?

7. What were your motivations for joining the Consortium?

8. What particular skills or knowledge do you think you brought to the Consortium?

9. Were there any moments of tension for you in the Consortium?

10. Who do you consider were the most influential people in the Consortium?

11. What do you think guided our decision-making in the Consortium?

12. To what extent do you consider that the *Whereas the People: Civics and Citizenship Education* Report inform the Consortium's decision-making?

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: _____

NAME OF RESEARCHER: _____

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: _____

I undertake to:

1.   explain the nature of the research to the interviewee

2.   answer any questions about the research to the satisfaction of the interviewee

3.   inform the interviewee that he/she may withdraw his/her consent at any time during the research

4.   provide a copy of the draft report in which the interviewee's comments are used for his/her feedback

5.   do all that is possible to protect the confidentiality of the interviewee

6.   remove the name of the participant and his/her institution before any data collected as part of the research is published.

Signed:

Researcher

Date:

APPENDIX C

ACTIVE CITZENSHIP

Within the parameters of the current project, the management committee has agreed on the following statements to define our view of active citizenship.

Active citizenship is:

- Knowledge not only of formal structures of government but also understanding of the different levels of decision-making and how the operations of government affect citizens;

- Willing and responsible participation;

- An understanding that citizenship involves rights and responsibilities which can be exercised either to support change or to resist change;

- Accessing decision-making within the local community.

What does this mean in schools?

- The commitment to encourage positive action where students can see the effects of their involvement. (Therefore concentrate on community or State issues, rather than larger issues in which they can little effect.)

- The view that school is a part of the community.

- The promotion of active student-centred learning.

- The exploration of values education.

Project will focus on:

- The Society and Environment learning area in primary and secondary schools.

- Illustrating how citizenship can 'fit' into the curriculum in primary and secondary schools.

- Developing an inter-action with 'agreed common values' and how these might be taught through active citizenship.

- Encouraging involvement with the community, e.g. Ribbons of Blue, Landcare.