Instructional Choices, Student Participation, and the Construction of Knowledge
in a Social Studies Learning Environment

by

Sean F. Lazarus

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Sherman Dorn, Chair
Lauren McArthur Harris
Kris Ewing

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this action research study was to explore the impact instructional choices had on student participation in the classroom learning environment, growth of knowledge in social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process. The instructional choices implemented through a flipped learning instructional approach were designed to target motivation and participation in the learning process via individualized student-learning opportunities. This action research study was conducted to compare the effectiveness of collaborative student-centered learning environments to traditional instructional style learning environments. This study provided students with opportunities to analyze, think critically of, and apply studied content in a Participation in Government course to their personal lives through experiential out-of-class assignments and collaborative hands-on in-class activities. The theoretical foundations for this study include social cognitive theory, theory of self-efficacy, and social constructivism. Participants included 32 high school seniors from the High School of Fashion Industries in New York, NY. Participants completed a pre-/post-self-efficacy survey, pre/posttest measuring their knowledge of government, and several short interviews. Eight participants, four from the Treatment group and four from the Control group, completed a semi-structured interview at the conclusion of the study. Results showed participants experienced an increase in self-efficacy and participation in the learning process. Participants from the Treatment group outperformed the participants from the Control group with regards to knowledge of government. In the discussion, outcomes related to the theoretical frameworks and the
problem of practice were discussed. Finally, limitations and a discussion regarding future iterations of the action research in a larger context were outlined.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife and her family, my two daughters, and my mother. The phrase “it takes a village” not only describes the commitment it takes to raise two small beautiful daughters who are only 20 months apart in age, but is the epitome of completing a doctoral degree program at the same time.

To Kameryn and Devyn, my two amazing daughters. When this journey started neither of you were here, but your arrival into this world solidified my commitment to this degree program in order to support your own journeys and be an example for your own pursuits in life.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

A classroom environment where students are active participants in cultivating their learning experiences embodies the pedagogical pursuit of an educator. Unfortunately, many instructional methods deployed in the classroom, specifically the social studies classroom, significantly lack in opportunities for critical thinking and application to one's personal life due to the use of traditional means of instruction (Kenna & Russell, 2014; Russell, 2010). Traditional means of instruction may rely on a lecture, use of PowerPoint slides, direct teacher-to-student instruction, and course textbooks (Mergendoller, Maxwell, & Bellisimo, 2006). In addition, traditional means of instruction do not fully engage students in the learning process through collaborative learning experiences and rely on rote memorization instead of thinking critically and applying content (Kenna & Russell, 2014; Mergendoller et al., 2006). But students are not a static variable but an ever-changing group that is continually shifting from the students who preceded them.

While the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI), located in Manhattan, New York, is a burgeoning institution of learning, many students have stated in recent annual surveys that they have become less engaged due to a lack of exciting and challenging activities in the classroom. According to the 2016-2017 School Quality Snapshot found in Appendix A, 57% of students feel they acquire a high level of knowledge from feedback received on their work from teachers, and 78% of students said that they know what their teachers want them to learn in class. However, only 70% of students responded
positively to questions about supportive environments as it pertains to the social and emotional needs of students. For example, 33% of students surveyed indicated they felt their teachers support them when they are feeling distracted and not focused on the content of the class. While education professionals and scholars may overlook this statistic, a lack of social and emotional support from an educator could lead to a breakdown in a student-teacher relationship, and subsequently negatively impact student motivation to participate in class (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Yang, Bear, & May, 2018).

Student engagement is defined as a student’s motivation to be an active participant in the learning process through cultivating intellectual relationships with their teachers and peers within the school environment (Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014; Shernoff, Tonks, & Anderson, 2014; Yang et al., 2018). For this action research study, student engagement is focused on the motivation of students to be active participants in the learning process and the collaborative learning environment of the social studies classroom. This focus on student participation in the learning process within social studies classrooms at HSFI is a result of perceptions from the district administration. The district administration has shared with the faculty of the social studies department at HSFI that they believe low student participation in the learning process could be a result of non-engaging instruction, students not feeling supported in their academic pursuits, and a lack of challenging tasks that foster analysis, critical thinking, and application to current events or personal lives.
Scrutiny from various levels of government and scholars has increased in K-12 schools and more specifically social studies classrooms. Educators are tasked with cultivating a more rigorous learning environment with pathways for individualized learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford, Lennon, & Russell, 2009). These pathways for individualized learning are differentiated for students to construct their own knowledge through analysis, critical thinking, and application to current events or their personal life (Byford et al., 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014; Russell, 2010). At HSFI, the district administration, school administration, and faculty perceive a decrease in student performance and learner participation in the classroom as a result of learning environments which lack rigorous instruction to challenge students to think critically of course content and apply content to their personal life. Specifically, these concerns are true within the social studies department at HSFI where the school has observed a gradual reduction in student test scores on the New York State Global History Regents examination and the New York State United States History Regents examination in the past three academic years from 2014-2017. Mean scores on the Global History exam and United States History exam mostly ranged between 30-40 correct answers out of a total of 50 multiple-choice questions. However, the past three academic years scores on the multiple choice section of the Global History exam by HSFI students have decreased to a mean 36.5 in 2015, 35.5 in 2016, and 34 in 2017 out of 50 multiple choice questions. The United States History exam scores have been less drastic but still show a decreasing trend. The average mean number of multiple choice questions answered correctly out of
50 by HSFI students for 2015 was 41, while 2016 and 2017 were 40.5 and 40, respectively.

At HSFI, there is growing concern among district administration and school administration that a lack of rigorous instruction, active participation in the classroom, and observed difficulty to connect acquired knowledge to current events or one’s personal life are negatively influencing student performance in the learning process. Studies have shown that a lack of interest in course content, lack of motivation to be an active participant in the classroom, and a lack of personal connection to course content are all contributing factors to decreased performance in the learning process of students (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Shernoff et al., 2014). Students at HSFI have shared similar frustrations through personal communication with faculty that their struggle in the classroom is due to a lack of interest, motivation, and personal connection to the course content in the classroom. Furthermore, concern among district and school administrators focus on the pedagogical approaches of educators in the classroom, and a lack of instructional rigor targeting critical thinking and analytical skills that should provide an opportunity for a student to apply their knowledge of government and other social studies content to present day issues or their personal life. As a means of addressing these concerns, this action research study looks at the potential for a flipped learning environment to be a catalyst in mitigating the performance and student participation trends within the HSFI community. I define a flipped classroom as a learning environment where students take on a more active and accountable role in their learning experiences through engaging out-of-classroom learning activities. These
activities support the construction of initial knowledge and are transferred to the in-class learning environment through challenging hands-on activities in class where students have to use their initial constructed knowledge to think critically of the content and apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios and a personal connection. Other scholars who have conducted research on instructional choices in the classroom have defined a flipped classroom to be the process of switching the learning environment where the initial construction of knowledge occurs outside of the classroom and instruction inside of the classroom engages students in a variety of collaborative hands-on activities that promote analysis, critical thinking, and application (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford et al., 2009; Tawfik & Lilly, 2015).

**Situated Context**

The High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) is a well-respected high school within the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) system, a school that strives to prepare students to be active and collaborative participants in a challenging and highly-complex society (Blank, 2015). HSFI boasts a 91% average graduation rate among its student population with nearly all of those graduates accepted to some form of postsecondary education (New York City Department of Education, 2017). In midtown Manhattan, HSFI is in an area filled with external educational opportunities to enrich learning, such as finding an internship with corporate headquarters in New York City, visiting the museums in the city, and experiencing a plethora of physical resources to support the academic growth of our students. For example, HSFI is located within the fashion district of New York City, which affords our students opportunities to interact
with many of the professionals within fashion, business, and entrepreneurship. In addition, HSFI is a specialized-choice school where students must apply and interview to be considered for admission. HSFI offers students a robust computer and technical education (CTE) program for possible career paths in Fashion, Fashion Design, Business and Virtual Enterprise.

Along with many other NYCDOE schools, HSFI is not equipped with the cutting-edge technological resources for instructional purposes. For example, classrooms at HSFI are equipped with only five Chromebooks for a class size of approximately 34 students. In addition, most classrooms are not equipped with a SmartBoard, or another type of interactive technology to immerse students digitally in course content. Since the priority and mission (see Appendix A) at HSFI is to assist students to become college and career-ready, updating the instructional approaches to incorporate more student-centered and technology-based instructional choices is imperative to meet the needs of the students. Furthermore, faculty must undergo professional development to influence an instructional culture where student choice, individualized learning, and experiential activities drive the learning process for students. HSFI is also designated as a Title I school and boasts a high percentage of students eligible for Title I funding, a designation which provides additional resources for teaching and learning. HSFI receives approximately $1 million each academic year in Title I funding (Blank, 2015). However, these monies for educational resources are not enough to substantially enhance the student experience in the classroom from a technological or instructional perspective.
Beyond the need for upgrading the technological resources at HSFI, a much larger quandary is of growing concern at HSFI. Active student participation in peer collaborative learning and accountability for one’s success in the classroom has become a particular concern for many teachers and administrators at HSFI. This action research study perceives student engagement through the lens of active student participation in the learning process. As explained earlier in this chapter, student engagement is defined as a student’s motivation to be an active participant in the learning process through cultivating intellectual relationships with their teachers and peers within the school environment (Furrer et al., 2014; Shernoff et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2018). Collaborative learning with peers and taking ownership of constructing knowledge through experiential homework assignments are exemplary of active student participation in the learning process. Finally, students have become increasingly withdrawn from in-class instruction and classroom activities at HSFI. This can be a result of many factors. From my observations, students appear to become bored rather quickly when in the classroom and checkout from the learning environment as a result of a lack of engaging topics, hands-on application-based activities, student choice, and instruction.

**Position as a Teacher**

As a current teacher within the NYCDOE and previous adjunct instructor at Arizona State University (ASU), I have become increasingly observant to the archaic and antiquated instructional methods used within today’s classrooms. Pen, paper, textbooks, and lecture do not encourage an environment grounded in active student participation, critical thinking, analysis, and application to current events or personal connection.
(Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford et al., 2009; Russell, 2010). Through this action research study, my goal was to identify a connection between instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom instructional model for social studies learning environments to stimulate the most significant impact on student participation, knowledge of social studies, accountability for one’s learning, and self-efficacy in the learning process. Additionally, effective instructional approaches should regularly rely on differentiated learning opportunities to reach all learners, such as student choice and experiential activities to provide challenging and rigorous learning experiences where formative assessments can be used to assess student progress and drive daily instructional objectives. Instructional choices aligned to a flipped learning model can be a resource to approach students in the learning process with meaningful critical thinking exercises that challenge students to apply course content to current issues within society or their personal lives. (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

Positionality of My Classroom

Within my classroom, I use a multitude of educational technologies to assist in the fostering and distribution of a student-centered learning environment. Some examples of educational technology used are Google Apps for Education (GAFE), EDpuzzle, iCivics, and Plickers. My classroom is reflective of a journey through American history, United States government, and Economics. Since my classroom is grounded in the curriculum of the social studies, inquiry-driven instruction and a hands-on approach to learning bestow a multitude of learning opportunities to my students through the use of a student-driven instructional focus. For example, in my Participation in Government course, students
experience learning activities which get them involved with their individual communities from a political standpoint to make connections to the impact of government on the daily lives of citizens. In addition, students complete a semester-long project where they identify an issue within society that "pisses them off." The desired outcome of the project challenges students to identify a problem within society, research and develop a public policy to address the problem and explain how they would go about implementing this policy if they were an elected official.

As explained earlier, at HSFI, the school only has five Chromebooks available in each classroom for a class size of approximately 34 students, so the school faculty relies on the use of student personal mobile devices to connect student learning to internet instructional resources. In my experience, these educational technologies and inquiry-based lessons spark student participation, motivation, and increases in student knowledge of social studies. Students are more active participants in the learning process when lessons are inquiry-driven and challenge students to think critically and apply course content to their personal lives. Curriculum such as the C3 Framework from the National Council for the Social Studies foster inquiry-driven instructional lessons and an approach to collaborative learning to influence active student participation in the social studies classroom (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). Our students have adapted to these new technologies and use them in ways which were previously unthinkable. For example, many students use Google Docs as a means of communication during group projects to coordinate the construction and development of research projects. Additionally, other students have used infographics to develop presentations for major
term projects. It is time we educators start doing the same with technology in the
classroom if we want to challenge our students to be more critical of content and apply
concepts to their everyday lives in order to achieve a more significant impact on their
development as individuals.

**Departmental/School-Wide Instructional Practice**

From a departmental standpoint, and to a greater extent a school-wide standpoint,
the teachers are free to develop their own instructional practice. However, the teachers
are evaluated (as in all New York City schools) by a standardized instrument based on
Charlotte Danielson’s work (Adams, Danielson, Moilanen, & Association for
Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2009). From my observations, current
instructional practices usually take the form of lecture, use of course textbook, and some
technology mixed into the learning environment. While autonomy with instructional
decisions empowers educators, the same autonomy has also acted as a potential detriment
to constructing an active student learning environment (Byford et al., 2009; Kenna &
Russell, 2014; Russell, 2010). Furthermore, a current building-wide problem of practice
at HSFI is concerned with student participation, performance, and instructional choices
which are not rigorous. The problem of practice has been observed by the district
administration to be a result of instructional practices which do not challenge students to
be active in cultivating their own learning. Furthermore, increasing awareness of
instructional practices which promote more rigorous and challenging learning
environments within New York social studies classrooms is one of my goals for future
iterations of action research. Finally, this study evaluated the effectiveness and impact of
instructional choices aligned with a flipped classroom instructional model to inspire greater analysis, critical thinking, and application in a social studies learning environment.

**Purpose of the Research Study**

The purpose of this action research study was to explore the impact instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom model had on student participation, performance in a *Participation in Government* course, and self-efficacy in the learning process. Specifically, does an increase in instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning model lead to an increase in student participation, knowledge of government, and confidence in the learning process? One way educators are trying to improve pedagogy is through the use of more inquiry-based student-driven instructional methods such as the flipped classroom to engage students in the learning process and create an environment rich in analysis, critical thinking, application, and individualized learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford et al., 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014). However, here lies the problem of practice. As stated at the beginning of the chapter, students are not a static variable but an ever-changing group that is continually shifting from the students who preceded them. Redundant instructional choices will only hinder growth in student participation and learning instead of fostering growth in critical thinking and application.

**Research Questions Driving Study**

RQ 1: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how does participation in a flipped learning model influence student perceptions of active participation and accountability for learning?
RQ 2: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy in the learning process?

RQ 3: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government?

**Innovation**

Envisioning a classroom environment where students are heavily engaged throughout the entirety of the lesson encompasses many different forms of instructional strategies by educators. One of the instructional choices available to educators that have garnered recent notoriety due to students taking a more active role in constructing their own knowledge in the learning process is the flipped classroom instructional model. As explained previously, through The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Environment, I define a flipped classroom as a learning environment where students take on a more active and accountable role in their learning experiences through engaging out-of-classroom learning activities. These activities support the construction of initial knowledge and are transferred to the in-class learning environment through challenging hands-on activities in class where students have to use their initial constructed knowledge to think critically of the content and apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios and a personal connection. In addition, a flipped classroom switches the process of learning with initial perceptions and knowledge are developed outside of the classroom while instruction inside of the classroom engages students in a variety of collaborative, hands-
on activities grounded in analysis, critical thinking, and application (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford et al., 2009; Tawfik & Lilly, 2015). A number of research studies, such as Bergmann and Sams (2012), Chen (2016), Hunley (2016), Rotellar and Cain (2016), and Tawfik and Lilly (2015) have shown potential positive correlations between flipped classroom instructional models and an increase in student participation and growth in learning in a range of subjects. However, there is little or no research on the efficacy of a flipped classroom model in an urban high school social studies classroom setting.

As stated earlier, this study looked at the potential for The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model to innovate the social studies classroom learning environment in order to increase student participation and knowledge of government. There are a variety of educational technologies such as Google Apps for Education (GAFE) and EDpuzzle, which can be partnered with a flipped classroom instructional approach to provide multiple opportunities to engage students in meaningful, detailed, and individualized learning opportunities. For example, one educational technology platform which was used in conjunction with the flipped classroom model for this innovation was GAFE. GAFE was used as a home base for all assignments and instructional activities through Google Classroom. Formative assessments were constructed and deployed using Google Forms, and students often used Google Docs for collaborative, hands-on projects, such as the Political Party Project which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, Method. My goal for the innovation was to reflect that a shift toward student-centered instructional choices, such as a flipped classroom learning environment, could promote a learning environment where students are motivated to be active participants in constructing their
knowledge in the learning process. As such, I embarked on an innovative design where my classroom was immersed in a flipped learning instructional model with educational technology resources and teacher-constructed formative assessments based on the content studied in the classroom supporting the design of daily instructional goals with considerable input from students. This was achieved through the use of various educational technology applications, such as Google Apps for Education (GAFE), EDpuzzle, Plickers, and non-educational technologies such as BreakoutEDU, primary source documents, and community-based assignments outside of the class that was aligned to flipped classroom instructional methods. I used GAFE as a digital classroom environment for student collaboration, the housing of assignments and assessments, and communication among teacher and students outside of the classroom. I used EDpuzzle as the primary source for creating and bestowing the flipped instructional pre-activities to the students, while Plickers and Google Forms served as methods for formative assessment purposes and tracking student progress.

To prepare for the action research project, I mapped the concepts of the social studies curriculum onto a flipped, learning-centric lesson to ease the transition. The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model incorporated developed activities for each of the topics within the course curriculum to engage students in pre-learning of unit topics. These activities were exemplified through developed Google Form assignments with a video and multiple-choice questions or short answer, primary source document, or digital game activity embedded to develop knowledge of a concept. Additional activities used as pre-activity assignments included visiting a historical location connected to the
content in New York City, interviewing peers and community members, and conducting
initial research on a topic for in-class deliberative discussions. Through the completion of
the pre-activity assignment, students developed a source of prior knowledge. Students
developed a more detailed and refined sense of understanding through in-class activities
centered on challenging the perceptions of the students based on the knowledge
previously acquired. Through this process, students constructed the knowledge outlined
by state standards, and also developed essential skills and abilities in identifying impacts,
challenging various viewpoints, group dynamics, and making personal connections to the
course topics. Finally, a flipped classroom is not based on lecture and merely acquiring
knowledge in the classroom; it consists of creating opportunities to further a student’s
pre-developed knowledge and providing them with experiences which challenge their
preconceived beliefs about the topics covered in the classroom.
CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE PROJECT

In chapter one, I described the purpose of the study and the context in which the action research occurred. An introduction to the problem of practice and the innovation to address the problem was also provided to set the framework of the action research study. As stated there, instructional choices aligned with a flipped classroom instructional model is a potential solution to low student participation and performance among the students in social studies classes at HSFI. In this chapter, I focus on the theoretical perspectives which ground this research study. Additionally, I review literature pertinent to the problem of practice and innovation, as well as previous cycles of action research. Finally, I explore the connections with the planned innovation between the theoretical perspectives and related literature.

Theoretical Perspectives

To assist in the development of the innovation and understanding of the research approach, the theories of social cognitive theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1989; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005; Schunk & Usher, 2012), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993), and social constructivism (Cooper, 1993; Gelo, Braackmann, & Benetka, 2008; Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1980) are the focal points of the research guiding the project, and subsequent understanding of the innovation, from a theoretical perspective. Furthermore, these theoretical approaches are the foundation of the action research study and help build an understanding of the identified problem of practice as it pertains to student motivation.
and participation, student knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process through instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom model.

**Social Cognitive Theory**

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) describes individual learning through lived experiences and observations from social interactions with peers. SCT focuses on human motivation and action as the primary beneficiaries of extensive forethought (Bandura, 1989; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005; Schunk & Usher, 2012). Additionally, Bandura (1993) found that the foundation of human functioning is in social systems which influence personal development, such as the learning process students experience in the educational system. Bandura (1991) also found that “human behavior is extensively motivated and regulated by the on-going exercise of self-influence” (p. 1). SCT can be used to understand one role of student learning opportunities through targeted hands-on activities. For example, Bandura (1971) incorporates social modeling under the SCT umbrella, as modeling “operates through four cognitive subfunctions encompassing attentional, representational, enactive translational, and motivational processes” (p. 350). Furthermore, social modeling is an approach where learning occurs through observations of behavior and the subsequent consequences of the behavior which follow (Bandura, 1971). Through social modeling, students can develop the motivation to be engaged in the learning process and encounter meaningful learning through collaborative experiences with their peers.

Within New York City schools and classrooms, teachers are evaluated using the Danielson Framework for Teachers (Adams, Danielson, Moilanen, & Association for
Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2009). According to the Danielson Framework for Teachers, modeling expectations for learning and the use of instructional materials is reflective of highly effective teaching. Modeling enhances the learning environment and experiences of the students by providing a model for which students can frame their own perspectives around (Adams et al., 2009). Figure 1 shows a breakdown of each component under the framework from the Danielson Group. The Danielson Framework for Teachers has four domains which outline expectations for effective instruction. Through the lens of SCT, techniques such as modeling used with the instructional choices aligned to a flipped learning environment may exemplify a powerful method for constructing collaborative social networks and bestowing instructional activities to students filled with extensive differentiated activities designed to increase active student participation and performance in the learning process.
SCT focuses on many factors which ultimately influence a person's behavior. Self-efficacy is one of the initial factors which may influence a person's behavior based on the person's belief in their ability to perform a specific action to achieve the desired outcome (Bandura, 1993; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Additionally, the core of SCT lies within five basic human capabilities, as outlined through the work of Stakovic and Luthans (1998) and Bandura (1971). These five basic human capabilities are symbolizing, forethought, vicarious learning, self-regulation, and self-reflection. Given the focus of SCT on the active participation of learners in constructing their own learning context, SCT supports a more student-driven and individualized approach to learning.
through the entrenched focus on the self and forethought. This is evident through Bandura's (1986) assertion that unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act. Whatever other factors may operate as motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to produce the desired results. (p.228)

Therefore, by equipping students with the tools to foster their learning experiences from an individual perspective, active participation and knowledge of social studies could potentially increase as a direct result.

SCT has a direct application to the problem of practice. Consistent and active student participation are identified barriers for enhanced student learning at HSFI. With an action research study focus on the potential for flipped classroom models to positively impact student participation and performance in social studies classrooms, an understanding and theoretical approach grounded in SCT would be most appropriate. SCT assists with the conceptualization for the theoretical construct of focusing on the individual student in a social context and motivation as the driver toward highly effective instruction. While traditional methods of instruction view the teacher as the expert bestowing information on student subjects, a more student-centered approach such as the flipped classroom model is rooted in supporting individualized student pathways to knowledge and growth. Therefore, SCT is supportive of a flipped classroom model environment through potentially increasing student participation by way of a more learner-driven approach to instruction. This study looks to enhance this assertion through
the incorporation of educational technology tools created to expand student participation in the classroom, knowledge of social studies and the student social experience in and out of the classroom.

**Theory of Self-Efficacy**

Bandura’s (1993) theory of self-efficacy focuses on the belief in one’s ability to persevere and succeed or accomplish a task in specific situations. Self-efficacy can dictate a student's commitment or approach to goal setting and difficult challenges (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Additionally, a student’s self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one’s own motivation, behavior, and social environment (Bandura, 1993; Linnenbrink, & Pintrich, 2003; Schunk, 1985). Self-efficacy comes into play with regards to the student motivation and participation in the learning process and its effect on growth in knowledge across the curricula. Furthermore, the achievement gap in education plays a role through a disparity in opportunities and resources available. Those who have a plethora of resources bestowed upon them may experience a higher level of self-efficacy because they experience more significant control over their learning experiences and subsequent behavior. However, when given an equal playing field of opportunities, students who may not have enjoyed the same opportunities may be more persistent when given the opportunity to advance their capabilities as reflected in self-efficacy. Instructional choices aligned to a flipped learning model infused with technology in the classroom might help expose students to a wide array of information, educational resources, and opportunities for increasing student interest, motivation, active participation, and cultivating an environment of individualized learning (Bell, 2011;
These opportunities support the pedagogy of a flipped learning classroom environment and are connected to the theoretical foundations of SCT, self-efficacy, and social constructivism. Furthermore, incorporating educational technologies with a flipped classroom model may increase student participation, knowledge of social studies and the overall student experience in and out of the classroom. Therefore, constructing an environment tailored to enriching a student's self-efficacy as they work toward achieving their goals.

In terms of its relationship to self-efficacy and my problem of practice, the idea of increasing student participation in social studies classes through the use of instructional choices aligned to a flipped learning model could support an increase in student-centered instruction, knowledge and application of content from the Participation in Government course, and enhance student accountability in the learning process. Experiential activities and technology-based activities can provide students with the opportunities to analyze and develop their critical thinking skills with much greater veracity than the traditional method of textbook, pen, and paper.

Using a more inclusive instructional method such as the flipped classroom model may inspire a higher level of autonomy amongst students and a higher level of student motivation and participation in the classroom (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Given the resources and opportunities, any student can equip themselves with the necessary attributes required to become a professional in the career path of their choosing (Bandura, 1993; Zimmerman, 2000). The problem for these students at HSFI is the lack of specific resources available to meet our students’ needs and access to provided resources in the
classroom environment. Therefore, the infusion of instructional choices aligned with a flipped classroom model could be a game changer or tipping point the industry of education needs to provide opportunities for all students to succeed.

**Social Constructivism**

Within the modern classroom, teachers have experimented with a wide array of instructional methods, such as flipping the classroom and problem-based learning, to inspire student participation and motivation in the learning process (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford et al., 2009). The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model falls within this approach and within the theoretical framework of constructivism (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). Much like SCT, constructivism proposes that students' acquisition of knowledge is a function of the interaction between individuals and the social world (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Constructivism is a theoretical approach to the process of how people learn and retain knowledge through an active environment focused on constructing knowledge rather than acquiring knowledge (Piaget, 1954; Powell & Kalina, 2009; Vygotsky, 1980). Within a flipped classroom learning environment, one can ensure that students are individually responsible for their learning. In a constructivist-learning environment, students develop their own perceptions regarding course topics being covered and are to continuously refine these perceptions throughout the process of constructing their knowledge base (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Cooper, 1993; Powell & Kalina, 2009).

Constructivist concepts support the targeted instructional style and development of the individualized approach to learning that one can find within many flipped
classroom models. Flipped classroom models can support individualized learning approaches through pre-instructional assignments where students complete tasks on course discussion topics prior to the collaborative hands-on in-class activities on the topics in focus (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; MacMeekin, 2013; Tawfik & Lily, 2015). These experiential activities provide students with the capacity to develop initial perceptions of course material, and in turn preparing them for more rigorous learning activities in the classroom. Teachers can prepare activities that are tiered based on formative assessments that identify a student’s current level of understanding (Chappuis, 2012; Stiggins, Arter, Chappius, & Chappius, 2006). These tiered activities are produced from a student’s initial performance on the pre-class homework assignments and are designed to support and challenge a student through the learning process. This method of preparation structures a targeted approach to a student’s learning environment, with activities contingent upon the student's grasp of the content.

Related Research

Advocacy and Research in Educational Technology

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) (2015) along with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), reflect that technology-based activities in classrooms may foster an increase in student participation in the classroom learning environment and growth in a student’s knowledge of course content when partnered with critical thinking and content application to one's personal life. Partnering technology with an instructional approach, such as the flipped classroom learning environment, which fosters a learning environment rich in differentiated activities can further encompass a
pedagogical practice committed to the success of all learners. Furthermore, NASSP and AFT also assert that the use of technology in the classroom holds the potential to decrease the disparity of access to educational opportunities for all students, enhance the impact of instructional choices, and engage students in exciting methods of learning. Therefore, developing and implementing instructional methods such as the flipped classroom model and problem-based learning will assist the education community in providing more opportunities for learners to construct knowledge through student-centered approaches to teaching and learning.

One of the many goals of education is to prepare students to become actively engaged members within their potential career path, in society, and to be more analytically critical of content they are exposed to. Through fostering these values by educators, students gain the opportunity to be engaged learners. Achieving these goals charge educators to incorporate varying methods in the classroom for students in the pursuit of acquiring knowledge through the use of technology-based learning activities, flipped learning instructional models, and heavily differentiated instruction. Through the lobbying of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and other education driven advocates, Congress has introduced and attempted to pass multiple pieces of legislation to direct resources and focus attention on enhancing education through technology (NASSP, 2015). Two such specific bills introduced in prior Congresses include the Digital Learning Equity Act (2015) and the Enhancing Education Through Technology Act (2015). Both of these bills died at the end of the 114th Congress, but their content is important.
The Digital Learning Equity Act of 2015 proposed an expansion to Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The purpose of the bill was to support instructional methods which incorporate learning strategies with multiple entry points for students to engage in active learning activities. The bill supported strategies which are grounded in technology, and it also supported a commitment to teaching and learning models framed in differentiation and fostering active student participation in the classroom. In turn, flipped classroom instructional models garner much attention as an outlet of opportunities for student learning within the problem of practice associated with this action research study. Through partnering the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model with a technological focus, instructional choices dedicated to increasing student participation in the classroom learning environment, motivation, and student performance may construct a classroom environment rich in active learning, critical thinking, and application of content to a student's own personal life (Byford et al., 2009). Therefore, providing students with more autonomy in constructing their own learning experiences through the implementation of a flipped learning environment may potentially increase a student’s ownership of their role in constructing knowledge and a collaborative learning environment among peers.

The Digital Learning Equity Act proposed to specifically increase student participation in the classroom, improve student access to postsecondary education opportunities, and increase the education technology and digital learning resources available to educators through an increase of allocated monies, educator professional development, and conforming curricula objectives to the changing learning habits of each
generational student (Digital Learning Equity Act, 2015). The premise of this bill could have substantial positive impacts on the learning environments of all students through the infusion of government funding to improve instructional conditions within schools by enhancing technological capabilities and professional development opportunities for educators. These professional development opportunities could be used as a means of exposing educators to a variety of instructional methods with the intention of influencing instructional choices within the classroom to build a collaborative learning environment among peers. This is especially true for those students who are within urban school districts or Title I schools, such as the case at the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) in New York City.

The Enhancing Education Through Technology Act of 2015 proposed to improve achievement through technology and innovation (Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, 2015). The bill asserted that this can be achieved by improving college and career readiness, ensuring all students have access to rigorous and engaging digital learning experiences, ensuring educators have the knowledge and skills needed to develop technology-infused lessons and ensuring that educators and administrators are knowledgeable in the latest cutting-edge technologies for learning experiences in the classroom. The Digital Learning Equity Act of 2015 and the Enhancing Education Through Technology Act of 2015 were primed to boost technology-infused instruction in classrooms through an increase in funding earmarked for technology and professional development. However, it remains to be seen if these bills will fare in the next Congress. While increased funding for technology in the classroom is a notable improvement, the
focus on professional development is the more critical improvement as professional
development can have a more expeditious and more substantial overall impact on the
learning environment in the classroom.

The term educational technology includes the use of tablets, laptops, personal
devices, and Internet-based education platforms utilized within the classroom
environment (Bell, 2011, Layng & Twyman, 2013; Muir-Herzig, 2004, Romiszowski,
2004). These technologies have become a fixture for many educators, including myself
when working to deploy instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning
environment in the classroom. The flipped classroom model has garnered increasing
attention as a viable instructional method since the rapid infusion of technology in the
classroom commenced (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; Oyola, 2016).
Furthermore, educational technologies are also advanced in providing teachers and
students with a structured organization of materials through platforms, such as Google
Classroom, Google Drive and EDpuzzle (Smith & Mader, 2015).

With much attention directed toward declining student achievement and student
participation in the classroom, the claims made by NASSP are justified in attempting to
find a new mode of instruction to encourage students to take an active approach in the
learning process. NASSP and AFT with the guidance of existing research, support a
learning environment entrenched in technology-based and hands-on, active instruction. In
the social studies classroom, this is evident through the work of Bergmann and Sams
(2012), Gehlbach (2011), Saye and Brush (1999), and Brush and Saye (2008) in an
attempt to ascertain the cause(s) of decreased student participation, motivation, and
performance in the learning process. While Bergmann and Sams (2012) focus their attention on individualized learning through a flipped classroom learning model, Gehlbach (2011), Saye and Brush (1999), and Brush and Saye (2008) reflect on the potential impact of instructional methods specifically within the social studies classroom. Gehlbach (2011) shares the potential for increasing student participation in the social studies classroom through using course curricula to assist students in constructing their worldview explicitly. Saye and Brush (1999) and Brush and Saye (2008) focus on the inclusion of various forms of multimedia and the potential impact it may have on student participation in the classroom. Overall, these studies reflect a growing need and commitment to instructional styles which foster a technology-based and collaborative hands-on approach to the learning process.

**Flipped Classroom Models**

In a flipped classroom learning environment, educators can take on a role similar to a guide through an intellectual journey rather than the expert and beholder of information pertaining to the course content (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Chen, 2016). Flipped classroom instructional methods can challenge traditional approaches to teaching and learning by reducing educator “air time” and placing more emphasis on student-driven collaborative, hands-on, active learning experiences. For example, traditional instructional approaches, such as lecture and note-taking, become sources of homework for students to prepare for in-class discussions and interactive, hands-on activities (Bergmann and Sams, 2012; Kilman, 2013). In addition, the role of the educator in a flipped class is changed to be a guide in the learning process for students (Bergmann &
Sams, 2012). Flipped classroom models may use but are not limited to short instructional videos created by or adapted by the educator, primary source documents, or experiential community learning activities (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; MacMeekin, 2013).

MacMeekin (2013) takes the flipped classroom a step further with hands-on experiential activities outside of the classroom combined with instructional videos and primary source documents to prepare students for activities in the classroom rooted in critical thinking and personal application. These methods can allow educators to engage students through introducing course topics outside of the classroom prior to experiencing rigorous collaborative, hands-on activities and discussions in the classroom. Additionally, time in the classroom can be driven by project-based and differentiated collaborative learning activities which enrich the content studied by the students through a more hands-on approach (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; Kenna & Russell, 2014; Rotellar & Cain, 2016). Furthermore, the flipped classroom model encourages students to be more accountable for their own learning experiences while also incentivizing students to increase their activity in the education process (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; MacMeekin, 2013). Such an approach to teaching and learning where students are provided more autonomy over their in-class learning experiences may enhance their sense of ownership, commitment, and desire to experiment and learn (Chen, 2016; Rotellar & Cain, 2016). This pedagogical approach could also potentially bear encouraging results with regards to increasing student knowledge of social studies and participation in the classroom learning environment (Chen, 2016; Rotellar & Cain, 2016; Tawfik & Lilly, 2015).
For purposes of assessment and content planning, the utilization of formative assessments embedded in flipped learning instructional activities may assist in supporting the teacher in identifying mastery and initiating the next steps in the education journey for the students. Formative assessments are a collection of informal or formal assessments utilized daily by teachers to improve student retention of learning through modifying or enhancing learning activities based off of results from collected data (Chappuis, 2012). Additionally, these assessments are a process of continuous data collection, which also serve as an early indicator of student academic progress in the course (Black & William, 2009; Chappuis, 2012; Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis, & Chappuis, 2006). Furthermore, technology often plays a role in the development, implementation, and analysis of these assessments for a more significant impact on identifying individual trends in student learning. For example, within my classroom, formative assessments are predominantly managed through small Google Form quizzes which filter onto a Google Sheet where student academic progress can be further analyzed. Therefore, formative assessments serve as an essential component of a flipped learning environment covering means of tracking student performance and fueling data-driven instruction.

While formative assessments can significantly enhance an educator's perspective of their students’ performance in the learning process, they do little in the way of mitigating the time required to develop differentiated flipped lessons. Flipped learning environments have been observed to be extremely time intensive on the educator for preparing differentiated activities within the scope of the learning environment (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; Oyola, 2016). This is a direct result of the
drastic change in the instructional perspective within the classroom and outside of the
classroom learning experience practices. However, a growing number of studies have
reflected a strong connection between flipped classrooms and increased student
participation in the learning process and a student’s knowledge of social studies amongst
the students participating in this style of instruction. Bergmann and Sams (2012) and
Kilman (2013) assert that flipped classrooms combine methods of direct instruction with
those of constructivist perspectives in order to increase student participation and a
student's ability to apply course content to their personal lives.

Bergmann and Sams (2012), Kilman (2013), and MacMeekin (2013) assert that
moving traditional in class functions out of the classroom in the form of homework can
prepare students for more intense learning activities in the classroom. In a flipped
classroom environment, homework takes on more of an introductory role and replaces the
common lecture within a classroom-learning environment. Students engage in the course
topics through media sources, primary source documents and active learning
opportunities to explore concepts associated with the topic (Bergmann and Sams, 2012;
Hunley, 2016; Kilman, 2013). Students also explore and develop their initial perceptions
of the content and may create their own guiding questions to bring to class the following
day in order to ascertain a more detailed understanding of the content (Bergmann and
Sams, 2012; Kilman, 2013). Classroom learning experiences are observed to be more
group intensive and focused on developing critical thinking skills and practical
application of the acquired knowledge in order to explain and expand the topic studied by
the students (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Kilman, 2013; Marlowe, 2012). Through in-class
learning activities, students can actively engage in discussions and debates to develop explanations attached to the topic. Furthermore, students can expand their learning through identifying applied solutions to problems ascertained through the study of the topic in the social studies classroom (Kilman, 2013; Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

Other definitions and examples of flipped classrooms have incorporated the use of instructional videos as a primary means for engaging students in pre-class instruction. This action research study took a different approach to the meaning and power of constructing knowledge through out-of-class activities. The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model rendered out-of-class learning to be more experiential and hands-on to encourage students to take ownership of their learning experiences and provide student choice in driving learning experiences. Instructional videos were used to support a students experience in constructing their initial knowledge, but it was not the sole, nor the primary means of engaging students in developing their own perceptions of the course content. In addition, experiential learning activities were used to foster the greatest and most significant construction of knowledge. These experiential activities encouraged student learners to interact with the resources and environment afforded to them within New York City, and also encouraged students to work directly within their own communities to observe the personal connection and impact the topics covered in class had on their lives.

The instructional choices made during the action research study in the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model were influenced by findings from previous cycles of research and also related research from scholars identifying pathways to engage
students in a flipped learning environment. Previous cycles of research indicated a strong desire from students to have a choice in the way they conduct their initial development of ideas and knowledge. Students desired more autonomy over their learning experiences which resulted in a range of outside-of-class learning activities beyond an instructional video or primary source document. Within the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model, this was evident through a learning by doing approach to the outside-of-class learning activities. Furthermore, these out-of-class learning activities provided a pathway for students to develop their initial perceptions of the topic being studied and feel more comfortable to participate in the hands-on collaborative learning activities in the classroom that were rooted in critical thinking, problem-solving, and personal application.

Bergmann and Sams (2012) found that flipped classroom learning environments provide students who are habitually absent with the ability to keep up with the content being covered in the classroom due to the extent of initial learning students construct outside of the classroom. Additionally, the process of digesting content and acquiring introductory level understanding are evident in outside of the classroom experiences through instructional videos, primary source readings, secondary source informational readings, and other activities where students are provided the opportunity to form initial perceptions regarding a given course topic (Marlowe, 2012; Szoka, 2013). Therefore, through the lens of a flipped classroom learning environment, teachers are better able to identify individual student needs and construct a learning environment that is
differentiated with learning opportunities for all students (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Kilman 2013; MacMeekin, 2013).

Engaging students in the learning process through the flipped classroom model can provide students with the opportunity to be more accountable for their learning experiences and potentially encourage greater individualized learning. Research suggests that flipped classroom models greatly benefit student participation in the learning process and potential performance growth through a more individualized and differentiated approach to instruction by the educator (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; Rotellar & Cain, 2016; Szoka, 2013). In-class experiences are based on planned differentiated activities that inspire critical thinking, analysis, and application to real life/present-day issues within society that also take initial learning completed by students outside of the classroom and explore the topics in greater detail. Student learning experiences in the classroom are more hands-on, group-oriented and focused on problem-solving (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hunley, 2016; Kilman, 2013; MacMeekin, 2013). Within flipped learning environments, the role of the educator is to guide students through the various learning activities in the classroom. The role of the educator focuses on guiding student exploration of the topics studied, and to refrain from directly dictating learning experiences. Furthermore, in-class experiences are positioned to cultivate not only a deeply rooted understanding for the student but also the ability to apply the concepts of the content to scenarios in order to find solutions to problems (Hunley, 2016; Szoka, 2013). Additionally, the use of technology-based resources such as Google Classroom and EDpuzzle can assist educators in presenting outside of the classroom.
learning experiences and also to facilitate the various extension activities inside of the classroom. As a result, these technology-based resources act as a bridge in learning between the out of classroom experiences and the learning activities from inside of the classroom.

Technology-based resources are just one component to bridging out of classroom experiences to the learning process in the classroom. Experiential activities that embed learning experiences into the community may also foster improved student participation in the classroom and can easily be incorporated into a flipped classroom model. Bergmann and Sams (2012) and Oyola (2016) found that flipped classroom education helps improve the learning environment for students by providing opportunities for individualized student learning. The increase in student participation in the learning process may stem from an increase in time educators spend working directly with students in place of lecture and direct whole class instruction. Additionally, increased student interest in content topics may be a result of the use of a flipped classroom instructional method which includes technological resources to engage students in active learning experiences beyond traditional lecture and rote memorization of concepts (Oyola, 2016; Rotellar & Cain, 2016). Similarly, Tawfik and Lilly (2015) found through their research that connecting problem-based learning with flipped classroom instructional environments may considerably increase student interaction in science and mathematics classes. Tawfik and Lilly (2015) identified a positive connection from student perceptions with regards to the teacher acting more as a facilitator rather than a traditional lecturer. These pieces of literature reflect flipped classroom models as
collaborative, hands-on, active learning environments where students are challenged to think critically and analyze topics to develop individual assertions and application within society, not just mastery of the topic studied. Finally, with the research from Tawfik and Lilly (2015) and other leading flipped classroom researchers in mind, this action research study considers the potential for flipped classroom instructional environments to enhance student interaction and increase academic performance within a social studies classroom.

A growing focus within the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) is on individualized learning experiences and increasing rigor in the classroom. Flipped classroom models place much attention on individualized learning experiences and a more direct impact on learning by the student. As with any instructional method, not all students may support this point of view due to the individuality of the student. Issues which may present boundaries to success for students are potential limits to technology access outside of the classroom, greater workload outside of the classroom for students, motivation to succeed in school, increased responsibility on the educator to produce quality instructional activities. Furthermore, these concerns may cause students to not respond positively to an environmental shift of this magnitude within the classroom. However, recent research on the impact of flipped classrooms within the K-12 school system reflects a substantially positive response to the use of flipped classroom instructional methods beyond the concerns of the potential negative consequences. Therefore, the students who experience difficulty adjusting to flipped classroom methods may require additional time to adapt to a flipped classroom instructional method, or the educator will have to adapt to the needs
The goal for flipped classroom oriented educators is to cultivate a classroom environment grounded in the theoretical perspectives of a flipped learning environment. However, educators must be flexible in cultivating their learning environments to meet the needs of every student in the learning process.

**Student Participation in Social Studies Classrooms**

One of the primary potential contributors to an active flipped learning environment is enhanced participation in the learning process from the students. This is a critical issue in the literature on social studies education. For example, Smith, Sheppard, Johnson, and Johnson (2005) assert that “engaging students in learning is principally the responsibility of the teacher, who becomes less an imparter of knowledge and more a designer and facilitator of learning experiences and opportunities” (p. 2). These assertions regarding student participation in the learning process trace back to Dewey’s (1902) work and his philosophical beliefs that the learning process is most effective in a collaborative hands-on and social setting. In addition, some literature focusing on the learning process avow that learning is a social and interactive process which should be rooted in a problem-based instructional pedagogy focused on developing a student's cognitive skills to analyze content, think critically about the content, and ascertain evidence-based assertions pertaining to the content (Dewey, 1902, 1938; Kenna & Russell, 2014; Saye & Brush, 1999; Smith et al., 2005).

As discussed earlier, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) purports that an individual learns through lived experiences and observations from social interactions with peers. Recent research has shared the quality of the learning environment is directly tied to a
student’s participation in instructional activities and subsequent academic performance (Saye & Brush, 1999; Shernoff, Kelly, Tonks, Anderson, Cavanagh, Sinha & Abdi, 2016; Smith et al., 2005). For example, Saye and the Social Studies Inquiry Research Collaborative (SSIRC) (2013), Brush and Saye (2008), and Kenna and Russell (2014) suggest that coursework embedded in investigation, inquiry and a connection to current societal issues encourages student participation in the learning process and a more meaningful application of the course content. Additionally, cognitive development has been shown to be most dynamically acquired through environments where engaging learning experiences challenge students to utilize their knowledge through application to real-world quandaries in social studies classrooms (Saye & Brush, 1999; Saye & SSIRC, 2013).

Student participation in the learning process is directly impacted by the “reciprocal interaction between learners and a learning environment” (Shernoff et al., 2016). Traditional classroom learning environments where mastery is considered through successful recall of information fails to adequately challenge students to make connections to their personal lives and encourage further interest in inquiry (Brush & Saye, 2008; Kenna & Russell, 2014; Saye & Brush, 1999; Saye & SSIRC, 2013; Smith et al., 2005). On the contrary, instructional choices rooted in collaborative and investigative learning which is evident in flipped learning environments, prompt students to use analysis, critical thinking, and application to construct a more detailed and meaningful understanding of topics (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Byford, Lennon, & Russell, 2009; Kenna & Russell, 2014). Within my classroom, an example of instructional choices that
encourage students to think more critically of content and apply it to their personal lives is the incorporation of the C3 framework from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The C3 framework encourages students to use analysis and critical thinking in an inquiry-based approach to learning social studies. Therefore, classroom environments where active investigative learning takes place, such as the case with flipped learning environments, pursues a demonstration of knowledge which impacts the lives of students beyond the standard recall of knowledge (Saye & SSIRC, 2013; Szoka, 2013).

**Multimedia-Supported Learning**

Saye & Brush (1999) and Smith et al. (2005) assert through their work that a multimedia-supported active learning environment may increase a student’s interest in the course topic and subsequently present an opportunity for greater impact and application of the knowledge by the learner. Shernoff et al. (2016) argue that participation in the classroom can be contextually based and fluctuating from student to student. Therefore, incorporating a multimedia-supported approach to instruction, including a flipped learning environment, could greatly benefit the student learning experience, inspire students to be active participants in class activities, and develop intrinsic motivation amongst the students (Bandura, 1993; Linnenbrink, & Pintrich, 2003; Gehlback, 2011; Shernoff et al, 2016; Smith et al., 2005).

**Technology in Social Studies Classrooms**

Mason, Berson, Diem, Hicks, Lee, and Dralle (2000) outline five guiding principles for the effective use of technology in social studies classrooms. These principles are to "extend learning beyond what could be done without technology,"
introduce technology in context, include opportunities for students to study relationships among science, technology, and society, and foster the development of the skills, knowledge, and participation as good citizens in a democratic society” (Mason et al., 2000, p. 107). Through the five guiding principles, flipped learning environments garner the opportunity and support as a method for enhancing the experience of students in the social studies coursework. Technology serves in the introductory role to present content information through lecture-based instructional videos, primary source videos, WebQuests and other multimedia instructional sources. As a result, the classroom environment can transform into a breeding ground for discussion, small and large group activities and opportunities for creativity, critical thinking, and application. Achieving these outcomes would place students well beyond the concept of mastery and more so with the ability to engage in the real-life social application of the concepts learned.

Using online opportunities to extend learning experiences may provide students with more in-depth understanding and provide for a more analytical approach to content topics (Baylor & Ritchie, 2002; Keengwe, Onchwari, & Wachira, 2008). Furthermore, the use of educational technology applications, such as Google Apps for Education (GAFE) provide teachers with the ability to disseminate information to their students in organized, critical thinking, and problem-solving arena while encouraging collaboration amongst students (Herrick, 2009; Nevin, 2009). On the contrary, the influx of educational technology in the classroom and instructional methods, such as the flipped classroom model, has some researchers and teachers concerned there will be a new shift of responsibility for teachers. Wepner and Tao (2002) share that flipped classroom models
may result in a shift of teachers viewed as experts to a more novice facilitative role. Although this is only one vantage point, Wepner and Tao (2002) reflect much of the concern shared by teachers within the social studies department at the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) and their beliefs of moving from a more traditional style of instruction with the teacher as the primary deliverer of information in the classroom. However, the research propelling technology in the classroom is much more intriguing and encouraging than the research reflecting educator concern. Educators will have to change their practice as learning objectives move forward in the 21st century and technology is further infused into the classroom.

**Connections with Planned Innovation**

SCT, self-efficacy, and social constructivism were chosen as the main theoretical approaches supporting the study as a means for investigating and evaluating the potential positive opportunities for instructional choices aligned with the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model. Additionally, the spotlight of the research study is focused on increasing student participation and performance within social studies classrooms at HSFI. SCT was chosen to further understand the most effective ways students learn and how to foster these methods in a flipped classroom environment. Self-efficacy is reflective of how motivation influences student participation in the learning process. The more resilient a student is, the more that student will be able to control their learning, become more engaged in the classroom, and make a more substantial gain concerning their knowledge of social studies. This goes hand in hand with learning objectives focused on individualized learning through the use of student-centered instructional
methods. Self-efficacy was also utilized to reflect how these opportunities within 21st-century techniques provide new opportunities for all students to succeed and propel themselves toward their educational and career goals. Furthermore, social constructivism supports how students learn and construct knowledge through experiential and collaborative learning activities. Finally, it is through the frameworks of SCT, self-efficacy, and social constructivism that provided an opportunity to study the potential impacts of instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom models on student participation in the learning process and the construction of knowledge in social studies classes.

Related literature on student participation in the learning process and flipped classroom models were chosen to ascertain the importance of instructional practice embedded in inquiry and application as a means for constructing knowledge. Since traditional instructional methods have been identified as driving a problem of practice at HSFI, increasing student participation in social studies, influencing the construction of knowledge in social studies, and developing student self-efficacy in the learning process was the goal of the planned innovation. Supported by SCT, self-efficacy, and social constructivism, the planned innovation aims to increase student participation, knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process through implementing a collaborative peer-driven learning environment where students are given autonomy over their ability to construct knowledge and reflect mastery through the application of their learning. The incorporation of instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom model was intended to increase student participation and motivation to learn through
challenging students with collaborative learning activities which were based in inquiry, critical thinking, and application to current societal issues. Finally, the flipped classroom innovation was intended to provide students with a more individualized approach over their learning experiences outside of the classroom while incorporating a collaborative hands-on and peer-driven learning environment inside of the classroom.

**Previous Research in the Situated Context**

Through previous cycles of research, I observed the underlying trend from collected data, which reflected curiosity among the staff members interviewed and an initial positive experience by the students who participated in a short pilot focusing on instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom model. Teachers who were interviewed were curious about the potential for an instructional methodology such as the flipped classroom to be useful in challenging students with rigorous instructional experiences and preparing students for state-mandated standardized assessments. Additionally, students boasted to their delight about having more autonomy over their learning experiences. The students also said that they were pleased with the opportunities afforded to them to construct and apply their assertions within the classroom environment amongst their peers. However, not all participants provided glowing remarks pertaining to the flipped classroom model. Some students were afraid of the impact more autonomy would have on their performance due to the threat of procrastination and lack of desire to complete an assignment outside of the classroom. These are considerations which are addressed on a student by student case to determine the best pathway for success in the
Finally, flipped classrooms provide the flexibility to maintain an individualized approach to learning within a collaborative learning environment.

Teacher Interviews

I first interviewed eight fellow teachers in the social studies department at HSFI. The semi-structured interviews focused on the instructional methods teachers used most often within the classroom learning environment. In addition, the interviews explored the teacher’s awareness and knowledge of student-driven instructional methods aimed at increasing rigor and performance in the classroom. Several teachers were skeptical of a flipped classroom structure, sharing their concern or utter disdain for an instructional method which does not incorporate the educator as the primary means of bestowing knowledge. Many of the educators stated that they did not believe their students would learn the content better than with the teacher acting as the primary source of information. Furthermore, the educators stated that they did not believe a flipped classroom instructional model was a viable option due to the increase in responsibility placed on the students and lack of direct instruction from teacher to student in the classroom. The perceptions of the educators are essential to note as future iterations of this action research program, and any implementation of a student-driven instructional practice would require support from educators.

Flipped Classroom Pilot

Following the interviews with my colleagues, the next iteration provided student participants with the opportunity to take a flipped classroom model for a test drive for one content unit within my Participation in Government course. For this unit, which
lasted approximately three weeks, students viewed instructional videos assigned to them on EDpuzzle or read primary source documents for homework the night before we covered the topic in class the following day. Students were also assigned secondary assignments depending on the in-class activities to go along with the instructional video, such as developing discussion questions, initial background research on a particular character, developing predictions and connections to future content topics. Additionally, differentiated tasks in the classroom ranged from developing in-class presentations, role-playing, debates, and problem-solving through the use of hands-on educational games, such as BreakoutEDU. Finally, responses from students were strongly positive and pointed to an initial connection between flipped classroom models and increased student participation in the learning process. The final cycle of research for this action research study incorporated methods for measuring knowledge of government, student participation in the learning process, and self-efficacy in one’s learning between a flipped classroom and a class of students who receive a more traditional method of instruction.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Chapter three focuses on the methods that I used to conduct, collect, and analyze data for the action research study. The setting of the action research study, a description of the participants included in the study, and the role of the researcher are thoroughly outlined in the following paragraphs. Additionally, a detailed description of the instruments and methods for data collection used in the study are reviewed. This is followed by a description of the innovation, which incorporates individualized student learning opportunities and instructional choices aligned to a flipped learning model to address the concerns of student participation in the classroom, knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process. The method section concludes with a discussion of the methods used for data analysis as well as a discussion surrounding potential threats to validity and reliability measurement test results.

The purpose of this study was to focus on identifying the potential impact a flipped learning environment may have on student participation and performance in a social studies classroom at a themed high school in New York City. Specifically, this research studied whether instructional choices based in a flipped learning design leads to an increase in student self-efficacy, participation, performance, and rigorous instruction in the classroom. One consideration by educators attempting to improve pedagogy is through the use of collaborative hands-on learning environments, such as flipped classroom models, to entrench students in the learning process and create an environment full of differentiated learning and student choice. In doing so, students gain a greater
sense of autonomy and accountability for their own learning within their classroom experiences. At HSFI, these types of learning environments may be exactly what our students need to shift their perception of learning and provide enriched opportunities to construct their knowledge. At HSFI, our school-wide problem of practice is a combination of decreasing student participation and a lack of rigorous instruction inside of the classroom, which has subsequently led to decreases in student learning. As explained previously, I believe students are not a static variable but an ever-changing generational advancement of the students who preceded them. Therefore, the belief that redundancy in instructional ideologies will continue to produce student learning that meet or exceed expectations year after year is a major contributor of the advancing educational woes schools such as HSFI are currently grappling with.

The goal of this action research study was to document perceptions of the students regarding the impacts of the experienced instructional choices on their ability to construct their learning, think critically about course topics, and apply course topics to their personal lives. Through identifying and evaluating these perceptions of the students, I evaluated instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom learning environment for its potential impact on student participation in the classroom, knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process. In advance of the action research study, I developed a self-efficacy survey with three constructs to document the perceptions of students regarding their confidence in the learning process. I conducted the pre-innovation surveys at the beginning of the action research study with all participants to gather and understand current student perceptions of their confidence in completing
various tasks within the learning process. The pre-innovation survey was followed by a pretest to ascertain all participants’ initial knowledge of government topics. Throughout the duration of the study, all participants participated in mini check-in interviews that served as reflections and updates for the researcher while the study was ongoing. Finally, the data collection culminated with eight semi-structured individual interviews, four from the flipped class and four from the traditional class. A post-survey completed by all participants and a posttest completed by all participants at the end of the study to gather data on the perceptions of students identify potential growth in student self-efficacy and their knowledge of government, and in doing so document the impacts of the instructional choices involved in the study.

This action research study builds upon previous cycles of research where a small group of teachers were interviewed about their perceptions of the impact instructional choices have in the learning process and a group of students participated in a survey gauging their perceptions of their roles in the learning process and the style of instruction they prefer. These previous cycles of research played significant roles in the development of this action research study due to the iterative nature of action research as a continuous learning process. The iterative process of action research is significant because it provides practitioners within the education setting with the ability to identify a problem of practice and pursue pathways to improve practice (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006; McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 2003; McNiff & Whitehead, 2009; Mertler, 2016). Furthermore, action research in education is used to empower practitioners to partake in the process of school improvement through improving practice and creating knowledge
of practice for the practitioner (McNiff et al., 2003; Mertler, 2016). Additionally, action research is an iterative process because it serves the researcher, or practitioner, with direct knowledge of their practice and potential avenues for improving their practice to have a larger impact within the context of their research (Mertler, 2016). Therefore, this action research study is indicative of another cycle to gather information, develop knowledge of my own practice, and reflect on how to improve my own practice. In doing so, I can develop the focus for the next cycle of action research and continue the improvement process on a larger scale within the education context for which I am situated in.

Creswell (2014) defines mixed methods research designs as comprised of both quantitative and qualitative research methods, used in one of a variety of ways. This action research project uses an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design as a means of overcoming potential limitations shared by single method designs. For this study, the explanatory sequential method uses qualitative methods to inform quantitative data in the form of pre-/post-surveys and pre/posttests. Additionally, concurrent triangulation of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used to connect and confirm outcomes driven by the analysis of the data within the study. Concurrent triangulation occurs when two or more methods of data collection are used to confirm and develop interpretations of data from various sources (Creswell, 2014). For this action research study, data collected from the 32 mini check-in interviews, eight semi-structured interviews, and researcher observation notes were the qualitative basis for interpretations. The process of triangulation is used as a means of constructing interpretations on the
impact of the innovation in the research study from the data collected. Quantitative approaches were used to evaluate student responses on the pre and post self-efficacy surveys and evaluate participants’ knowledge of government in terms of the potential impact of instructional choices on student learning. Additionally, qualitative approaches were used to collect and analyze the perceptions of the participants regarding the instructional choices made by the educator. These expressions of student perceptions were prompted by interview questions ascertaining how the instructional choices by the teacher may have impacted the participants’ motivation, participation in the class, and accountability in the learning process. Other perceptions from participants connected to the impact of the instructional choices included the participants’ ability to apply their critical analysis skills to current issues or each participant’s personal life.

Flipped learning environments might encourage teachers to take on a role similar to a guide through an intellectual journey rather than as the expert and sole beholder of information pertaining to the course content (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Chen, 2016). Flipped classroom instructional methods might also challenge more traditional approaches to teaching and learning by reducing the time that educators talk at students and placing more emphasis on active learning by the students. Flipped learning environments might also create more autonomy and accountability for students to take charge of their learning. The potential for flipped learning environments to make a positive impact on student participation in the learning process and student knowledge of social studies within the HSFI community was driven by the research questions guiding this study:
RQ 1: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how does participation in a flipped learning model influence student perceptions of active participation and accountability for learning?

RQ 2: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy in the learning process?

RQ 3: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government?

Contextual Setting and Participants

Setting

As described in chapter one, the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) is a well-respected high school within the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) system that strives to prepare students to be active and collaborative participants in a challenging and highly complex society (Blank, 2015). Administration and faculty members of the HSFI community have observed a recent decline in student participation in the classroom and performance in social studies classes. This action research study focused on student participation, knowledge of social studies content, and self-efficacy in the learning process. Furthermore, this action research study focused specifically on the subject of social studies in two different senior government class sections. HSFI is comprised of 1,671 students; 52% of the students are Hispanic, 37% are Black, 6% are Asian, and 4% are Caucasian. Additionally, 3% of the student population
are English Language Learners, and 16% are identified as Students with Special Needs (New York City Department of Education, 2017). These statistics reflect the diverse learning environment of HSFI and are consistent with current population trends in New York City.

HSFI boasts a 91% average graduation rate amongst its student population with nearly all of those graduates accepted to some form of postsecondary education (Blank, 2015; New York City Department of Education, 2017). Since our priority and mission at HSFI is to assist our students to become college and career ready, it is imperative to transform our instructional methods to be more student-centered, rigorous, and challenging. In doing so, this will provide the opportunity for educators to foster a learning environment rooted in critical thinking and application of course content to one’s personal life. This study focused on identifying the potential impact on student participation in the classroom setting through the use of a flipped learning instructional environment in a social studies classroom. As such, outcomes stemming from this study will hopefully garner more support from stakeholders within the school for future iterations of this research dedicated to studying the potential impact flipped learning models may have on instruction across the HSFI curricula.

Participants

Participants were recruited to participate in the study based on their registration in my fourth or fifth period Participation in Government courses. Those who agreed to participate in the study completed a consent process which was contingent upon the age of the student at the start of the research and required by the Arizona State University
(ASU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix F). Students 18 or older completed the consent process without parent consent (see Appendix I). I asked students under 18 to obtain consent from their parents and also complete their own assent form (see Appendix J).

The participants for the action research study incorporated 32 high school seniors from two separate sections of Participation in Government courses. From the fourth period class, 13 students participated in the study, and 19 students participated from the fifth period class. Participant ages ranged between 17 and 19, reflective of the predominate demographics of the high school, except that the participants in the classes differed in terms of whether Black or Hispanic students were in the majority. Table 1 displays the demographics of students involved in the study.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Fourth period (flipped)</th>
<th>Fifth period (traditional)</th>
<th>All participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% female</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Hispanic</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% White</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consistent with the majority of their generation, the participants have and use their knowledge of various technologies available to them for constructing learning opportunities and social communication use. Also consistent with their generation,
participants may reflect varying degrees of understanding for technology uses in the instructional environment of a classroom, as well as flipped classroom models. The participant pool formed from two government-class sections is to enable a comparison of participants experiencing instructional choices aligned to a flipped classroom learning environment with participants in a section that experienced a more traditional style of instruction. The flipped class learning environment provided participants with individualized student learning opportunities through experiential homework assignments which prompted student choice in constructing one’s knowledge. Individualized student learning opportunities served as the foundation for participants to cultivate initial perceptions and knowledge of content in order to build deeper and more meaningful connections through hands-on collaborative activities in class. Finally, the recruitment of participants fell under the purposeful sampling approach due to the inclusion of only students within my Participation in Government course during their senior year of study at HSFI. This decision to only include specific students is supported by Creswell’s (2015) discussion about participant selection to “intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon.” (p. 5).

**Role of the Researcher**

Within the action research study, I functioned as a participant and observer. Since I was the educator bestowing the in-class instructional experiences, I held a prominent role in the development and implementation of the innovation for the research. During the research study, I had to ensure that the instructional choices of each class were separate and identified with the instructional method used in the specific class. This was
especially challenging for me as an educator since my usual style of classroom instruction before the action research study did not align specifically to either instructional method included in the study. Additionally, careful attention was given to my role as the researcher and educator due to the potential threat to validity and to preserve the credibility of the study. Therefore, my role as the researcher also presents potential limitations to the study through bias I may have held toward a specific instructional method during the study.

**Innovation**

This action research study evaluated the potential for instructional choices that incorporated a flipped learning instructional design to be used in social studies classrooms with a target of increasing student participation and knowledge of government course concepts. There were a variety of educational technologies that were partnered with the flipped classroom instructional design to provide multiple opportunities for student participation in meaningful, detailed, and individualized learning opportunities. The platform used in conjunction with the flipped classroom instructional design for this innovation was the Google for School G-Suite, or Google Apps for Education (GAFE). My goal for this innovation was to evaluate the extent to which a shift toward a more student-driven instructional design such as the flipped classroom learning environment promotes a positive learning experience for the students in the Participation in Government class, and where that might more generally increase student engagement and performance in social studies classrooms at HSFI.
The innovation integrated a flipped classroom instructional design into one section of my *Participation in Government* course. Curriculum studied in the two sections of *Participation in Government* were the same, but the learning activities differed due to the differences in instructional choices between the flipped class and the traditional class. Formative assessments and deliberate hands-on learning activities were used as a means of driving daily instructional experiences. This was achieved through the use of educational technology applications, such as Google Apps for Education (GAFE), EDpuzzle, Plickers, and non-educational technologies such as BreakoutEDU. EDpuzzle is an internet resource for educators to find and share instructional videos with their students. EDpuzzle seamlessly syncs with Google Classroom and provides educators with the ability to embed multiple choice and short answer questions into instructional videos, enhance instructional videos with voice overs for points of emphasis, and the ability to track student progress with each instructional video assigned to the students. Plickers is an internet assessment tool resource for educators to develop, deliver, and obtain assessment data instantaneously. Plickers eliminates pen and paper based assessments and is an interactive method for obtaining assessment data where students use a QR code on a piece of paper to answer multiple choice questions. Student answers are recorded on the Plickers application by the educator using a device to scan the students answers in real time. BreakoutEDU is a game that encourages hands-on collaborative learning and challenges students to use analysis, critical thinking, and problem solving to unlock the lockbox to solve the mystery. The BreakoutEDU game takes content from the core subjects and transforms it into a game where students work
collaboratively to solve steps that unlock locks attached to a box. The contents inside of the box remain a mystery and are contingent upon which game is being played.

Examples of hands-on learning activities included creative group projects, Socratic seminars, presentations, and individual projects with community application. Specific government lessons, activities, and primary sources were credited and adapted from iCivics, Stanford University, Reading Like a Historian, National Constitution Center (NCC), Bill of Rights Institute, National Archives, Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN) and the Library of Congress (LoC). GAFE was used as a digital classroom environment for student collaboration, housing of assignments and assessments, and the primary form of communication between teacher and students outside of the classroom. EDpuzzle was used as a source for creating and disseminating instructional video pre-activities to the students, while Plickers and Google Forms were used for formative assessment purposes and maintaining individual student performance trends.

**Traditional Classroom Implementation**

For the traditional classroom, the concepts of the social studies curriculum within the Participation in Government class were disseminated to students through PowerPoint lectures and the class textbook, Government Alive. Access to the PowerPoint lectures was provided through Google Classroom after each class to give students the opportunity to review the content discussed in class. Instructional choices in the traditional class favored whole class question and answer during lecture. In addition, homework assignments took the form of summative assessments to extend learning experiences from in-class lecture
and discussion. For example, often homework assignments would consist of reading and annotating the chapter currently being studied in class followed by answering the contextual questions at the end of the chapter. Activities in the classroom used to engage students were centered around whole class discussions directed by the teacher. Small group discussions and hands-on activities were rarely used in the instructional environment. Furthermore, content was delivered by the teacher with minimal differentiation unless student specific student needs were outlined on an individual education plan (IEP) to remain in compliance with New York State Education Law.

Student learning objectives were targeted through memorization of course material and completion of summative assignments to reflect mastery of the course content. Summative assessments in the traditional class relied on quizzes, unit exams, and research papers. Finally, my role as the teacher in the traditional class was more of an expert providing students with the information they needed in order to succeed in the class. Students were given weekly quizzes to assess learning for each topic discussed during the week with culminating summative assessments at the end of each unit.

During the action research study, the traditional class studied a unit on the United States Constitution and the First Amendment. This unit studied the origins of the United States Constitution, the importance of the three branches of government, and a breakdown of the individual rights found within the First Amendment. Students participated in whole class discussions on the roles each branch of government serves and how each branch can also be checked. In addition, the teacher and students reviewed primary source documents and lecture notes together in class for the First Amendment.
Homework assignments completed by the students included reading chapter text from the course textbook, answering questions aligned to the course topics on review worksheets, reading supplemental text, completing current event exercises in a written paper format, and reviewing course notes in preparation for summative assessments. Students completed a research paper on the First Amendment where they were asked to research, outline, and discuss the importance of each of the rights connected to the First Amendment. Finally, the traditional instruction class had minimal collaborative learning experiences, and individualized learning experiences were focused on student to teacher interaction instead of peer to peer interaction.

**Flipped Classroom Implementation**

For the flipped classroom, I matched concepts of the social studies curriculum within the *Participation in Government* class with appropriate technologically based lessons to foster active participation outside of the class and to help prepare each student for the in-class activities. Activities were developed for each of the topics within the course curriculum to engage students in pre-learning of unit topics outside of class time. Examples of these activities included but were not limited to the following: instructional videos, primary source documents, webquests, digital game activities, interviewing peers and community members, and visiting locations in New York City such as Federal Hall that held a connection to the topic(s). These activities were a means for developing initial knowledge of course concepts and also provide individualized student learning opportunities. Additional activities provided to the students which fell under the flipped classroom instructional ideology included digital scavenger hunts, physical scavenger
hunts within New York City, visiting a museum or local government facility connected with the class topic, and brainstorming initial suggestions for solving a societal issue prompted prior to class discussions (MacMeekin, 2013).

Through the completion of the pre-activity assignments, I had hoped that students would develop a source of prior knowledge available for them to tap into through differentiated hands-on activities. These in-class activities centered around challenging the perceptions of the students based on the knowledge acquired, assisting students in a meaningful connection to present day issues and their personal lives. Through this process, students were supposed to acquire the knowledge set forth by state standards and also develop important skills and abilities in identifying impacts, thinking critically and challenging various viewpoints, working collaboratively in peer groups, and multiple methods of learning. In its ideal form, a flipped classroom is not based on lecture and the creation of knowledge from within the classroom but in creating opportunities to further a student’s pre-developed knowledge through individualized student learning opportunities and allow them to experience activities which challenge their preconceived beliefs about the topics covered in the classroom.

Example of a flipped class social studies unit of study. The unit on political history covered the history of political parties, how political parties are created, political ideology, and politics in the community. Students participated in experiential homework assignments to construct their initial perceptions of political parties and their own political ideology. These experiential homework assignments prepared the students for the hands-on collaborative activities in-class where students cultivated a deeper
understanding of political history, the impact of political parties on United States history, and their own political beliefs.

**Experiential homework assignments connected to the political history unit.** The unit commenced with a homework assignment that required students in the flipped class to pick a historical political party from a list provided and gather initial information about the political party to report back to the class. Some overlap existed due to the size of the class versus the number of political parties in United States government history, but this overlap was intended to add to the in-class discussion. Students gathered information on the beginnings of the political party, the origins of the party’s name, what the party platform had focused on, and any connections that could be made to the current Democratic and Republican parties. Through this activity and in-class discussion, students were supposed to uncover a more robust understanding of the evolution of the Democratic and Republican party ideologies during the post-Civil War era, how and why the Democrats have a donkey as their logo while the Republicans have an elephant, and why other parties such as the Whig party no longer exist. In addition, students viewed instructional videos from Crash Course Government and Politics on the development of political parties, reviewed several primary source documents connected to political party platforms and events which shaped present day political parties, interviewed members of their community about their political ideologies, and researched the impact of lobbying and lobbyist groups on today’s political climate.

**Hands-on in-class activities connected to the political history unit.** In-class activities supporting the political history unit included a creative group project, guided
discussion, debate, political inventory, and exploring political perspectives. The creative group project challenged students in the flipped class to design their own political party which included their own party platform, party logo, slogan, and convention speech. Each group also identified one of its members to be the candidate for their party. Groups were allowed to use the current Democratic and Republican platforms as a reference, but the members of each group had to create their own platform. At the conclusion of the group project, candidates from each group participated in an in-class debate on predetermined current issues within government.

Socratic seminars were used as a primary method for guided class discussions and deliberations. Socratic seminars allow students greater autonomy in developing their initial perceptions outside of class in preparation for an in-class discussion rooted in primary source documents and research (Tredway, 1995; Parker & Hess, 2001). Socratic seminars in the flipped class were student-led, with the teacher serving as a guide through posing guiding questions to engage and welcome students into the discussions. Socratic seminars were used to explore political ideology and exploring individual political perspectives. Finally, Socratic seminars were also used in other units during the action research study and incorporated topics such as the Second Amendment, foreign policy, and economic policy.

**Differentiation of learning.** In addition to the concepts encompassed through the flipped classroom, differentiation of learning was incorporated into the innovation through flexible grouping and student choice within assignments given. Willis and Mann (2000) described their concern that teaching philosophies which use a one-size-fits-all
approach to instruction miss out on the opportunity to reach all learners. This instructional concern ties directly into the focus of this action research study, in which student choice and accountability may be supported with a flipped learning environment. Willis and Mann (2000) argued for a differentiated approach to teaching and learning to reach the spectrum of learners from gifted student to students who may require additional attention and particular services. Tomlinson (2013) asserted that differentiated instruction “... provides guidance for teachers in addressing student differences in readiness, interest and learning profile, with the goal of maximizing the capacity of each learner” (p. 287). Differentiated instruction is a process for engaging students of varying learning preferences, readiness to study a topic, and ability to complete assigned tasks (Hall, 2002; Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). Students can be grouped in a multitude of ways depending on what the facilitator (teacher) is intending to accomplish. For example, students may be placed into different groups contingent upon results of the pre-activity assignment (e.g., those who did not complete the assignment; those who did not perform well with the assignment; –and those who accomplished mastery of the concepts through the pre-activity assignment). Within these differentiated groups, assignments and activities can be incorporated to address the current level of understanding by the student, and upon completion incorporate them into the next level activity within the classroom. Through the model of differentiating learning, teachers can promote an environment where students receive the necessary knowledge base to gain understanding and impact through the in-class activities.
For this action research study, instructional activities were differentiated through student choice within instructional assignments, flexible groupings, and multiple entry points into the concepts for students to participate in the lesson. Examples of summative assessment opportunities used in the social studies classroom environments in the past included written essays, political cartoons, podcasts, student made instructional videos, and poetry. Flexible groupings were used to pair students with similar levels of understanding and to pair students with similar preferences for expressing their knowledge (e.g., written essay, political cartoons, and podcasts). Multiple entry points provide students with opportunities to gain access to concepts being studied in the class (Tomlinson, 2001). Examples of multiple entry points used in the social studies classroom environments included modeling a concept by the teacher or students, gathering contextual information from provided text, developing understanding through political cartoons or pictures, and collaborative learning activities were used as a range of choices inviting students to engage in meaningful learning. In addition, by providing opportunities for individualized learning with a video clip to watch, political cartoon to analyze, or primary source document to analyze, I gave students multiple pathways to participate in the lesson. Finally, multiple options for students to express their knowledge via summative assessment choices and in-class activities allowed for students to find their voice in expressing what they have learned through studying a particular topic. These methods of differentiating instruction in the social studies classroom teamed with a instructional choices aligned with a flipped classroom model were incorporated into the
action research study to target an increase in student participation and knowledge of
government.

**Instruments**

This mixed-methods action research study incorporated a variety of instruments to
record and collect data from the participants. Quantitative data was collected through a
self-efficacy survey evaluating participant confidence in completing tasks critical to
success in a civics/government class. The survey can be found in Appendix B. The self-efficacy survey contained three constructs focused on the confidence of the students to
perform certain tasks targeted to collect student perception data on instructional choices
aligned with the methods of a flipped classroom model. The three constructs within the
self-efficacy survey were confidence in the capacity to understand content outside of the
class, confidence in the capacity to come into class and have a meaningful discussion on
course topics, and confidence in the capacity to apply course content to current
events/personal lives. Each of the constructs collected and measured data specifically
connected with an element characteristic of individualized student learning in a flipped
classroom-learning environment. Additional quantitative data included participant test
scores tied to knowledge of government obtained from a pretest and posttest on topics
covered within the *Participation in Government* course. The pretest was a set of 55
multiple choice questions drawn from a New York City test bank of questions on United
States government and can be found in Appendix C. The posttest was a set of 60 multiple
choice questions drawn from the 1999 Advanced Placement United States Government
assessment and can be found in Appendix D. Pretest and posttest data will be used to
evaluate potential increases in student knowledge of government in substantial part through the potential for a flipped classroom to provide a more enriching learning environment than traditional instructional methods.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews to obtain participant perceptions and reflections about their experiences during the action research study. These individual interviews were conducted using a purposive sampling technique of selective sampling and included one 45 minute audio recorded interview with four students from each Participation in Government section participating in the action research study. Four students were selected at random to provide more focused perceptions of the instructional choices made by the educator. Purposive sampling is a technique used in research studies to represent the characteristics of a population and to synthesize the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, individual short interviews consisting of short 2-3 minute weekly check-ins with random participants throughout the course of the action research study. These mini check-ins were not taped, but documented by the researcher in a designated notepad. Students were asked to reflect on the instructional choices made by the teacher and how these instructional choices may have impacted their learning experiences. Appendix E includes the interview protocols for both the short weekly check-ins and the longer individual interviews at the end of the innovation.

Procedure

Two United States Government courses were incorporated into the action research study. One section of the course experienced instructional choices aligned with a flipped
learning instructional environment, as described in the **Innovation** section above. The other section of the *Participation in Government* course experienced no change in instruction and instructional choices in that class resembled a traditional style of instruction based around lecture. Students were recruited to participate in the data collection from each *Participation in Government* course, using a standalone consent process for students 18 years old and older, and a combined parent/guardian consent and minor assent for students under 18.

Once consent was obtained from the participants, a self-efficacy survey, and then a content pretest was administered to both classes. The pretest consisted of 55 multiple choice questions covering an array of topics from the Participation in Government curriculum and New York State Standards for 12th grade social studies. This was drawn from a New York City test bank with practice United States Government and Politics multiple-choice questions available for in class use. The use of such questions from exams as practice tests is part of ordinary classroom activities during the year for this class. After the pretest was administered, the researcher conducted an initial analysis of the collected data to establish a baseline of understanding of course content by both sections of the course. Then, the innovation was implemented in only one of the sections of the class for the duration of the action research study. Over the course of the study, the researcher met individually with student participants for a 2-3 minute check-in pertaining to the students’ perception of their performance and participation in the class while the innovation was implemented.
At the end of the study, the researcher met individually with four students from each section of the *Participation in Government* course, who consented to data collection, to compile overall perceptions and reflections of the innovation during one 45-minute audio recorded interview per interviewed participant. Students in both sections were given the self-efficacy survey again to evaluate potential change in student confidence to complete instructional tasks aligned with the learning process. Students in both sections also completed a posttest to measure student knowledge of government over the course of the study by comparing the pretest to the posttest results. The posttest was drawn from the 1999 Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics examination, which included 60 multiple choice questions and is aligned to the curriculum studied in my *Participation in Government* classes during the academic year. For a clearer understanding of how these procedural events transpired, please see Table 2.
### Table 2

*Timeline and Procedures for the Action Research Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November - December</td>
<td>Prepared instructional materials</td>
<td>Transformed instructional materials to be used in the flipped class during the innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Recruited students to participate in the action research study.</td>
<td>Met with students and obtained necessary written consent from students and parents or guardians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Self-efficacy survey administered</td>
<td>Emailed survey link to participants; reviewed initial responses to gather initial observations of the Treatment and Control groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test administered</td>
<td>Completed via hard copy in class to develop a baseline of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February - June</td>
<td>Flipped Classroom innovation</td>
<td>Monitored student participation in the flipped classroom through observations of student participation during hands-on activities and accountability for own learning through completion of preparatory homework assignments. Technology based formative assessments used to drive instructional activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducted weekly check-in interviews with two students from each study</td>
<td>Gathered information from students during the study regarding their perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Conducted individual interviews with participants to debrief and gather post-innovation data and perceptions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual interviews allowed for participants to share reflections and understanding of perceptions pertaining to the effectiveness of increasing student participation through the use of flipped classroom instructional environments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Self-efficacy survey administered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed via hard copy in class. Review responses to evaluate potential change in student confidence to complete instructional tasks in the learning process aligned to the instructional choices aligned to the flipped classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Posttest administered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed via hard copy in class. Evaluation of student performance trends conducted after completion of the Posttest to make assertions pertaining to the impact of the instructional choices administered within the innovation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member checking was conducted to check for accuracy or clarification of collected interview data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

Qualitative Methods

I used qualitative approaches to identify a potential impact of the quantitative data and to uncover the feelings, opinions, situations, and patterns that occurred during the action research study. These data were comprised of the mini check-in interviews with students, the eight semi-structured interviews at the conclusion of the study, and the field notes I documented throughout the study.

Table 3 summarizes the scope of the collected qualitative data. Interview questions were open-ended as a means of encouraging all students to elaborate on their perceptions and experiences during the action research study. I wrote field notes bi-weekly to provide substantial time for observation and reflection about the Treatment and Control groups within the action research study.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Texts</th>
<th>Total Word Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini Check-in Interviews</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>33,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question one depended on qualitative data collected through individual interviews with each student during the action research study. These interviews consisted of one 45 minute interview with four students from both the Treatment and Control groups, and were audio recorded. These interviews will be preceded by 2-3 minute mini
check-in interviews with all participants from the Treatment and Control groups. The audio recorded interviews were transcribed and coded through three cycles of coding using the HyperRESEARCH coding program. The coding methods used to analyze the collected qualitative data consisted of process coding, axial coding, and theoretical coding.

**Process coding.** Process coding was used to identify interactions and emotions in response to experiences students encountered in the classroom that were connected to the instructional choices delivered by the educator. Process coding refers to actions described by participants within the individual interviews. Saldana (2009) and Corbin and Strauss (2008) recommend process coding to delineate interactions with a situation or problem when there is a goal of finding a solution. This action research study looked to identify a potential solution to the stated problem of practice of decreasing student participation and performance in social studies classrooms at HSFI. Therefore, this type of coding was important to answer research question one to unpack specific emotions and interactions students may have experienced with the increase in accountability for constructing their own learning in the context of instructional choices.

**Axial coding.** Axial coding was utilized to further categorize the data from the interviews and field notes during the first cycle of initial coding. Axial coding takes the categories created from process coding and clusters them into larger categories, which allows for the “conditions, causes and consequences of a process” to be analyzed (Saldana, 2009, p. 159). Charmaz (2006) asserts that this process helps analyze the “if, when, how, and why something happens” (p. 62). Axial coding assisted in drawing out
participant perceptions of their participation and performance due to the instructional environment they experienced in the classroom as well as outside of the classroom through the experiential homework assignments.

**Theoretical coding.** Theoretical coding helped to identify a central or core theme within the qualitative data (Saldana, 2009). Saldana (2009) shares that theoretical coding looks to condense the analyzed data and connect it to the overarching central theme. This allows the researcher to then formulate a descriptive narrative or propositions based on the phenomenon experienced supporting the central theme (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Prior coding exercises such as initial coding, axial coding, and focused coding lay the framework for theoretical coding to synthesize the analyzed codes and identify outcomes pertaining to assertions developed on the research. Saldana (2009) claims that theoretical coding is the final link to come to a constructed assertion and understanding of the data collected. Together, these various types of coding methods provided a clear path to constructing an assertion based on the evaluation of instructional choices between two United States Government classes, observed levels of student participation in the social studies classroom, and performance data for identifying knowledge of the government curriculum.

**Quantitative Methods**

Research questions two and three depended on the quantitative measures. Research question two addressed self-efficacy while research question three addressed student performance.
**Research question two.** The self-efficacy survey was completed twice by the participants to measure changes in student confidence over the course of the action research study. Research question two was answered by comparing the group means of the individual score differences by construct between the Treatment group and Control group. The Treatment group included the students who experienced the instructional choices aligned with the flipped classroom innovation, while the Control group students experienced instructional choices aligned with traditional methods of instruction from the educator.

The pre-survey was administered to the students in both the Treatment group (flipped) and Control group (traditional) on the same day in their respective class periods. Participating students completed the survey prior to their participation in the action research study and again at the conclusion of the study during the final week of the school year. The pre-survey and post-survey used a Likert scale from 1 to 4 where 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree. Both surveys reflect that all participants completed the pre-survey and post-survey (N = 32). Of the completed surveys 13 were from the Treatment group and 19 were from the Control group (N = 13 Flipped; N = 19 Traditional).

**Research question three.** Quantitative data were collected and analyzed to answer RQ3. Quantitative data sources included a 55 multiple choice question Pretest and the 60 multiple choice questions from the 1999 Advanced Placement test for Government used as the Posttest. These data represent the performance scores on knowledge of government for each of the students participating in the action research study. The
Treatment and Control groups completed the pretest on March 1, 2018, and completed the posttest on June 8, 2018. The pretest and posttest scores were used to determine group and individual student performance gains.

Research question three was answered by a linear regression analysis using the following equation

\[ y = C + \alpha T + \beta X + \text{Error} \]

where \( y \) = posttest score; \( C \) is the underlying constant linking the pre-test with the posttest score, \( \alpha \) = estimated post-test difference between the flipped classroom and the Control; \( \beta \) = relationship between pretest and posttest scores; \( T \) = a dummy variable indicating enrollment in the flipped classroom (0 = traditional instruction, 1 = flipped classroom); and \( X \) = pretest score. The third research question focused on a potential relationship between factors impacting student participation in the Participation in Government course and performance in the learning process in two different instructional styles.

The dependent variable was the posttest score, and the independent variables include the dummy variable indicating participation in the flipped section of Participation in Government and the pretest scores (flipped-class enrollment and the pretest score). The pretest and posttest assessments are different scales (pretest = 55 multiple choice questions; posttest = 60 multiple choice questions), but the two measures were assumed to be related in a linear fashion. The coefficient was interpreted as the effective difference in post-test scores between the groups - i.e., the effect we are looking
for from participation in a flipped classroom. If the flipped classroom leads to a different path of learning performance for its students, \( \alpha \) will be different from zero.

**Credibility of Analysis**

**Quantitative Data**

**Reliability.** The self-efficacy survey can be found in Appendix B. For the purpose of reliability, 10 students aged 18 years or older completed the 13 question pilot of the self-efficacy survey (N = 10). Reliability analyses were conducted on all constructs together and the three constructs individually within the survey to identify the reliability statistics. To test the reliability of the piloted survey instrument, I calculated Cronbach’s \( \alpha \). The constructs ranged from \( \alpha = .705 \) to \( \alpha = .838 \). When analyzed together, the three constructs scored \( \alpha = .765 \) for all variables of the pilot survey. From the analysis of the reliability data, a credible assertion can be made that the self-efficacy survey is a reliable tool for the action research study due to the Cronbach scores remaining above .7 as recommended by Fraenkel and Wallen (2005). The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 4.
Table 4

*Self-Efficacy Survey Instrument Coefficient Alpha Estimates of Reliability (N = 10)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Within Factor Items</th>
<th>Coefficient Alpha Estimate of Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in the Capacity to Understand Content Outside of the Class</td>
<td>Items 1 - 3</td>
<td>.838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in the Capacity to Come Into Class and Have a Meaningful Discussion on Course Topics</td>
<td>Items 4 - 9</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in the Capacity to Apply Course Content to Current Events or Personal Lives</td>
<td>Items 10 - 13</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Items 1 - 13</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Validity.** The standardized achievement test used for posttest data collection is the multiple-choice portion of the 1999 Advanced Placement (AP) United States Government and Politics examination. According to the College Board (1999), 56,772 (N = 56,772) students participated in the AP United States Government and Politics exam. College Board analysis showed a strong connection between performance on the multiple choice section of the exam and earning an overall grade of 3 or higher. Table 5 displays the statistics from the AP report.
Table 5
*AP Total Score Probability Based on Correct Number of Multiple Choice Section (N = 56,772)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple Choice</th>
<th>AP Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 to 60</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 48</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 to 39</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 28</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 16</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: College Board (1999).

**Threats to validity.** Threats to validity consist of alternative hypotheses which challenge the researcher’s hypothesis pertaining to the change observed in the independent variable were caused by dependent variable changes (Smith & Glass, 1987). While action research is concerned more with transferability than generalizability, I discuss potential threats to internal validity here. For this action research project, particular concerns for threats to validity are rooted in maturation and testing. Maturation threat to validity is concerned with changes which may occur in participants over the course of the action research project. In the context of this study, that includes the possibility of deteriorating learning performance as well as growth. For example, maturation within the context of this action research study may be represented through
participants losing their focus and dedication to the flipped learning environment in the classroom due to senioritis and their impending graduation from high school. This threat is diminished in this study because of the use of a two-group design. Maturation threat is diminished in a two-group design due to an assumption that the students in both groups will mature at the same rate.

A retesting effect is a potential threat to validity due to the use of a repeated pretest-posttest assessment of content knowledge. Smith & Glass (1987) argue that retesting is a potential threat to validity as shown by previous research studies where participants “...learn something merely from taking a pretest.” (p. 126). Therefore, multiple methods of data collection and interpretation were necessary in order to accurately assess the influence of instructional choices made by the teacher on student achievement. In this research, the testing threat to validity was reduced because the pretest and posttest did not contain the same questions, but did cover similar constructs. Instead, the pretest and posttest should have accurately evaluated student learning in the Participation in Government course as a result of the learning process and instructional choices students experienced.

**Qualitative Data**

In this study I focused on the following ways to ensure the qualitative findings were credible and transferable. Credibility can be enhanced through triangulating data collection methods, such as persistent observations by the researcher, member checks, and a prolonged engagement.
**Triangulation.** To build confidence in the findings stemming from the qualitative data, multiple methods of data collection were used. Qualitative data findings were triangulated through the credibility check methods of prolonged engagement, member checking, and persistent observations by the researcher. In doing so, triangulating the data promoted the opportunity for a far more confident and trustworthy conclusion to be constructed. Furthermore, triangulating qualitative approaches provided an opportunity for the researcher to uncover additional valuable data on the same focal point from multiple perspectives.

**Prolonged engagement.** The action research study occurred over the course of the spring semester (February - June) and provided ample time to conduct interviews, check-ins, and researcher observations during a time where the *Participation in Government* class covered the second half of the 12th grade curriculum. The length of the spring semester provided ample time for the researcher to gain a detailed understanding of the behaviors, values, and relationships in the classroom of the participants which may have impacted their motivation, participation, and performance in social studies. Furthermore, the researcher was able to ensure persistent observations through observational field notes focused on reflections about the concepts and learning experienced in the study.

**Member checks.** Triangulation and member checks are the most substantial steps to be taken to address issues of credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that member checks are one of the most significant tools for establishing credibility in a study. Member checking consists of returning data or results to participants to check for
accuracy, or checking in with a participant for clarification of collected information (Birt, Scott, & Cavers, 2016). Member checking also incorporates participants deeper into the research and permits participants to have a greater impact on collected data due to the ability to verify or clarify their thoughts from previous interviews (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). Member checking was a particularly important piece to this action research study as the students were provided the opportunity to develop and provide their assertions regarding their experiences through an individual interview. In addition, students were given the opportunity to review their initial thoughts to clarify or add additional information to fill in any identified perceived gaps. Member-checking was conducted at the completion of the study prior to the end of the school year.

Since the students involved in the action research study were Seniors, I conducted the member checks during the last several weeks of the academic school year through the mini check-in interviews and also through electronic communication after the school year ended for the semi-structured individual interviews. Students received a transcript of their answers provided during the interviews and were given an opportunity to check for accuracy or modify their answers. Member-checking began during the month of June in order to allow the students time to process their experiences in the action research study. Additionally, various forms of electronic communication were used to contact students after the study to provide ample time for participants to revisit their initial answers recorded in the semi-structured individual interviews and check for accuracy or modify answers. Modes of electronic communication used included Email, Google Classroom, and through video conferencing applications such as Google Hangouts.
Feedback received from the member-checking process further stressed student desire for a range of instructional choices and practices to be used in the learning process. Students who participated in the mini check-in interviews affirmed the accuracy of their perceptions. Students who participated in the semi-structured interviews provided more detailed feedback. Six of the eight students who participated in the semi-structured interviews at the end of the study returned their transcripts of the interviews with little to no modifications. The students agreed with interpretations constructed based off of their interviews. Some of the students took the opportunity to highlight their desire for a learning environment that provides students with more choice and accountability in the learning process. Finally, the member-checking process served as a means to provide participants with the ability to affirm the interpretations constructed from their interviews and also serve as a means of developing credibility for the action research project.

**Persistent observations by the researcher.** Since I served a dual role as the researcher and educator involved in the study, I had the opportunity to conduct persistent observations of participant engagement and performance. These observations documented trends in student engagement and performance on assessments throughout the study from both the Treatment and Control groups. These observations allowed prompted the opportunity to reflect on the experiences of the participants and what was observed to construct a more detailed interpretation of the impact by the innovation.

**Limitations**

The role of the researcher presented a potential limitation to validity for the action research project. Due to the researcher also maintaining the role of the educator within
the action research study for both classes, the student participants may have been more motivated and engaged in excess during class periods than if the students were not included in the study. This phenomena occurs because the students could potentially want to perform well within the study as they believed it would help the researcher, and to more of an extent, their own standing within the course. To limit this particular challenge, I informed students that the impact of instructional choices on student learning were the focal point of the study.

Information regarding diverging instructional modalities between the two classes was not disseminated to the students (e.g., traditional approach to instruction versus flipped learning approach to instruction). However, it was outside of my control as the researcher/educator to keep the students from each of the classes from discussing their experiences with one another outside of the classroom. On two occasions I learned of my students discussing the two sections of the class with one another. The first time was in passing with a student from the traditional class who expressed their desire to be in the flipped class because they liked the idea of debating current issues in class. The second time was during one of the semi-structured interviews. The student informed me they much preferred the instructional style of the other class based on what their peers told them about during the semester. Finally, the researcher/educator may have been biased toward the success of the instructional choices aligned with the flipped class due to previously-expressed beliefs about student learning, accountability, and participation.
Conclusion

Within the educational research community, studies on flipped classroom instructional models in elementary education and higher education settings are plentiful. However, research on the impact of flipped classroom models in urban secondary education environments, specifically social studies classrooms, is rather scarce. Since social studies curriculum heavily relies on the application of content to present day societal issues, a more hands on approach to learning is imperative to engage students. By engaging students in a more hands on approach in the learning process, students will be encouraged to analyze and think critically about social studies, and be better prepared to apply their knowledge in pursuit of developing their own worldview.

There is a distinct need for more student-driven instruction, such as the instructional choices aligned with flipped classrooms. At the High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI), student participation in the classroom learning environment and a students self-efficacy in the learning process have been a major concern and an area of focus in social studies classrooms over the past few academic years. Previous cycles of research have discovered this trend may be connected to the instructional choices deployed across social studies classrooms by educators. Furthermore, as stated in chapter one, the action research project was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional choices within different instructional modalities, such as the flipped classroom instructional model and a more traditional style lecture based model, targeting an increase in student participation, academic performance and rigor in the classroom. The potential for flipped classroom learning environments to make a positive impact on student
participation and academic performance within the HSFI community was driven by the research questions introduced and discussed in chapters one and three. A mixed methods research design was chosen for this action research study in order to evaluate statistical student academic performance data and the perceptions of the students participating in the study. By incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, the study method allowed me to construct a more detailed and informed conclusion regarding the efficacy of a flipped classroom instructional environment in social studies classrooms to increase student participation and knowledge of social studies.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Chapter four contains the analysis and subsequent results of the quantitative and qualitative data collected throughout this action research study. Analysis and results of the data are organized by research question below. The research questions driving this action research study are the following:

RQ 1: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how does participation in a flipped learning model influence student perceptions of active participation and accountability for learning?

RQ 2: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy in the learning process?

RQ 3: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government?

Research question one is supported by data collected through qualitative methods, and research questions two and three are supported by data collected through quantitative methods. Qualitative data supporting research question one consisted of short check-in interviews from participants in both groups throughout the action research study and detailed semi-structured individual interviews obtained from four participants in each group at the conclusion of the action research study. These results are a representation of each participating student’s opinion of their experience with the instructional choices
made during the study, supported by themes and assertions constructed through the analysis of the short check-in interviews and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, results stemming from the analysis of the quantitative data consist of descriptive statistical data from the students in the treatment and control groups on the pre/post-surveys and pre/post-tests. Additional results stemming from the achievement data are represented through a linear regression model and a comparison of means graphically represented.

**Data Collection Summary**

Results from the quantitative data address research questions two and three while qualitative data help answer research questions one and two. The qualitative data sources, mini check-in interviews, and semi-structured interviews at the conclusion of the study were administered to address RQ1. Data collected from the interviews were coded and analyzed to develop theories and assertions based off of student perceptions and experiences. The quantitative data sources, Pre/Post Self-Efficacy surveys, were administered to address RQ2. Qualitative data from the short check-in interviews and semi-structured interviews were analyzed to develop assertions through triangulation of these three sources (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative data sources, Pretest and Posttest, were administered to address RQ3. These data were analyzed to identify trends among the two groups and develop assertions pertaining to the impact of the instructional choices on student participation and academic performance.
Research Question One

The first research question focuses on the essence of student responses to instruction. Qualitative data addressed RQ1. Qualitative data sources included 32 short check-in interviews during the study with all participants and eight semi-structured interviews at the conclusion of the study with four students from each group.

To address RQ1, the researcher conducted multiple rounds of coding and revising codes to construct a final group of eight categories and 74 related codes. Through further analysis of the codes and reviewing connections between codes and the data, components emerged resulting in four themes. The themes stemming from the analysis of the data were as follows: (a) application of coursework to personal life/current events through learning by doing, (b) rejection of traditional teacher-led lecture style learning environment, (c) accountability among self and classmates assisted in constructing meaningful learning experiences, and (d) academic rigor through a focus on analysis, critical thinking, and application. Table 6 shares the breakdown of themes, theme-related components, and assertions constructed by the researcher associated with each theme. For purposes of reporting individual comments below, I use FC# (e.g., FC7) or TC# (e.g., TC3) to identify participants in the flipped class or traditional class, respectively.
Table 6

**RQ1: Themes, Theme-related Components and Assertions Related to the Impact Participation in a Flipped Learning Classroom has on Student Participation and Academic Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Theme-Related Component</th>
<th>Assertion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application of coursework to personal life/current events through learning by doing</td>
<td>1. Flipped class participants experienced opportunities to construct perceptions and expand knowledge via primary source documents and instructional videos.</td>
<td>Participants in the flipped class experienced opportunities to apply course content to their personal life/current events via experiential homework activities and hands on engaging activities in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Instructional choices in the flipped class challenged participants to think critically of content and apply it to their lives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Flipped class student participation and performance thrived in class as a result of the knowledge constructed stemming from the authentic experiential homework assignments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection of traditional teacher-led lecture style learning environment.</td>
<td>1. Traditional class participants experienced a lack of motivation.</td>
<td>Participants prefer a learning environment where they have a larger role in cultivating their learning experiences, and desire a learning environment which is more experiential and challenging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Traditional class participants expressed a lack of personal connection to the course content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Flipped class participants rejected the traditional lecture-style learning environment in favor of a learning environment more supportive of project-based learning and student choice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Traditional class participants predominantly rejected the lecture-style instructional environment in favor of a more student-centered instructional environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability for</td>
<td>1. Flipped class participants developed Student motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning among self and classmates assisted in constructing meaningful learning experiences. Accountability for the learning environment through preparing for in-class hands-on group activities. and participation in the flipped class setting enhanced accountability for their own learning and the peer to peer learning environment of the class.

2. Flipped class participants developed accountability for their own learning experiences via student choice, experiential homework assignments, and subsequent in-class formative assessments.

3. Student motivation increased preparation and participation in class discussions, debates, and project-based inquiries.

Increasing academic rigor through a focus on analysis, critical thinking, and application to personal life.

1. Flipped class participants experienced authentic learning opportunities with their homework assignments.

2. Hands on in-class projects challenged students to think critically about, and make connections between topics studied in class and current issues within our society.

Participants cultivated their learning through experiential activities which immersed them in challenging projects that empowered them to think critically of, and apply the content to their lives/society.

Application of Coursework to Personal Life Through Learning by Doing

Participants in the flipped class experienced opportunities to apply course content to their personal life or current events via experiential homework activities and hands on engaging activities in the classroom. Student responses from the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews at the end of the study corroborated the three theme-related components: (a) flipped class students experienced opportunities to construct perceptions and expand knowledge via primary source documents and instructional videos, (b) instructional choices in the flipped class challenged students to think critically
of content and apply it to their lives, and (c) flipped class students were introduced to authentic experiential homework assignments.

**Flipped class students experienced opportunities to construct perceptions and expand knowledge via primary source documents and instructional videos.**

Participants from the flipped class often referred to the homework assignments with instructional videos and primary source documents as meaningful methods for building initial perceptions and knowledge of a topic. Flipped Class Participant 4 (FC4) mentioned during a mini check-in, “While the work outside of the class can be labor intensive, it serves an important purpose in preparing us for our in class activities. I really enjoyed the out of class work where we had to review primary source documents connected to the topic we would be discussing in class…” (Mini Check-In [MC] Interview, March 13, 2018). FC5 specifically commented on the impact they observed: “I find myself excelling in developing my opinions through the instructional videos and primary source documents that are on the topics we were going to be discussing in class…” (MC Interview, March 15, 2018). Many of the participants from the flipped class shared similar sentiment that the primary source documents and instructional videos encouraged them to research the topic(s) to further develop their opinions and knowledge. FC2 said, “I have found my participation level is much higher in this class than others and I am actually excited to conduct research on the topics we will be discussing” (MC Interview, March 12, 2018). Finally, FC6 said, “...the instructional videos we were given to watch outside of the classroom really helped in building my knowledge of the topics we covered, while also pushing me to research more on the topic to develop my own
thoughts more and be more prepared for our class discussions” (MC Interview, March 20, 2018).

**Instructional choices in the flipped class challenged students to think critically of content and apply it to their lives.** Participants in the flipped class said that the activities and projects conducted in the class were challenging and provided ample opportunity for critical thinking and analysis of the content from class. Socratic seminars are an example of in-class hands-on activities which challenged students to analyze, think critically of, and apply their knowledge to a given topic. Socratic seminars were used as an instructional choice in this study to promote student-led inquiry and discussion in the flipped classroom. Parker and Hess (2001) asserted, “A Socratic discussion with students holds as the aim a mutual search for a deeper and wider understanding. It is a shared inquiry...” (p. 279-280). Students were provided with primary source documents to review outside of class prior to Socratic seminars and were charged with constructing initial perceptions to share during the in-class discussions. FC5 said, “...any of the Socratic seminars we have had in class would be a great example where we are supposed to make connections between the videos and primary sources we review at home to present day issues in society” (Interview, June 4, 2018). This instructional choice was used often to engage students in an inquiry-based activity rooted in analysis and critical thinking. Examples of topics included in Socratic seminars were the First Amendment, Second Amendment, *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*, Stop and Frisk NYPD policy, and the Common Core State Standards Initiative. Additionally, FC1 reflected on the challenging nature of the activities through the political party project:
For example, when I matched with being liberal in the political party activity; when I saw things on the news that the conservatives were doing/saying, I disagreed with it because it did not match with my views. We also participated in an in-class project where we had to come together as a group to construct our own political party with our own views and demonstrate how we would campaign to get elected. This helped me and my classmates build our knowledge of political parties and how they function in an election cycle… this also allowed us to express our own opinions in a group environment and debate those opinions against one another in mock election debates. (Interview, June 6, 2018)

FC7 shared his perception of the challenges brought about through the public policy project where students were charged with identifying an issue in society and developing a policy and implementation plan to address the issue. This semester long project called for intensive research into the problem, development of their own in-depth policy, and consistent peer-to-peer constructive feedback:

A good example is from the public policy project peer reviews. We had to be more engaged in our day to day lives with a semester long project, such as the public policy project. Also, the peer review portion of the project encouraged accountability on the part of each of the students and motivated me to work really hard to learn about the issue I chose to research and how I would create and implement a policy to address the societal issue. The peer reviews were probably the most important part of the process as It just allowed the classroom to feel like
we are needed and bring multiple perspectives to each other’s learning.

(Interview, June 7, 2018)

Furthermore, FC7 described another example of critical thinking, analysis, and application from the class as he described the challenges of critical thinking and application:

A very specific example as stated before was the Presidential race (Political Party) project we completed in class. Having to take actual jobs and work as a cohesive group to learn how the government works is a great example of critical thinking, analysis, and application to present day issues. Then, rotating through jobs allowed us to put ourselves in the shoes of our partners and learn a true understanding of each other allowing us to work amongst each other even better.

(Interview, June 7, 2018)

Participants in the flipped class also experienced more opportunity working as a class to develop their perceptions of the Second Amendment and the acts of mass gun violence in schools which took place over the course of the academic year. Students participated in Socratic seminars pertaining to the topic of gun violence in schools and the Second Amendment, reviewed primary source documents, newspaper articles, and other forms of media to assist in developing their stance with regards to gun violence. FC5 shared how the learning environment in the flipped class helped to prepare her and her classmates for National Walkout Day in March as a response to the recent string of school shootings:

I think the most memorable ones (Socratic seminar) for me was on the 2nd Amendment after all of the recent school shootings. We as a class were able to
really develop our opinions and it helped to prepare us for our National Walkout Day in March. We better understood the complex issues surrounding gun laws around the country, which in effect helped to make our walkout protest much more meaningful than if we did not have these seminars in class. Many of my friends in other classes just saw the walkout as a break from class rather than a meaningful protest, and I fully place that feeling on our focus on debates and discussions in class. (Interview, June 4, 2018)

While National Walkout Day was an initiative supported by the HSFI administration and faculty, it is important to note that student participation was completely by choice and not a class assignment. This was an event that the students voiced their concerns and were clearly passionate about. I only provided the opportunity and the arena for the students to develop their stance with regards to the matter within the class learning environment.

Finally, during the end of March and into April is the approximate time period that the researcher started to observe the flipped class begin to make considerable gains in their learning and surpass the traditional class as the participation among students increased with more challenging content.

**Flipped class student participation and performance thrived in class as a result of the knowledge constructed stemming from the authentic experiential homework assignments.** The experiential homework assignments promoted autonomy for participants to develop their own knowledge and perceptions of the topic studied in class at that time. Examples of experiential homework assignments were participating in a community board meeting and documenting their experience, interviewing family or
community members about a current political topic, visiting a museum to gather background knowledge on a topic, attending protests and rallies, and conducting research on a topic to broaden knowledge after completing the initial instructional video or primary source document. FC5 said, “I found more meaning in homework for this class than I have ever for other classes, because it was more thought-provoking and not just a fill-in-the-blank worksheet” (Interview, June 4, 2018). Additionally, FC1 shared how the experiential homework assignments helped to inspire her to further develop and share her perceptions. FC1 stated, “... various hands on activities within our community helped us to prepare for in-class activities. This is especially true for when we had to attend a city council meeting to observe how the council functions and how it empowered me to inspire change” (Interview, June 6, 2018). This student also shared how these experiential homework assignments encouraged her to be more engaged in cultivating her own knowledge. FC1 explained, “I also enjoyed the various interviews we were assigned to do and also the small research assignments that helped to develop our initial opinions and reflect on our potential biases” (Interview, June 6, 2018). FC8 discussed the impact the experiential homework assignments had on her participation in class:

My favorite homework was interviewing voting-age people about what they look for in a candidate and how they choose which candidate to vote for during an election… this served as great preparation for the hands-on political party project in class and also encouraged me to think about what is important to me when choosing a candidate in future elections. (MC Interview, April 16, 2018)
Overall, participants from the flipped class found the experiential homework assignments to be engaging and challenging. Through experiential homework assignments, such as interviewing a peer about their political beliefs, attending a community board meeting, or reviewing excerpts of the Republican Party platform from the 2016 election, students analyzed and thought critically about the content, and also found many pathways to apply the content to their personal lives. While the homework assignments were more time-consuming and more challenging, the students gained more autonomy and choice over their homework which sparked many of their interests and spurred creativity.

**Rejection of Traditional Teacher-led Lecture Style Learning Environment**

Students prefer a learning environment where they have a larger role in cultivating their learning experiences, and desire a learning environment which is more experiential and challenging. Participant responses from the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews at the end of the study corroborated the four theme-related components: (a) traditional class students experienced a lack of motivation, (b) traditional class students expressed a lack of personal connection to the course content, (c) flipped class students rejected the traditional lecture-style learning environment in favor of a learning environment more supportive of project-based learning and student choice, and (d) Traditional class students predominantly rejected the lecture-style instructional environment in favor of a more student-centered instructional environment.

**Traditional class participants experienced a lack of motivation.** Responses collected from students in the traditional class revealed several differences between the traditional and flipped classes. Students from the traditional class expressed a lack of
motivation and difficulty comprehending course content. Traditional Class Student 3 (TC3) said, “Sometimes the class gets a little boring because we only really talk about the course topics through slides and question and answer” (MC Interview, March 26, 2018). When asked about difficulties the students have experienced in class, another student from the traditional class admitted her lack of motivation could be connected to her sporadic attendance in class, but she still experienced a lack of drive to participate in class when present. TC4 said, “Class assignments have proven to be very difficult for me. This may be due to my recent attendance issues, but I also do not find the class particularly interesting” (MC Interview, March 29, 2018). Some students connected their lack of motivation and participation to the end of the school year approaching. TC5 commented, “...my participation has definitely tailed off in recent weeks… due to a loss of interest and the end of my senior year quickly approaching” (MC Interview, March 28, 2018), and TC6 stated, “My participation has decreased dramatically from last year. I blame this on being a senior, but also the lack of interesting activities as well” (MC Interview, March 27, 2018). Another student voiced her displeasure for the style of instruction as a direct factor in her lack of motivation. TC1 stated, “I did not find the class to be all that engaging. It was rather boring. I hate PowerPoint and lectures” (Interview, June 7, 2018). Reported lack of motivation and interest in class content was found only within students from the traditional class. Students in the flipped class did not mention or explicitly report a decrease in motivation in any of the interviews.

**Traditional class participants expressed a lack of personal connection to the course content.** Collected qualitative data from the traditional class interviews reflected a
connection between a decrease in motivation and a corresponding lack of personal connection to the course content. Discussed previously, TC5 shared that she experienced a definitive tail-off in participation during the study. TC5 also explained,

I look forward to hearing about current issues going on all over the world. I’m not sure how it impacts my personal life directly, but it would be nice to spend more time talking about current issues. We have taken a lot of notes in class, but applying those to my personal life I think is not so easy. (MC Interview, March 28, 2018)

Some of the students tied being bored in class to both a lack of motivation and an inability to connect content to their personal life. TC7 said, “Sometimes the class gets a little boring because we only really talk about the concepts from the slides” (MC Interview, March 26, 2018). For TC7, connecting class content to his personal life was a struggle for much of the semester: “Applying the knowledge to my personal life has been a little bit difficult, because it is hard to see national politics directly impact my personal life” (MC Interview, March 26, 2018). TC2 acknowledged, “I have difficulty finding meaning in what we are learning. If we had more discussions in class based on the topics, I may be able to make better connections that are important to me” (Interview, June 5, 2018). When asked about the impact of homework in making personal connections to the content, TC2 said,

Homework that is just a review of what we discussed in class is meaningless and boring to me. If homework was more meaningful and actually had a connection to
me then I would be more excited about it and more likely to complete it.

(Interview, June 5, 2018)

TC1 also weighed in on the impact of homework:

Homework should be utilized to target specific student needs. Instead of casting a wide net with a single homework assignment, homework should have choices with the idea that all students would eventually get to the same place of understanding, but maybe took different paths. This would encourage us to complete homework assignments while challenging us with different levels of assignments and allow for a deep discussion connecting all of the avenues.

(Interview, June 7, 2018)

Overall, creating a personal connection to the course content appeared to be difficult for the participants in the traditional class due to many factors which lead back to the students lacking motivation and a personal connection to the course content.

**Flipped class participants rejected the traditional lecture-style learning environment in favor of a learning environment more supportive of project-based learning and student choice.** Participants in the flipped class experienced instructional choices focused more on project-based learning and accountability for developing their own learning experiences outside of the classroom rooted in student choice. During the final interviews, all students were given an opportunity to describe what their ideal learning environment in the classroom would be, which permitted students to compare their learning experiences with different instructional choices. Responses from students
in the flipped class are discussed within this section while responses from students in the
traditional class are discussed in the following section.

Responses from several students in the flipped class indicated a preferred learning
environment where students have a role in developing their learning experiences,
experience opportunities for hands on learning activities, and activities that assist in
relating the content to their lives. FC6 described her perception of lecture-style learning
environments:

Classes that use lecture heavily lose my interest rather quickly, because I feel like
I have no input into the class. Lecture based classes also bore me due to a lack of
student-led discussions and is more focused on memorization. (MC Interview,
March 20, 2018)

Additionally, FC4 described the instructional environment that she finds to be most
interesting, motivating, and thought-provoking:

I like class environments that are more hands on and where I can take what we
discuss in class and apply it to my life. This makes a much larger impact on me
and pushes me to continue looking into the topics we discuss in class to expand
what I have already learned. (MC Interview, April 18, 2018)

FC5 shared her ideal learning environment in opposition to a lecture based learning
environment:

My ideal learning environment empowers me and my fellow students to think
critically of the world we live in and how we can impact the immediate
community we live in. My ideal learning environment is also mostly student run
with the teacher guiding us instead of acting as the expert. (Interview, June 4, 2018)

FC7 explained his experiences with regards to teacher-led lecture: “I was so used to the traditional here's a textbook read these pages, take these notes and listen to me talk for the remainder of the period...very little input or involvement at all from the students” (Interview, June 7, 2018). Overall, students from the flipped class resoundingly rejected the format and learning environment of lecture-based instruction. These students craved a learning environment more inclusive of student choice, learning by doing, and differentiated instructional choices.

**Traditional class participants predominantly rejected the lecture-style instructional environment in favor of a more student-centered instructional environment.** Participants in the traditional class experienced instructional choices more aligned with a lecture style learning environment. During final interviews with students from the traditional class, students were given an opportunity to describe what their ideal learning environment in the classroom would be, which also permitted students to compare their learning experiences with different instructional choices.

Responses from several students in the traditional class also indicated a preferred learning environment where students lead the instructional process of developing their learning experiences. TC2 said, “I would like to see what a class would be like that is student-run. This class would have a lot of student run discussions and connect what we are learning to present day scenarios” (Interview, June 5, 2018). Although the flipped class was not completely student-led, many aspects of the instructional choices made
thrust the students into more of a leadership role within the learning environment (e.g. Socratic seminars and group projects). In addition, TC1 reported her feelings toward the instructional choices she experienced in the traditional class:

I hate PowerPoint and lectures. I feel like they're so melo-toned and I hate that. I lose interest very quickly… I think the way the class was taught stunted my performance and experience in the class. Instead of making gains in my learning and building on these topics to learn more about them, I found myself often fighting off daydreaming and figuring out what information was important to take notes on and what could be left out. (Interview, June 7, 2018)

Some students found the instructional choices in the class to meet their expectations for a learning environment as seen from TC3: “Though very structured due to the lecture style of teaching, we were all given equal opportunity to succeed through the presentation of the slides and answering our questions we had on the topics” (Interview, June 11, 2018). TC4 said, similarly, “We learned what we needed to learn… the various Powerpoints and discussions of the topics in class helped me to understand the content along with the notes that I took” (Interview, June 1, 2018). However, several students from the traditional class held a negative perception of traditional lecture-based learning environments. These students held similar instructional desires as their colleagues from the flipped class when prompted to share their ideal learning environment. TC1 stated, “I love the idea of having the desks set up as debate like and having a learning environment where the students have more control and voice over projects and discussions” (Interview, June 7, 2018). Although previously disclosing the instructional choices in the
traditional class met the expectations of TC3, when asked about ideal learning environments TC3 explained.

I would say personalizing the discussion and more hands on material… a fun class environment that allows us to express ourselves as well as learning the material through more hands on activities would be the best for my ability to build knowledge. (Interview, June, 11, 2018)

While some of the students in the traditional class mentioned the instructional choices met their expectations, all of the students in the traditional class shared their ideal learning environment would encompass student choice, hands on activities which promote learning by doing, and differentiated learning experiences to some degree. These students also shared that they would much prefer a class similar to their ideal learning environment rather than the traditional lecture-style instructional environment they have grown accustomed to at HSFI.

**Accountability for Learning Among Self and Classmates Assisted in Constructing Meaningful Learning Experiences**

Student motivation and participation in the flipped class setting enhanced accountability for their own learning and the peer to peer learning environment of the class. Participant responses from the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews at the end of the study corroborated the four theme-related components: (a) flipped students developed accountability for their learning environment through preparing for in-class hands-on group activities, (b) flipped students developed accountability for their own learning experiences via student choice, experiential
homework assignments, and subsequent in-class formative assessments, and (c) student
motivation increased preparation and participation in class discussions, debates, and
project-based inquiries.

**Flipped class participants developed accountability for their learning
environment through preparing for in-class hands on group activities.** Responses
collected from the qualitative interviews demonstrated student accountability for their
learning environment was enhanced through active participation in the experiential
homework assignments. These assignments served as opportunities for students to
construct initial perceptions and knowledge about the various topics studied in class.
When asked about being accountable for upholding the learning environment in class,
FC10 said, “This class has challenged me to research my opinions to have information to
backup my claims and not aimlessly share my opinions without preparation” (MC
Interview, March 23, 2018). In addition, FC3 found the out-of-classroom experiences to
be challenging but meaningful in developing initial perspectives and knowledge: “It was
very challenging, and intense from a workload perspective, but I really liked having the
autonomy to make my own path with a given topic and develop my own perspectives to
share with the class” (MC Interview, March 29, 2018). Finally, FC7 said, “I knew we
each played an important role in class. If we did not complete our assignment to prepare
us for class, it would throw off the learning environment and impact of the activity. We
depended on each other” (Interview, June 7, 2018). Overall, students reflected a sense of
ownership for the learning environment in the flipped class, and also considered their
own level of accountability in terms of their own personal learning.
Flipped class participants felt accountable for their own learning experiences via student choice, experiential homework assignments, and subsequent in-class formative assessments. Data collected from the qualitative interviews connected a strong sense of accountability from students for their own learning experiences. Participants from the flipped class considered student choice, experiential homework assignments, and the in-class formative assessments as the primary factors in driving their feelings of being more accountable for their own learning in addition to wanting to do well in class. FC2 said,

The homework assignments which prompted us to prepare for the activities in class the following days really helped me construct my understanding of topics in the class and gave me the time and confidence to develop an in-depth understanding of what we were going to be discussing in class. (MC Interview, April 19, 2018)

FC5 said that their level of accountability increased through their active participation in class: “The class discussions and outside prep work for homework have only encouraged me to continue researching the topics and build my knowledge of the topic even more” (MC Interview, March 15, 2018). Connected to the previous subsection pertaining to students having accountability for their learning environment, flipped class students made reference to the level of difficulty they encountered during the class. FC11 remarked, “The class is pretty fast-paced in comparison to my other classes, and there is a considerable amount of work required at home” (MC Interview, April 17, 2018). FC11 as
well as others in the flipped class did not find this to be a deterrent but as a means for pushing them to strive for excellence. FC11 later commented,

The class is setup so that as long as students apply themselves, they can succeed. For example, I knew that if I did not complete an assigned instructional video the night before class, that I would be given the opportunity to watch the video at the beginning of class in order to catch up and join in on the class activity. The class is very much built on the word accountability. This is something you (Mr. Lazarus) made a point in getting across to us at the beginning of the year… especially with the #accountability at the top of the board to remind us everyday.

(MC Interview, May 10, 2018)

Furthermore, FC5 stated, “I felt that I had more control of my own learning, but at the same time I had to be more accountable for my learning” (Interview, June 7, 2018).

Overall, students from the flipped class experienced a substantial increase in their participation in class and accountability for their own learning.

**Participant motivation increased preparation and participation in class discussions, debates, and project-based inquiries.** Results from the qualitative interviews reflected an increase in student excitement and interest from the flipped class well above observed levels in the traditional class. FC1 explained how her role and her classmates’ roles in the class shaped their preparation for the hands on activities:

My role and our roles were to be prepared for our Socratic seminars and debates that we had in class through completing our homework tasks, but also conducting
whatever research was necessary in order to be prepared to share our opinions in class. (Interview, June 6, 2018)

FC7 connected her motivation to an observed increase in accountability for her own learning and the learning of her classmates. FC7 said, “The style of instruction was also highly motivating and instilled a sense of accountability for my own learning and accountability for the learning of my classmates” (Interview, June 7, 2018). In addition, FC3 experienced an increase in motivation to participate in class debates and discussions through the student choice supported out of class opportunities bestowed upon the students:

I was really motivated to do well in class. I really liked this approach as it allowed me to have ample time to review the initial content and develop my thoughts and opinions without being constrained to a specific amount of time in class. (MC Interview, March 29, 2018)

Finally, results from the qualitative interviews reflected a clear desire by the students in the flipped class to prepare copious notes and extend their knowledge of a topic in order to participate in the class discussions and debates.

On the contrary, participants from the traditional class were observed to be less inclined to participate in the learning process of the class. As discussed previously, students from the traditional class signaled that they combated feelings of boredom and a lack of motivation in class potentially stemming from senioritis. As TC1 stated, “I did not find the class to be all that engaging. It was rather boring. I hate PowerPoint and lectures” (Interview, June 7, 2018), and TC5 added, “My participation has definitely tailed off in
recent weeks… due to a loss of interest and the end of my senior year quickly approaching” (MC Interview, March 28, 2018). Overall, from analyzing the qualitative interviews it is clear that students who experienced the instructional choices in the flipped class experienced a higher level of motivation and accountability than the students from the traditional group to come to class prepared to have meaningful conversations about the course content, and its applicability to their personal lives.

**Increasing Academic Rigor Through a Focus on Analysis, Critical Thinking, and Application to Personal Life**

Participants cultivated their learning through experiential activities which immersed them in challenging projects that empowered them to think critically and apply the content to their lives or society. Participant responses from the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews at the end of the study corroborated the theme-related components: (a) flipped class students were provided differentiated experiential learning opportunities through their homework assignments, and (b) hands-on in-class projects challenged students to think critically of and make connections between topics studied in class and current issues within our society.

**Flipped class Participants were provided differentiated experiential learning opportunities through their homework assignments.** Results from the qualitative interviews revealed that participants from the flipped class environment excelled with the experiential homework assignments. These assignments provided students with opportunities to interrogate and develop their initial perceptions of course concepts prior to receiving instruction on the topic. Several students in the flipped class identified the
out-of-classroom experiences as enhancing their knowledge of concepts and positively shaping their writing due to the research-intensive assignments. For many of the students in both classes, taking viewpoints shared in class and constructing those perspectives with supporting research in a paper has proved to be quite perplexing. FC9 explained that exact sentiment during an interview:

I can talk about my opinions in class with no problem, but putting those perspectives on paper with supporting information has always proved to be difficult for me. However, in this class the homework assignments have really helped to change this experience since I am forced to research more information to develop my own thoughts. (MC Interview, April 19, 2018)

FC3 also stated that the homework assignments extended ample opportunity for cultivating her own learning experiences outside of the classroom: “It was very challenging, and intense from a workload perspective, but I really liked having the autonomy to make my own path with a given topic and develop my own perspectives to share with the class” (MC Interview, March 29, 2018). In addition, experiential homework assignments yielded the students with ample student choice and minimal barriers for completing the tasks. FC8 said, “Engaging in a scavenger hunt around the city or visiting a museum connected the topics discussed in class to real meaningful experiences” (MC Interview, April 16, 2018). Other students like FC10 found the homework assignments to be challenging for an array of reasons, but also meaningful in propelling their learning. FC10 said, “The homeworks were especially challenging as I completed a ton of research just to be better prepared for class… these homeworks were
more thought provoking and forced me to really develop my own thoughts around a specific topic” (MC Interview, March 23, 2018). FC5 found the experiential homework assignments to be rigorous due to being challenged to question content presented and develop her own perspectives of the content to share with the class. FC5 explained during the interview,

   We completed homework activities such as reviewing primary source documents, watching instructional videos from EDpuzzle, interviewing family members or community members, and also completing scavenger hunts around the city, which I really enjoyed. These activities helped support our learning and challenged us to build our opinions, so that our in class activities had in-depth discussions and our group activities were more meaningful. (Interview, June 4, 2018)

Overall, results from the qualitative interviews corroborated the assertion that the experiential homework assignments differentiated student learning and challenged students to construct their own perceptions of the class topics.

**Hands-on in-class projects challenged students to think critically of and make connections between topics studied in class and current issues within our society.** Participants from the flipped learning environment described their experiences with the instructional choices made by the educator to be much more challenging than what they have experienced in other social studies classes. Students identified that these instructional choices challenged them to think critically of the content and make connections between topics studied in class and current issues within society. Students in the flipped classroom also shared that the increased autonomy and student choice
provided freedom to explore topics meaningful to their learning, but it also enhanced the level of rigor. Hands-on in-class projects that challenge students to think critically of content and apply it to present day issues were found to be a key component to the students’ ideal learning environments as stated by FC5: “My ideal learning environment also empowers me and my fellow students to think critically of the world we live in and how we can impact the immediate community we live in” (Interview, June 4, 2018). FC5 also commented on the hands-on in-class projects with an example of one of the more challenging projects. FC5 said,

Our work on our public policy projects proved to be extremely challenging. This is especially true when we conducted our peer reviews in our groups and we each had to be accountable for each other in developing our individual policies. The peer review method gave us more autonomy over our learning and it also allowed for our peers to help improve our initial drafts of the policy projects. (Interview, June 4, 2018)

FC1 said, “I was regularly challenged to think critically of the topics in class and apply it to my life through the projects we completed” (Interview, June 6, 2018). In addition, several students in the flipped class mentioned that they found the hands on projects to be challenging, but also meaningful learning experiences. For example, FC6 commented on their perceived increase in confidence in the classroom as a result of connecting the topics to their lives:

I believe the instructional style has impacted me in a positive way because I remember more and I am way more confident to participate in class projects and
debates. The instructional style has also helped build my confidence in class to be more engaged, because I was already given the opportunity to build some knowledge through our homework assignments. (MC Interview, March 20, 2018)

FC4 found the hands on projects challenging, but viewed them more confidently as a result of the meaningful relationships she developed in class and the group centered learning environment. FC4 said, “While the projects were quite difficult, I was confident I could do well due to the preparation and research we did for homework, but also because I had group members I could trust to do their part” (MC Interview, May 9, 2018). Overall, results from the qualitative interviews suggest the students from the flipped learning environment were regularly challenged with a more intensive level of rigor. This level of rigor is evident through the hands on projects the students completed which prompted them to use critical thinking, analysis, and applying their knowledge to present day scenarios.

Synthesis of Data Analysis and Results for Research Question One

Qualitative data were collected and analyzed to answer RQ1: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how does participation in a flipped learning instructional model influence student perceptions of active participation and accountability for learning? Qualitative data investigated from the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews discerned the following: (a) application of coursework to personal life/current events occurred most frequently through learning by doing, (b) rejection of traditional teacher-led lecture style learning environment, (c) accountability among self and classmates assisted in constructing meaningful learning
experiences, and (d) increasing academic rigor through a focus on analysis, critical thinking, and application to personal life. The qualitative data suggested that participants in the flipped learning environment perceived their accountability for their learning to be higher than the students of the traditional class. Furthermore, participants in the flipped class also exhibited more excitement toward their learning experiences which influenced their participation in the class regardless of the rigorous nature of the experiential homework assignments or projects in class.

**Research Question Two**

To explore the relationship between instructional choices and students beliefs in their capacity to learn and engage with material, quantitative data were collected and analyzed to answer RQ2. Sources of data derived from Pre-survey and Post-survey mean scores for each of the three constructs within the survey. The three constructs making up the survey were a) Confidence in the Capacity to Understand Course Content Outside of Class, b) Confidence in the Capacity to Come Into Class and Have a Meaningful Discussion on Course Topics, and c) Confidence in the Capacity to Apply Course Content to Current Events/Personal Lives.

**Confidence in the Capacity to Understand Course Content Outside of Class**

This section pertains to instructional choices focused on more student driven learning in the classroom where students prepare for the class discussion topics the day before through various experiential homework assignments, such as small introductory research, instructional video clips, primary source documents, peer interviewing, and informative predicting based on connecting prior knowledge. Table 7 displays the
complete data for all of the constructs. For the first construct, Confidence in the Capacity to Understand Course Content Outside of Class, the Treatment group recorded a pre-survey mean score of 2.6 and a post-survey mean score of 3.4 on the first construct, or a gain of 0.7. For the same construct, the Control group scored a 3.0 pre-survey mean score and a 3.1 post-survey mean score, or a gain of 0.1. Survey items from this construct questioned participants about their perception the impact instructional videos and primary source documents may have on their ability to comprehend course content outside of the classroom. Initial data collected from the pre-survey indicates that participants from the flipped class were predominately cautious, or unsure about the ability to comprehend course content outside of the classroom through reviewing instructional videos and primary source documents. However, the flipped class also recorded a much larger gain from pre-survey to post-survey than the traditional class. The difference in gains could be due to the instructional choices made by the educator in both classes. Where the flipped class regularly reviewed instructional videos and primary source documents for homework prior to class, the traditional class experienced homework assignments that were more summative in nature.

**Confidence in the Capacity to Come Into Class and Have a Meaningful Discussion on Course Topics**

Student participation is concerned with the level of interaction and motivation a student embodies within the learning process through activities in the classroom and outside through experiential homework assignments. The second construct, Confidence in the Capacity to Come Into Class and Have a Meaningful Discussion on Course Topics,
recorded mean scores from the Treatment group of 2.6 on the pre-survey and 3.4 on the post-survey for a gain of 0.8. Control group mean scores for the second construct were 2.8 on the pre-survey and 3.1 on the post-survey for a gain of 0.3. Survey items considered for the second construct asked participants about their perceived level of participation in the classroom. The questions for this construct focused on activities which challenge students to analyze and think critically of content. In addition, other questions under this construct focused on the perceived impact instructional choices that incorporate slideshow presentations and lecture have on a students’ participation within the learning environment. Quantitative data collected from the pre-survey revealed the flipped class (Treatment group) scored lower than the traditional class (Control group), but experienced a greater mean gain than the traditional class. Results from this construct potentially indicate a connection between the instructional choices made by the educator and an increase in self-efficacy by the students in flipped class.

Confidence in the Capacity to Apply Content to Current Events or Personal Lives

Application of course content to current events or personal lived experiences is a key component to reflecting mastery of content. Additionally, the level of challenging work a student endures in the classroom ultimately has an impact on the extent their learning is developed. Confidence in this capacity is also reflective of a higher level of participation by students in a learning environment. Interestingly, the third construct, Confidence in the Capacity to Apply Course Content to Current Events/Personal Lives, saw an increase in group mean score for the Treatment group, but a decrease in mean score for the Control group. The flipped class (Treatment group) had a pre-survey mean
score of 2.8, and the traditional class (Control group) had a pre-survey mean score of 3.2. The post-survey scores showed divergence between the two groups in the study. The flipped class had a post-survey mean score of 3.4 and a gain of 0.5. The traditional class recorded a post-survey mean score of 3.1, a 0.1 decrease from the pre-survey mean of 3.2. Results from the post-survey scores on the third construct imply that instructional choices for both groups may have considerably impacted student confidence to apply course content to current events/personal lives contingent upon student learning environment membership. Table 7 represents the group mean data from the pre and post survey broken down by construct and participant group.

Table 7

*Group Mean Data by Construct Pre/Post Survey (N = 32; Flipped N = 13; Traditional N = 19)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Understand</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Discuss</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Apply</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Gain/Diff</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Gain/Diff</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Gain/Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flipped</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 displays the group means broken down by construct and participant group. The figure assists in presenting the self-efficacy gains from the pre-survey to the
post-survey within the flipped class. Additionally, the chart highlights the perceived decrease in self-efficacy in the traditional class for the Application construct.

Figure 2. Change in Self-Efficacy Between the Traditional and Flipped Class. This figure illustrates the pre and post survey means by construct and class.

Summary of Data Analysis and Results for Research Question Two

Quantitative data through the use of a pre and post self-efficacy survey was collected and analyzed to answer RQ2: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy in the learning process? An analysis of the quantitative data from the pre-survey reflected a higher self-efficacy in all three constructs from the traditional class (Control group) over the flipped class (Treatment group). Post-survey data reflected higher scores and overall mean gain scores for the flipped class over the traditional class. The quantitative data indicated the flipped class participants experienced a larger gain in
their self-efficacy than the traditional class participants. In addition, the quantitative data indicated lower increase in self-efficacy for the traditional class participants within construct one and two and a decrease in self-efficacy for the third construct, confidence to apply course content to current events/personal lives.

**Research Question Three**

To explore the relationship between instructional choices and how students learn knowledge about government, quantitative data were collected and analyzed to answer RQ3. Quantitative data sources included a 55 multiple-choice question Pretest and the 60 multiple choice questions from the 1999 Advanced Placement test for Government used as the Posttest. These data represent the performance scores for each of the students participating in the action research study. The Treatment and Control groups completed the pretest on March 1, 2018, and completed the posttest on June 8, 2018. The pretest and posttest scores were used to determine group and individual student performance gains.

A regression analysis was conducted on the quantitative data to estimate the effect on academic performance from participation in a flipped learning instructional environment. According to Sainani (2013), “Linear regression is appropriate when the outcome variable of interest is continuous and normally distributed” (p. 1063). Table 8, represents the regression coefficients with the dependent variable of Posttest and independent variables of Pretest and Flipped to identify differential knowledge of government or achievement in the flipped class. *Posttest* is the correct items on a 60-item multiple choice test drawn from the 1999 United States Government Advanced Placement exam. *Pretest* is the number of correct items on a 55-item multiple choice test.
drawn from a New York State government test bank. Flipped is a dummy variable where 0 = lecture style class and 1 = flipped learning environment.

Table 8

Regression Model Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest/55Qs</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flipped</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = .23$ (p < .05).

The coefficients table delineates the statistics and values, which can be used to estimate the effect on academic performance from participation in a flipped learning instructional environment. The sample evidence from the regression model shows that the innovation from the action research study influenced knowledge of government among participants in the flipped class in terms of their expected posttest scores. (Greenland, Senn, Rothman, Carlin, Poole, Goodman, & Altman, 2016). The slope of each regression coefficient can be interpreted as the predicted difference in the posttest associated with a change in 1 unit in the corresponding variable. According to Sainani (2013), “The slope quantifies the linear relationship between two variables and is what we care about more often.” (p. 1064). The slope from the regression coefficients is $B = 10.3$ for the Flipped class instruction variable. This means that being in the flipped classroom is associated with a predicted increase in 10.3 additional correct answers on the posttest. The Pretest coefficient is $B = 0.7$, or a predicted increase in 0.7 additional posttest questions correct for every one pretest question correct.
The linear regression model thus estimated that the flipped class had more knowledge of government at the end of the innovation than the traditional class. In addition, the flipped class performed better overall on the posttest as a result of the instructional choices experienced during the action research study. Table 9 displays the raw pretest and posttest means for both classes, without the adjustments in a multivariate regression. The Flipped class mean pretest score was 24.4, and the mean posttest score was 45.5. The Traditional class mean pretest score was 23.9, and the mean posttest score was 34.8.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Pretest/55Qs Questions Correct</th>
<th>Posttest/60Qs Questions Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flipped</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another way to represent the data is by displaying the pretest and posttest scores in a scatterplot that also displays the posttest scores predicted just by the pretest (i.e., a univariate regression best-fit line). Figure 3 represents student participant scores from the flipped class and traditional class plotted against a linear regression model. The regression line represents a best-fit line for all student participants in the flipped and traditional classes. The regression model predicts posttest scores for all student participants based on their pretest scores and participation in the class. The relationship between the pretest and posttest, or the slope of the regression associated with the pretest
for all participants, is 0.75, or three-quarters of an additional question answered correctly on the posttest predicted for every additional question correct on the pretest. Circles above the line indicate posttest scores higher than predicted by the pretest, and circles below the line indicate posttest scores lower than predicted just by the pretest. The regression model shows the majority of the flipped class scores plotted above the model fit line, and the majority of the traditional class scores plotted at or below the model fit line.

![Graph](image)

*Figure 3. Traditional Versus Flipped Class Pretest and Posttest Scores Linear Regression Model. This figure illustrates a linear regression model for pretest and posttest scores from the Traditional and Flipped class students in the study.*

**Summary of Data Analysis and Results for Research Question Three**

Quantitative data were collected through the use of a pretest and posttest. These data were analyzed to answer RQ3: For a social studies classroom in a themed
metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government? An analysis of the quantitative data from the pretest reflected an initial equivalent greater level of understanding for participants in both classes. However, posttest data demonstrated higher posttest scores by the flipped class. Therefore, I conclude that participation in the flipped class learning environment had a positive impact on student performance for the participants.

Summary of Results

I collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data to answer the three research questions.

Qualitative data were applied to address RQ1: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how does participation in a flipped learning model influence student perceptions of active participation and accountability for learning? These data signified that participants from the flipped class experienced substantial increases in their participation and took ownership of the accountability for their own learning and the learning environment of the classroom. Additionally, participants in the flipped class reported that they experienced a higher level of rigor in the classroom through the experiential homework assignments and hands-on class activities which challenged them to analyze, think critically about, and apply the course content to their personal lives. Furthermore, results from the qualitative data indicated participants from both classes rejected the learning environment often found with traditional instructional methods. Participants from the flipped class were most opposed to the idea of the traditional instructional style of slideshow presentations and lecture by the teacher. These
students found the student-driven instructional model of the flipped learning environment to be more challenging, interesting, and applicable to constructing their knowledge. Finally, results analyzed from the qualitative data showed that participants from the flipped class actively searched for opportunities to extend their learning through experiential homework assignments and the hands on class activities. This was quite the contrary with the traditional class as the students were more concerned with understanding the course content to perform well on the summative assessments.

Quantitative data were used to address RQ2: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy in the learning process? Results were based on the quantitative data collected from the pre and post self-efficacy survey. These data exhibited growth in perceived confidence in the classroom for both the flipped class and the traditional class on two of the three survey constructs, confidence in the capacity to understand course content outside of class, and confidence in the capacity to come into class and have a meaningful discussion on course topics, respectively. Growth among the two groups was strongest from the flipped class, which experienced growth in self-efficacy across all three of the survey constructs. Furthermore, the traditional class participants experienced a decrease in confidence for the third construct, confidence in the capacity to apply course content to current events/personal/lives, which could be a result of the instructional choices experienced in the classroom for that group. Finally, the flipped class experienced the most observed growth in self-efficacy on the third construct of the survey, which directly correlates to the instructional choices made by the educator and
experienced by the students during the action research study. Participants from the flipped class actively made connections between the course content and their personal lives. Evidence of growth in self-efficacy is also reflected through an increase in student participation within their communities to inspire change based on what they have learned in class. At the end of the study, several participants mentioned of the study that they planned on volunteering within the community and wanted to have a larger impact within their communities from a policy perspective.

Quantitative data were used to address RQ3: For a social studies classroom in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government? Results for RQ3 were substantiated by quantitative data collected from the pretest and posttest. The relationship between the student participation in the flipped class and the scores on the posttest showed growth in the learning process and achievement for the students of the flipped class. Statistics gathered from the regression showed a slope of 10.3 (B = 10.3) for the dummy variable associated with membership in the flipped class. The majority of posttest scores for the flipped class were above the model fit line of the regression model for all participants while the majority of the traditional posttest scores were below the model fit line. This suggests that participants in the flipped class experienced greater achievement in Participation in Government than the participants in the traditional class. Overall, an analysis of the results connected to the three research questions signified the instructional choices of the flipped learning environment proved to be an effective innovation for
addressing student participation and academic performance concerns in the social studies classroom at the High School of Fashion Industries.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This action research study examined the impact instructional choices had on student participation, knowledge of government, and self-efficacy in a social studies learning environment. Bergmann and Sams’ (2012) flipped class model as well as Byford et al (2009) and Tawfik and Lilly’s (2015) contributions to engaging instructional choices supported the foundation for developing the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model. Additionally, these studies supported the corresponding instructional choices within the social studies classroom for this action research study. Figure 4 illustrates the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model and how it was implemented in my classroom to engage students in their individual learning processes.

Figure 4. The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model. This figure illustrates the cyclical process students experience in their endeavor of constructing meaningful knowledge in the flipped Participation in Government class.
The Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model supports students in the learning process by providing student choice and the ability for students to construct their own knowledge through the learning philosophy of learning by doing. The next section of this chapter focuses on the integration of qualitative and quantitative data by triangulating the data collected for the three research questions. Following this section, I will discuss outcomes stemming from this action research study in relation to the theoretical frameworks and related research. Furthermore, additional points of discussion will be provided with regards to lessons learned, limitations, implications for practice, implications for future research, and final conclusions.

**Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

This action research project deployed a mixed methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data for collecting, analyzing, and describing data in conjunction with the three research questions. The study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design as a means of overcoming potential limitations shared by single method designs (Creswell, 2014). Concurrent triangulation was used to confirm findings within the action research study. As explained in chapter three, concurrent triangulation occurs when two or more methods of data collection are used to confirm and develop interpretations of data from various sources (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2015). Below I describe how the detailed data collected from the qualitative methods, mini check-in interviews, and semi-structured interviews, helped me to interpret the results and construct conclusions from the quantitative tools, pre-/post-survey, and pre-/posttest.
Research Question One

The first research question probes the potential change in student perceptions of participation and accountability for learning through participation in a flipped learning environment. Sources of data for RQ1 came in the form of the mini check-in interviews and the semi-structured interviews. Data extracted from the interviews provided a concise and comprehensive understanding of the student participants’ thoughts and feelings towards the instructional choices experienced in the classroom. In addition, data collected from the pre- and post-survey can be incorporated to further delineate results for RQ1. Overall, the results from the pre- and post-survey document a substantial increase in participation among the students in the treatment group (flipped class). Specifically, the survey results pointed to the most growth in the participants’ confidence in applying their knowledge to current events within society that impact their personal lives.

Qualitative data support four assertions, which assist in triangulating the quantitative data to explain an increase in student perceptions of participation and accountability for learning in the treatment group. The following are the assertions derived from the qualitative data in Chapter 4: (a) participants in the flipped class were provided opportunities to apply course content to their personal life/current events via experiential homework activities and engaging hands-on activities in the classroom, (b) participants prefer a learning environment where they have a more significant role in cultivating their learning experiences, and desire a learning environment which is more experiential and challenging, (c) participant motivation and participation in the flipped class setting enhanced accountability for their own learning and the peer to peer learning
environment of the class, and (d) participants cultivated their learning through experiential activities which immersed them in challenging projects that empowered them to think critically of, and apply the content to their lives and the broader society. Results from the qualitative methods indicated students experienced increased accountability for their learning and an increase in their participation in class. Through the qualitative data, students had the opportunity to describe their experiences in the flipped learning environment and its impact on their participation and performance. Results from the qualitative data demonstrate how students in the flipped learning environment perceived their experiences and the impact on their learning through examples of application to their personal lives.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question focused on the potential impact participation in the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model may have on student self-efficacy. Results were based on the quantitative data collected from the pre and post-self-efficacy survey. Overall, these data documented growth in perceived confidence in the classroom for both the flipped class and the traditional class on two of the three survey constructs. Growth between these two classes was far stronger within the flipped class than the traditional class. We can conclude that participants in both classes experienced a positive change in their confidence to learn course content and participate in class. Instructional choices made by the educator had varying levels of impact on student performance and learning outcomes that were specific to the class. Furthermore, growth for the third construct, confidence in the capacity to apply course content to current events/personal lives, was
only observed in the flipped class with a loss of confidence between the two surveys from the traditional class. This was a glaring dichotomy as participants from the flipped class experienced their most substantial growth within this construct, but participants from the traditional class reported to be less likely to apply course content to their personal lives. It is within the third construct where the impacts of the instructional choices are most evident. Overall, the quantitative data collected from the post-survey suggest high levels of participation and self-efficacy in learning for participants within the flipped class. On the contrary, quantitative data collected from the post-survey suggests a stagnated or loss of confidence in learning and participation for participants within the traditional class for the third construct of the self-efficacy survey.

**Research Question Three**

The last research question addressed the extent to which participation in a flipped learning model affected student knowledge of government. The quantitative data collected from the pretest and posttest reflected higher posttest knowledge for participants in the flipped class. Two assertions from the qualitative data in RQ1 can also be applied to RQ3. The two assertions associated with this last question are the following: (b) students prefer a learning environment where they have a larger role in cultivating their learning experiences, and desire a learning environment which is more experiential and challenging; and (d) students cultivated their learning through experiential activities which immersed them in challenging projects that empowered them to think critically of, and apply the content to their lives or society, provide descriptive evidence to support the quantitative data collected from the pretest and posttest. It is not a
coincidence that participants who performed well on the posttest were more often enrolled in the flipped class. These participants also pointed to the instructional choices and learning environment of the class as contributing factors to their overall achievement in the course. Overall, the qualitative and quantitative data connected to the last research question exhibited strong evidential support for the assertion that the flipped learning environment significantly impacted participant participation and performance.

**Returning to the Problem of Practice**

Results and outcomes from this action research study produced critical implications for the original problem of practice. These recommendations for educational practice are as follows: (a) the need to challenge students with experiential activities that encourage analysis, critical thinking, and application to one’s personal life, (b) the need to develop educators to be innovative guides in the classroom rather than experts, and (c) the need to provide opportunities for student choice and leading discussions among peers in the class learning environment.

**Challenge Students with Experiential Activities**

The first recommendation considers the impact traditional learning environments have on student engagement and academic performance. Enhancing the student experience through opportunities to increase academic engagement is a goal of the HSFI community. In order to achieve this venture, students need to be challenged in the learning process. The use of experiential activities that encourage analysis, critical thinking, and application significantly increased student engagement and motivation in the flipped class during the action research study. For example, students were provided
opportunities to construct their own perceptions and initial understanding of course
content through experiential assignments outside of the class in order to prepare for in-
depth, challenging hands-on activities in class, such as Socratic seminars and political
debates. Challenging students to be more accountable for cultivating their own
knowledge through experiential activities fostering critical thinking and application to
one's life will enhance the student experience in the learning process and lead to
increased student participation and academic performance.

**Innovative Guides in the Classroom**

A second recommendation is a need for educators to be innovative guides in the
classroom rather than the traditional expert of content. If students are going to be
challenged to think critically of the course content and apply it to their personal lives,
educators will have to innovate their learning environments to be more student-led and
focused on individualized learning. Through educators becoming an innovative guide in
the classroom, students gain more opportunity to work one-on-one with the teacher as
well as more opportunities to expand their knowledge of course content through
individualized pathways in the learning process. Finally, educators as innovative guides
put students in the driver's seat for learning instead of the educator being the sole
provider of content. An effective, innovative guide in the Community-Focused Flipped
Learning Model not only allows students to take control of their learning experiences in
the learning process but also actively promotes these experiences to their students. The
guide on the side mentality challenges students to take a more accountable role in the
learning process and also challenges educators to use higher order thinking to work
through rigorous tasks via analysis, critical thinking, and personal application. In turn, students are poised to experience a more significant connection to the course content, participate more in class, and perform better overall in the class as a result of greater accountability and ownership for one's learning.

**Student Choice and Collaborative Learning**

The third and final recommendation is to provide opportunities for student choice and collaborative learning. The results of the action research study pointed to a strong student desire for student choice in designing and completing assignments and learning environments that are rooted in collaborative learning. Collaborative learning environments allow students to interact more on a peer-to-peer level and work together to construct knowledge instead of learning being teacher-directed. Furthermore, collaborative learning environments foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and application among students as they work through hands-on activities driving the learning experiences in the classroom.

**Outcomes Related to Theoretical Perspectives and Related Research**

This section is dedicated to the outcomes uncovered through this action research study and how they are connected to the theoretical perspectives and related research that guided the project. Outcomes related to the theoretical perspectives of social cognitive theory (SCT), self-efficacy, and social constructivism are discussed. Then, outcomes related to research on flipped learning environments and student engagement in the social studies classroom are discussed.
Outcomes Related to Theoretical Perspectives

SCT links individual learning with lived experiences and observations from social interactions with peers. SCT focuses on human motivation and action as the primary beneficiaries of extensive forethought in the learning process (Bandura, 1989; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). SCT supports the notion that students cultivate their own learning when provided with hands-on in-class activities (social modeling) partnered with experiential homework assignments (lived experiences). Bandura (1971) focused on social modeling as a key component to individual learning through motivation. One of the objectives for this action research study was enhancing student motivation as a means of increasing student participation in the learning process. Additionally, SCT principles support a more student-driven and individualized approach to learning through the entrenched focus on the self and forethought (Bandura, 1989; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005).

Through the innovation within this action research study, participants in the Treatment group participated in experiential homework assignments, student-driven hands-on in-class activities, and the application of course content to their personal lives. Results from qualitative and quantitative data demonstrated that participants from the Treatment group demonstrated greater knowledge through their participation in the flipped class. Participants in the flipped class reported being motivated to develop their own perceptions and initial understanding of course content through the out-of-class activities which they reported had challenged them to analyze and think critically about the topics being studied. Participants in the flipped class also reported being more
accountable for their own learning experiences and also the learning environment of the classroom with their peers. Furthermore, these participants reported a desire to learn in a classroom environment where the educator assumes the role of a guide rather than an expert as this type of environment prompted students to have an "all for one and one for all" approach to their learning experiences. Finally, as the participants in the flipped class experienced the instructional choices, their participation in the class became more frequent, and their ownership in the learning process shifted to a greater sense of accountability.

Outcomes from the results also point to an impact on participant self-efficacy. Self-efficacy in the learning environment reflects student confidence in the ability to exert control over one’s own motivation, behavior, and social environment. For example, students who believe in their ability to construct their learning experience a greater ability to persevere and succeed or accomplish a task in specific situations throughout the learning process (Bandura, 1993). Results obtained from the qualitative and quantitative methods in this action research study reflected increased confidence among participants in the flipped class in their ability to participate and make a meaningful contribution to the class. Participants in the flipped class reported experiencing greater motivation to participate in the class learning environment through the hands-on activities and feelings of having more control over their learning. Flipped class participants also reported increased interest in a social studies course due to connecting the curriculum to current events and applying the content to their personal lives. Experiential homework assignments, such as interviewing peers, reviewing primary sources, and digital
scavenger hunts acted as the foundation for flipped-class participants to discover initial understanding of course topics. These assignments played a crucial role in building student self-efficacy in the learning process. Finally, as the participants in the flipped class became more comfortable with the instructional choices and their role in the learning process, their confidence to cultivate their own learning experiences increased and became more pronounced through the hands-on in-class activities.

The principles of social constructivism also resonate with the outcomes connected to this action research study. Social constructivism approaches the process of how people learn through an active environment focused on constructing meaningful knowledge rather than merely acquiring knowledge through memorization (Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1980). For this action research study, the outcomes are supported by the principles of social constructivism through the belief that a student's construction of knowledge is a function of the interaction between individuals and the social world (Gelo et al., 2008). Results from this action research study show participants in the flipped class experienced an active learning environment focused on constructing knowledge through developing perceptions and understanding of course content. Flipped-class participants reported increased knowledge of course content through initial construction of meaning, understanding, and perceptions of course content via experiential homework assignments. Furthermore, flipped-class participants also reported building collaborative learning groups through peer interaction associated with the hands-on in-class activities. These activities encompassed analytical and critical thinking skills, which the flipped-class participants reported to assist in applying the course content to their personal lives.
Flipped-class participants also reported the collaborative learning environment directly enhanced their ability to construct deeper meaning and impact of course content through application to their personal lives. Finally, the outcomes associated with this action research project indicate the instructional choices aligned to the flipped class supported students in the learning process through collaborative learning, experiential assignments, and greater self-efficacy in one’s learning.

**Lessons Learned**

Conducting this action research study was an eye-opening experience and an arduous task, to say at the very least. However, through the action research study, I feel that I have not only become a more seasoned researcher, but also a more effective educator and leader within my school community. While I have observed many positive changes within my own professional and leadership development, like action research, I will continue to identify areas to innovate through future iterations of research. As Mertler (2014) asserts, “Action research deals with your problems… action research provides educators with opportunities to better understand, and therefore improve, their educational practices” (p. 21). As discussed in Chapter 3, action research is an iterative process that encourages continuous learning through research and reflection of one’s practice (McNiff et al., 2009; Mertler, 2016). Through this action research study, I was able to identify a problem of practice within my own academic environment and look for pathways to increase the effectiveness of my instructional choices, teacher efficacy, and further develop my leadership qualities. This action research study acted as Herr and
Anderson (2015) described as “a reflective process… that is deliberately and systematically undertaken and generally requires that some form of evidence be presented to support assertions” (p. 3-4). One of the biggest takeaways for my own practice that I uncovered through this action research is that improving the pedagogical practice within my classroom is the epitome of the iterative process of action research. Furthermore, through improving my own practice in the continuous learning process of action research, I hope to expand the use of action research within my colleagues of educators at the High School of Fashion Industries to encourage a larger scale focus on improvement within the school environment. The following section focuses on the lessons learned related to the educator, the flipped classroom, and the traditional classroom.

Through the facilitation of the action research project as a researcher and educator, I have discovered a newfound appreciation for the learning process. This action research project provided the opportunity to observe how traditional and flipped learning environments function within the learning process as well as the impact on student participation and performance. One of the biggest takeaways from my observations is the stark differences between the role of the educator in the traditional class and flipped class. In the traditional class, the educator served as the expert through providing notes and lecture connected to the topics studied in the government class. In addition, the learning process within the classroom relied considerably on the educator’s ability to deliver content to the students in a succinct and understandable fashion. As a result, there
was a perceived decrease in time available to conference with students on a 1:1 basis and also check the progress of students at different levels of understanding.

On the contrary, the educator in the flipped class served more as a guide to the students as they continued their journey through constructing their knowledge base through the learning process. Furthermore, the learning process in the flipped class relied heavily on the participation and accountability for individual learning from the student. This learning environment provided power to the students to dictate their learning experiences and apply these experiences to their current issues in society/personal lives in and out of the classroom. With the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model, the educator focused on guiding the students toward the learning objectives and goals of the lesson which provided an opportunity for the educator to observe the class from a more holistic perspective instead of focusing on the specific information students needed to notate regarding each topic during instruction.

One of the most notable difficulties I experienced during the action research study was struggling to ensure that participants in both learning environments received a pure version of the instructional choices. Implementing a pure traditional model instructional environment and the Community-Focused Flipped Learning Model was challenging due to my own instructional pedagogy not ascribing to one specifically. There were many moments where I had to take a step back as the educator to think about and challenge the level of influence I was having in the flipped and traditional classes. Finally, one of my biggest lessons learned through this action research project was the impact on my own practice as an educator, but understanding the pedagogical differences among educator
colleagues. It was noteworthy for me to understand how challenging it was to acclimate new instructional choices into a previously developed pedagogical approach to the learning process.

**Issues Related to Transferability**

Limitations within an action research study are predominantly focused on transferability of the findings rather than the generalizability. Transferability gives the opportunity to readers of the research to apply, or transfer the action research study to their own contextual situations (Herr & Anderson, 2014). In addition, limitations within a research study can be factors that are out of the control of the researcher. Limitations associated with the transferability of this action research study include (a) history, (b) positionality of the researcher, and the (c) Hawthorne Effect. I end this section with a discussion of what it means for the research to be transferable rather than generalizable.

**Current Social Context**

Current social context is a limitation of this action research study due to the belief that specific events that occurred between the survey and assessment measurements factored into the participation of students in the study. During the action research study, a number of mass shootings occurred, including the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. As part of the *Participation in Government* course, the Second Amendment is covered during a review of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The unfortunate mass shooting events occurred around the same time that the classes included in the action research were studying the Second Amendment. Within the class, many discussions, debates, and Socratic seminars were held to focus on issues pertaining
to the First Amendment, Second Amendment, and amendments four through six. Current social context presents as a potential limitation to transferability due to the chance that these events encouraged the students to participate more in the class than usual should the events not have occurred. Therefore, readers transferring the results of this action research study must be aware of the experiences the participants encountered within this study and be mindful that similar results may not be replicated in their own context due to the current social context limitation.

**Hawthorne Effect**

The Hawthorne Effect is a limitation for this research study due to the possibility that the students in both sections of *Participation in Government* increased their participation and focus in the class as a direct result of the increased attention the participants received, and not due to the instruction the participants received. In addition to being the researcher for this action research study, I was also the teacher for the two sections of the *Participation in Government* class. The participants were fully aware that I was observing the impact of instructional choices on student participation and learning throughout the study. Therefore, student participation and motivation in the course may have been influenced as a result of participant knowledge of the study focus on the impact of instructional choices in the classroom.

**Positionality as Teacher and Researcher**

As explained in Chapter 3, *Methods*, my positionality as the researcher and the teacher presented a potential limitation to the action research study. Due to being the researcher and also maintaining the role of the educator within the action research study
for both classes, the student participants may have been more motivated and engaged in excess during class periods than if the students were not included in the study. This phenomena occurs because the students could potentially want to perform well within the study as they believed it would help the researcher, and to more of an extent, their own standing within the course. To limit this particular challenge, I informed students that the impacts of instructional choices on student learning were the focal point of the study. Additionally, my role as the educator and belief in project-based learning may have unintentionally caused bias in the study, thus potentially hindering transferability of the study. As a result of my belief in project-based learning, I may have unconsciously perceived the flipped class would outperform the traditional class at the commencement of the action research study. To limit this particular challenge, member checks were conducted on the qualitative data to check for accuracy of responses recorded by the researcher and also provide participants with the opportunity to modify their responses after the conclusion of the action research study.

**Not Generalizable but Transferable**

This action research study is transferable but not generalizable due to the results and findings from the study on the sample student population not being representative of the larger population of students. The results of this action research study can be transferred to similar social studies learning environments and students due to the focus on instructional choices, student participation, and knowledge of social studies. However, the results of this action research study cannot be applied in a broader context and are specific to the social studies learning environment at the High School of Fashion
Industries. This limitation was reduced by extensively describing the research context that was essential to the study.

**Implications for Future Research**

Through completing this action research study, additional areas of interest for future cycles of action research include instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning environment in classes with a standardized state assessment at the conclusion of the course, a department-wide focus on instructional choices, student participation, and academic performance in all social studies classes at HSFI, and a school-wide focus on instructional choices and teacher efficacy across the curricula.

**A Flipped Learning Environment in Classes with a Standardized State Assessment**

This action research study took place within a 12th-grade *Participation in Government* social studies classroom. This class does not have a culminating standardized state assessment at the end of the course. Therefore, one recommendation for a future cycle of action research would be to study the impacts of instructional choices on student engagement and achievement in social studies classes with a required standardized state assessment at the conclusion of the course. The focus of the study would be on growth in learning and student engagement, but including the impact of high stakes testing and stressors associated with a standardized state assessment. A potential research question for this cycle of study may include the following: For a social studies classroom with a culminating standardized state assessment in a themed metropolitan high school, to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect self-efficacy? Furthermore, another potential research question may be, For a social studies
classroom with a culminating standardized state assessment in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a flipped learning model affect student knowledge of government?

**Department-Wide Focus on Instructional Choices in all Social Studies Classes**

Taking this action research study and expanding it to incorporate all classes within the social studies department at HSFI is another recommendation for a future cycle of research. In order to expand this iteration of action research to incorporate all social studies classes at HSFI, I will have to conduct outreach to the Assistant Principal in charge of the social studies department, the teachers within the social studies department to get them on board for this potential study, and to all students in the social studies classes. While the outreach process would be an arduous task, teachers and students would be the focal point of the study and would need to be recruited and provide consent to be participants. Through expanding the current action research to include all faculty within the social studies department, pending consent, would allow for a broader study to be conducted to consider the potential impact instructional choices aligned to flipped classroom models may have on student participation, knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in the learning process in social studies classes. Furthermore, the school-level administration would be interested in this proposed research study due to the connection to the school’s focus of providing a learning environment to students that is academically challenging and socially supportive to the growth of learners. Potential research questions for this cycle of research may include, For a social studies department in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does participation in a
flipped learning model affect student knowledge of social studies across all classes? An additional research question may focus on teacher interaction with the instructional model and their impact on student engagement and academic performance. The research question posed could be as follows: For a social studies department in a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does teacher perceptions of instructional choices affect student participation in the classroom learning environment and academic performance?

**School-Wide Focus on Instructional Choices and Teacher Efficacy Across the Curricula**

The final recommendation for a future cycle of research focuses on a school-wide study on instructional choices which inspire analysis, critical thinking, and application of content to one's personal life across the spectrum of curricula. Teacher efficacy would be a major focus of this cycle of research to determine the overall belief of the faculty at HSFI to influence student participation and academic performance. This proposed study would require outreach to recruit teachers across the curricula and the students in their classes. Approval would need to be obtained from district level administration due to the size and potential reach the research study may have. Through this cycle of research, potential pathways for professional development may be identified, and specific teacher leaders who are willing to create and cultivate a professional environment dedicated to developing educators who incorporate instructional choices which are inspired by analysis, critical thinking, and application. Furthermore, this proposed study would be of interest to district-level administration due to the current focus on instructional rigor.
inside classrooms at HSFI. A potential research question to incorporate into this study would be: For a themed metropolitan high school, how and to what extent does teacher efficacy impact the effectiveness of instructional choices in the learning process?

**Conclusion**

Traditional teacher-led instruction, which uses lecture, PowerPoint slides, and a student-to-teacher relationship to acquire knowledge, remains the most relied upon method of instruction within classrooms at HSFI. However, concerns regarding student participation, knowledge of course content, and instructional rigor have placed traditional teacher-led instruction under the microscope at the district level. With a focus on developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and applying knowledge to current issues or personal lives, it is imperative for educators to adapt their instructional choices to provide meaningful experiential learning opportunities to students. This action research study looked at the potential for instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning environment to be an option for educators to use that may assist in increasing student engagement and academic performance in high school social studies classes.

The purpose of this action research study was to identify the potential impact of instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning environment may have on student participation in the learning process, a student’s knowledge of social studies, and self-efficacy in a social studies class. A mixed methods research design, where qualitative data were used to inform quantitative data, was used to evaluate the effectiveness and influence of the instructional choices made in the flipped class had on student participation, academic performance, motivation, and one’s accountability for their
learning. These instructional choices presented one potential avenue for educators to provide students with the opportunity to take greater ownership and accountability for their learning through experiential and collaborative learning activities.

The students who participated in this action research study overwhelmingly preferred a learning environment which is rich in collaborative learning, experiential activities, and applicable to current events or a personal connection to their lives. Outcomes connected to the results of the action research study indicate instructional choices aligned with a flipped learning environment increased participants’ self-efficacy, motivation, and accountability in the learning process. In addition, the instructional choices made by the educator provided a pathway to the observed increases in participant participation in the flipped class and subsequent greater knowledge of government. Furthermore, as participants became more comfortable with the instructional choices in the flipped class, their participation and performance quickly outperformed the students in the traditional class. Overall, the instructional choices used in the flipped class are exemplary of a learning environment where students dictated the construction of their knowledge through analysis, critical thinking, and application of collaborative learning and experiential activities to their personal lives.
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APPENDIX A

HIGH SCHOOL OF FASHION INDUSTRIES 2016-2017 SCHOOL QUALITY SNAPSHOT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How effective is the school environment?</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well are high expectations communicated to staff?</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How clear are the school’s expectations and goals?</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of students who feel safe and supported to grow and excel</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teachers who feel responsible for student success</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teachers who feel their opportunities to learn are expanded</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of classroom teachers who feel they are learning</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of classroom teachers who feel they are learning</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

SELF-EFFICACY SURVEY
Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey was designed to gain a better understanding of student learning and engagement in the classroom. For the questions below, please rate how certain you are that the items positively impact your ability to learn. Your answers will remain anonymous throughout the duration they are in the possession of the researcher and will be destroyed upon completion of the research study. Results of this survey will be used to help the researcher ascertain the potential for flipped learning environments as an effective instructional method in the classroom. The survey is a total of 13 questions and should be completed within 10 to 15 minutes.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me at sflazarus@gmail.com
Respectfully,
Sean Lazarus

Directions
Rate your degree of confidence by circling a number from 1 to 4 on the scale given below:

1
2
3
4
Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

Confidence in the Capacity to Understand Content Outside of the Class
This section pertains to instructional choices focused on more student driven learning in the classroom where students prepare for the class discussion topics the day before through various experiential homework assignments, such as small introductory research, instructional video clips, primary source documents, peer interviewing, and informative predicting based on connecting prior knowledge.

1. Instructional videos enable me to think critically of course content more deeply.

1
2
3
4
Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

2. Reviewing primary source documents prepares me to think critically of course content more deeply.

1
2
3
4
165
3. Reviewing primary source documents outside of the classroom enables me to develop my own assertions on class topics.

4. I lose interest in classes where content is primarily delivered through slideshow presentations.

5. Class instruction primarily based in lecture negatively impacts my ability to learn course concepts.

6. Class instruction primarily based in lecture negatively impacts my ability to apply course concepts to my personal life.

7. I learn best when activities in the classroom challenge me to think critically of a topic.

8. I am more confident to participate in daily class topic discussions when I am given homework assignments that prepare me for the next day’s topic.

Confidence in the Capacity to Come Into Class and Have a Meaningful Discussion on Course Topics

Student engagement is concerned with the level of participation a student embodies within the learning process through activities in the classroom and outside through experiential homework assignments.
9. I perform better in classes when there are activities planned to support my understanding of the content.

Confidence in the Capacity to Apply Course Content to Current Events/Personal Lives

Application of course content to current events or personal lived experiences is a key component to reflecting mastery of content. Additionally, the level of challenging work a student endures in the classroom ultimately has an impact on the extent their learning is developed. Confidence in this capacity is also reflective of a higher level of participation by students in a learning environment.

10. In class debate activities with my peer’s assists in my ability to apply topics to current events.

11. Classroom experiences based in hands on activities assist in constructing my application of topics to present day situations.

12. I can apply course topics to my personal life/current events better when reviewing course content outside of the classroom.
13. Watching instructional videos outside of the classroom enables me to apply my own assertions of class topics to current events/personal life.

1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

**Participant Demographic Items**

1. Class year
   a. Junior
   b. Senior

2. With what gender do you identify?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Transgender Female
   d. Transgender Male
   e. Gender Variant/Non-Conforming
   f. Other __________

3. Age
   a. 16
   b. 17
   c. 18
   d. Other _____

4. Ethnicity origin (or Race): Please specify your ethnicity.
   a. White
   b. Hispanic or Latino
   c. Black or African American
   d. Native American or American Indian
   e. Asian / Pacific Islander
   f. Other
5. What period is your class?
   a. 4th
   b. 5th
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT PRETEST
1. The ideological battle behind the Civil War might be interpreted as a battle between
   A. the Constitution and the Articles of Confederation
   B. the First Amendment and the elastic clause
   C. property and the pursuit of happiness
   D. the Ninth and Tenth Amendments
   E. the supremacy clause and the "full faith and credit" clause

2. The principal of natural rights, as enumerated in Locke’s theory, are
   I. Life
   II. Liberty
   III. Property
   IV. The pursuit of happiness
   A. I and II only       B. II and III only
   C. I, II, and III only D. I, II, and IV only
   E. II, III, and IV only

3. Which of the following are part of the unwritten Constitution?
   I. Political parties
   II. The Cabinet
   III. Judicial review
   IV. Two-term limit on presidency
   A. I only               B. II and III only
   C. I and IV only        D. I, II, and III only
   E. all

4. Which of the following clause invalidates any state law that violates the Constitution, federal laws, or international treaties?
   A. Full faith and credit clause
   B. Elastic clause
   C. Privileges and immunities clause
   D. Supremacy clause
   E. Extradition clause

5. The Anti-Federalists have much in common with the modern Democratic Party in terms of
   I. Geographic base
   II. Socioeconomic base
   III. Regard for individual liberties
   A. I only               B. III only
   C. I and II only        D. II and III only
   E. I, II, and III

6. The Federalist Papers were designed to
   A. mock the Federalist argument in favor of the new Constitution
   B. convince the states of the wisdom in a strong central government coupled with autonomous state power
   C. satirize the Anti-Federalist point of view
   D. reach out to lower-class Americans about the virtues of the new central government
   E. win over the American people to participate in the new republic created by the Constitution

7. In response to Watergate, the Iran-Contra Affair and the prospect of Russian meddling in the 2016 Presidential Election Congress
   A. took no action
   B. conducted congressional investigations
   C. let the Justice Department conduct investigations
   D. impeached presidents
   E. held trials led by the Chief Justice

8. If Congress is about to pass legislation that is strongly opposed, which of the following is a plausible way to check Congress’ power?
   A. The President overrides the bill.
   B. The Supreme Court declares Congress unconstitutional.
   C. The states refuse to abide by the new law.
   D. The President vetoes the bill.
   E. Voters recall their congressmen.
9. "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it."
   – President Andrew Jackson

   The above quotation demonstrates
   A. the reliance of the Supreme Court upon the executive branch to carry out its decisions
   B. the Supreme Court’s occasional command of executive power during the 19th century
   C. close communication between the executive and judicial branches of the federal government
   D. the Chief Justice’s unwillingness to expand the power of the Supreme Court in its early years
   E. the deference with which the Supreme Court treated the power of the President

10. In *Gibbons v. Ogden*, the Supreme Court used judicial review to
    A. rewrite the Constitution
    B. increase federal power over interstate commerce
    C. narrowly interpret the Constitution
    D. strike down a federal law
    E. decrease federal power over press

11. "It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is."
    – Chief Justice John Marshall

    The above quotation comes from the opinion of what landmark Supreme Court case?
    A. *Marbury v. Madison*
    B. *McCulloch v. Maryland*
    C. *Gibbons v. Ogden*
    D. *Cohens v. Virginia*
    E. *Dartmouth College v. Woodward*

Which of the following constitutional concepts does the cartoon above depict?
I. Checks and balances
II. Federalism
III. Separation of church and state
IV. Popular sovereignty
A. III only
B. I and II only
C. II and III only
D. I and III only
E. I, III, and IV only
13. "That one generation of men cannot foreclose or burden [the Earth's] use to another, which comes to it in its own right and by the same divine beneficence; that a preceding generation cannot bind a succeeding one by its laws or contracts; [...] these axioms are so self-evident that no explanation can make them plainer."
– Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson's remarks are most likely to be quoted in support of
A. a constitutional amendment
B. judicial restraint
C. strict construction
D. dual federalism
E. originalism

14. Which of the following has had the greatest influence over federalism in America?
A. Reserved powers
B. Checks and balances
C. Enumerated powers
D. Executive orders
E. The Tenth Amendment

15. Which of the following parts of the Constitution has been used most to expand the scope of national government?
A. First Amendment
B. Fifth Amendment
C. Tenth Amendment
D. Commerce clause
E. Elastic clause

16. The Supreme Court settled two matters in the McCulloch v. Maryland by establishing
A. the national government's ability to regulate interstate commerce and the supremacy of the national government over the states
B. the supremacy of the national government over the states and a narrow definition of commerce
C. the national government's ability to regulate interstate commerce and the existence of implied powers
D. the national government's implied right to create a national bank and the Supreme Court's power of judicial review
E. the supremacy of the national government over the states and the existence of implied powers

17. The process through which an individual's political beliefs are shaped by family, education, religion, and other factors is known as
A. political dealignment
B. selective incorporation
C. political socialization
D. extraordinary rendition
E. solidary incentivization

18. If the most liberal wing of the Democratic Party takes control of the party platform and focuses on social reforms, it would be most likely to alienate
A. graduate students
B. Northeastern suburban voters
C. Jewish Americans
D. Wealthy southerners
E. African-Americans living in cities

19. Which of the following regions is most likely to vote Republican?
A. New England
B. The Northeast
C. The Southeast
D. The Northwest
E. The Southwest

20. In recent years, there has been a spike in the number of voters who classify themselves as
A. Republicans
B. Democrats
C. liberals
D. populists
E. independents

21. In 2003, the Census Bureau announced that ________ now comprise the largest ethnic minority in the United States
A. African-Americans
B. Asian-Americans
C. Native Americans
D. Hispanic-Americans
E. Arab-Americans

22. All of the following are frequently advocated by liberals EXCEPT
A. stricter regulation of business
B. funding for alternative energy research
C. privatization of Social Security
D. strong protection of civil liberties
E. background checks for gun-owners
23. Which of the following ideologies would most likely endorse a government program to reduce poverty?
   I. Liberalism
   II. Conservatism
   III. Libertarianism
   IV. Populism
   A. I only          B. I and III only
   C. II and IV only  D. I and IV only
   E. II, III, and IV only

24. Which of the following ideologies would most likely endorse low taxes?
   I. Liberalism
   II. Conservatism
   III. Libertarianism
   IV. Populism
   A. II only          B. I and III only
   C. II and III only  D. I, II, and IV only
   E. I, II, III, and IV

25. Which of the following publications is generally regarded as being politically conservative?
   A. The Wall Street Journal
   B. The Los Angeles Times
   C. The Washington Post
   D. The New York Times
   E. The Boston Globe


   The trend indicated by the above graph would probably be most disturbing to a(n)
   A. Keynesian economist
   B. fiscal conservative
   C. civil libertarian
   D. investment banker
   E. foreign central bank

27. Which of the following best explains why voter registration records underestimate the number of independent voters in the U.S.?
   A. In order to vote in primaries in many states, independent voters register as either Republicans or Democrats.
   B. Many independent voters choose not to vote and therefore are not registered.
   C. Independent voters are less likely to be registered than Democrats.
   D. Independent voters tend to be illegal residents.
   E. Independent voters often lie about political allegiances instead of admitting to being independent.
28. Which of the following statements best describes electoral behavior in the United States?
   A. Democrats usually have higher voter turnout than Republicans.
   B. Voter turnout determines most elections.
   C. Presidential elections usually have higher voter turnout than midterm elections.
   D. The majority of the electorate votes in most state elections.
   E. Citizens aged 18-21 have the highest rate of voter turnout.

29. Party platforms are developed...
   A. during the primary season by the potential party candidates
   B. after the national convention by the party candidate for president
   C. through polling of party members
   D. by the platform committee at the national party convention
   E. by the party's Senate and House campaign committees

30. A caucus differs from a primary in that
   A. party members congregate and discuss the candidates before selecting delegates
   B. independents as well as registered party members are allowed to vote in a caucus
   C. only those who contribute financially to party candidates may participate in a caucus
   D. primaries express voters' preferences, whereas caucuses nominate national delegates
   E. caucuses were banned by the Democratic Party's McGovern-Fraser Commission

31. The combination of a presidential and vice-presidential candidate of the same party is known as a
   A. convention   B. caucus
   C. primary      D. platform
   E. ticket


   What election trend is this excerpt describing?
   A. Coattails
   B. Gerrymandering
   C. Retrospective voting
   D. Incumbent advantage
   E. Prospective voting

33. Replacement of the Electoral College with a direct popular vote would most likely have all of the following effects EXCEPT to
   A. encourage presidential candidates to campaign in a greater number of states
   B. promote the resolution of more elections in the House of Representatives
   C. prevent the election of a presidential candidate who did not win the most votes
   D. reduce the electoral strength of residents of states with small populations
   E. decrease the importance of "swing states" in determining election outcomes
34. Which of the following statements about the Electoral College is correct?
A. In most states, the candidate who receives the most votes wins all of the state's electoral votes.
B. Electoral votes are typically divided among the candidates in proportion to the votes they receive.
C. Under the Electoral College system, small states have disproportionately few electoral votes.
D. Many state electors vote for candidates other than those for whom they promised to vote.
E. A tie in the Electoral College is resolved by a simple majority in the Senate and House of Representatives.

35. 1992 Presidential Election Results

Which of the following criticisms does this chart support?

A. The people have too much say over the outcome of a Presidential election.
B. The states are dealt electoral votes on the basis of population size.
C. Presidential elections should be limited to two-party candidates.
D. The winner-take-all system fails to reflect the general will of the people.
E. The electoral votes of each state should be divided between candidates proportionately.

36. An interest group is best defined as a
A. circle of political candidates who support each other in the party primary
B. set of people pursuing similar policy objectives through the political process
C. formal organization of like-minded congressional representatives
D. network of allied policymakers in Congress, the bureaucracy, and industry
E. media conglomerate whose coverage is driven primarily by the profit motive

37. The American Association of Retired Persons, the American Medical Association, and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters are all examples of
A. interest groups
B. labor unions
C. political action committees
D. single-issue groups
E. oligopolists

38. A reporter who uncovers and publicizes government corruption or scandal is known as a
A. mugwump
B. muckraker
C. carpetbagger
D. scalawag
E. yellow dog

39. Which of the following is an example of muckraking?
A. A member of the Electoral College votes for a candidate who lost her state's popular vote.
B. A state legislature draws congressional district lines so as to benefit incumbent representatives.
C. A journalist writes an exposé on politicians who violate campaign-finance legislation.
D. An opponent of a popular bill occupies the floor of the Senate and refuses to stop speaking.
E. A lobbyist finances a challenger's campaign in return for a promise to vote against a certain bill.

40. Which of the following is an example of libel?
A. An antiwar activist burns an American flag to protest the nation's involvement in a foreign conflict.
B. The President seeks a court injunction to stop a newspaper from publishing a story on national security.
C. A reporter falsely accuses a congressman of taking bribes in order to hurt his political fortunes.
D. An underqualified candidate is appointed to a state commission as a result of political connections.
E. The majority party in a state legislature passes an electoral law to make voter-registration more difficult.
41. Which of the following is an accurate statement about representation in Congress?
   A. California, New York, and Florida elect the greatest numbers of senators but only two House members each.
   B. While the Senate has grown with the admission of new states, the House has always had 435 members.
   C. Residents of states with small populations, such as Wyoming, are unfairly underrepresented in the House.
   D. The citizens of every state have roughly equal amounts of representation in both houses of Congress.
   E. A resident of California is adequately represented in the House and underrepresented in the Senate.

42. During a midterm election, which of the following officials are elected?
   A. The entire House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate
   B. The President and the entire Senate
   C. The President and the entire House of Representatives
   D. Half of the House of Representatives and half of the Senate
   E. Half of the House of Representatives and the entire Senate

43. Which of the following best describes the presidential removal process?
   A. A grand jury votes for impeachment and the Supreme Court convicts.
   B. The House votes for impeachment, and the Senate conducts a trial and reaches a guilty verdict.
   C. The House and Senate vote for impeachment.
   D. Congress votes for impeachment and the Supreme Court reaches a guilty verdict.
   E. The House passes a bill of impeachment.

44. The cartoon above
   A. demonstrates the principle of separation of powers
   B. provides an example of a Congressional override
   C. illustrates the lack of power in the judicial branch
   D. indicates that the legislative branch has the most influence over foreign policy
   E. shows a legislative check on the executive's foreign-policy power

45. "[This organization] is responsible for protecting the public health by assuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, medical devices, our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation."

The above is excerpted from the mission statement of the
   A. Food and Drug Administration
   B. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
   C. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
   D. Drug Enforcement Agency
   E. National Institutes of Health

46. A law designed to counter misleading information in the stock market would most likely be administered by the
   A. Securities and Exchange Commission
   B. Federal Trade Commission
   C. New York Stock Exchange
   D. Federal Reserve Governors
   E. House Committee on Ethics
47. The cartoon above best supports which of the following statements?

A. The partisan balance of the Court is extremely skewed.
B. The Court often hears cases on abortion.
C. The Supreme Court is not subjected to the scrutiny of public opinion or partisan politics.
D. The Court refuses to hear cases it considers to be out of its jurisdiction.
E. Court decisions like Roe v. Wade must be balanced due to their volatile nature.

48. The cartoon above best describes which of the following statements concerning public policy?

A. Interest groups are usually interested in distributed benefits and distributed costs.
B. Defense spending is costly and requires cutting social reform programs.
C. Reducing the national debt is high on the political agenda.
D. Social security is in danger of going bankrupt if not reformed in the near future.
E. Citizens want to retain federal benefits, but refuse to pay more for them.

49. The leading contributor to a person's payment for medical costs is

A. Medicare
B. Medicaid
C. malpractice insurance
D. out-of-pocket expenses
E. private insurance

50. Some Americans believe that social welfare programs violate the American principle of

A. the pursuit of happiness
B. anti-federalism
C. separation of powers
D. rugged individualism
E. the American dream
APPENDIX D

PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT POSTTEST
Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answer completions. Select the one that is best in each case and then fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.

1. Which of the following is an example of checks and balances, as established by the Constitution?
   a. A requirement that states lower their legal drinking age to eighteen as a condition of receiving funds through federal highway grant programs
   b. Media criticism of public officials during an election campaign period
   c. The Supreme Court’s ability to overturn lower court decisions
   d. The requirement that presidential appointments to the Supreme Court be approved by the Senate
   e. The election of the President by the electoral college rather than by direct election

2. We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I’m going to show you a seven-point scale on which political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal - point 1 - to extremely conservative - point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale? (Point 4 not shown on scale.) MY POLITICAL VIEWS ARE...

The graph above supports which of the following statements?
   a. People with higher incomes are more likely to think of themselves as conservative than are those with lower income.
b. Americans with incomes under $10,000 are twice as likely to think of themselves as liberal than as conservative.

c. A majority of people whose incomes fall between $10,000 and $50,000 think of themselves as conservative.

d. No income group contains more people who think of themselves as liberal than people who think of themselves as conservative.

e. People with higher incomes are less likely to think of themselves as either liberal or conservative than are those with lower incomes.

3. A primary election in which voters are required to identify a party preference before the election and are not allowed to split their ticket is called

   a. An open primary
   b. A blanket primary
   c. A closed primary
   d. A runoff primary
   e. A presidential preference primary

4. When selecting a vice-presidential candidate, a presidential nominee is usually concerned with choosing a running mate who

   a. Has significant personal wealth
   b. Adds balance and appeal to the national ticket
   c. Comes from the same ideological wing of the party as the President
   d. Can serve as the most important domestic policy adviser to the President
   e. Can effectively preside over the Senate

5. The primary function of political action committees (PAC’s) is to

   a. Serve as fund-raising organizations for challengers
   b. Provide members of Congress with unbiased information regarding proposed legislation
   c. Consult with the President regarding domestic policy
   d. Encourage broader participating in politics among the electorate
   e. Raise campaign funds to support favored candidates
6. Which of the following conclusions about income distribution during the Reagan administration is supported by the table below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AMONG FAMILIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(percentage share by economic level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest fifth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. The share of income received by the lowest fifth increased, whereas the share received by the fourth fifth decreased.
b. The share of income received by the second fifth increased, whereas the share received by the fourth fifth decreased.
c. The share of income received by the highest fifth increased, whereas the share received by the lowest fifth decreased.
d. The number of people earning high incomes increased.
e. The middle class disappeared.

7. Registered voters directly elect which of the following?

I. The President and Vice President
II. Supreme Court justices
III. Members of the Senate
IV. Members of the House of Representatives

a. I only
b. IV only
c. I and II only
d. III and IV only
e. II, III, and IV only

8. The role of a conference committee in Congress is to

a. Hold hearings on proposed legislation
b. Oversee the actions of the executive branch of government
c. Decide which bills should be considered by the full Senate
d. Conduct hearings that make information available to the public
e. Reconcile differences in bills passed by the House and Senate
9. Supreme Court justices were given tenure subject to good behavior by the framers of the Constitution in order to ensure that

   a. Justices are free from direct political pressures
   b. Justices remain accountable to the public
   c. Justices are encouraged to make politically popular decisions
   d. Cooperation between the judicial and legislative branches is assured
   e. Presidents are encouraged to seek younger nominees for the Supreme Court

10. The committee system is more important in the House than in the Senate because

   a. The seniority system plays no role in the House and therefore committees must play a larger role
   b. The Constitution mandates the type of committee structure in the House
   c. Committee members are appointed by the President
   d. The House is so large that more work can be accomplished in committees than on the floor
   e. The majority party in the House prefers to give priority to the work of the committees.

11. The most important source of the Supreme Court’s caseload is

   a. Its original jurisdiction
   b. Its appellate jurisdiction
   c. Instruction from the solicitor general
   d. The special master’s certification of cases review
   e. Congress’ certification of cases for review

12. A President attempting to influence Congress to pass a legislative program might employ all of the following strategies EXCEPT

   a. Using the media to draw attention to the legislative program
   b. Assigning legislative liaisons in the Executive Office of the President to lobby legislation
   c. Denying campaign reelection funds to legislators who oppose the President’s policy stand
d. Exploiting a partisan majority for the President’s party in both the House and Senate
e. Reminding legislators of high popularity ratings for the President in public opinion polls

13. Presidents have had the most success in changing the direction of decisions of the federal judiciary by

a. Threatening to ask Congress to impeach specific judges
b. Using the media to build consensus for the President’s position
c. Requesting that Congress reduce the term of office that judges may serve
d. Using the appointment process to select judges with judicial philosophies similar to those of the President
e. Pressuring Congress to pass the appropriate legislation to override judicial opinions

14. Which of the following did the most to expand civil rights in the 1950’s?

a. State legislature decisions desegregating public accommodations
b. State court decisions outlawing poll taxes
c. The passage of voting-rights legislation by Congress
d. Executive orders mandating affirmative action
e. The Supreme Court decision declaring state-mandated school segregation to be unconstitutional

15. Which of the following is true about the right of free speech, as currently interpreted by the Supreme Court?

a. It protects the right to express opinions even without the actual use of words
b. It protects the use of language deemed obscene by the courts
c. It allows citizens to disobey laws that they believe to be unjust
d. It is protected from infringement by the federal government but not from infringement by state governments
e. It cannot be limited in any manner

16. The importance of Shays’ Rebellion to the development of the United States Constitution was that it

a. Revealed the necessity of both adding the Bill of Rights to the Constitution and creating a new system of checks and balances
b. Demonstrated the intensity of anti-ratification sentiment within the thirteen states
c. Indicated that a strong, constitutional designed national government was needed to protect property and maintain order
d. Convinced the delegates attending the Constitutional Convention to accept the Connecticut Plan
e. Reinforced the idea that slavery should be outlawed in the new Constitution

17. In a federal system of government, political power is primarily

a. Vested in local governments
b. Vested in the regional governments
c. Vested in the central government
d. Divided between the central government and regional governments
e. Divided between regional governments and local governments

18. Which of the following generalizations about group voting tendencies is true?

a. Jewish voters tend to vote Republican
b. Protestant voters tend to be more liberal than Roman Catholics on economic issues
c. More women than men identify themselves as Republicans
d. Rural voters are more likely to support Democratic candidates than are urban voters
e. African American Democrats tend to support the more liberal candidates within their party

19. A corporate lobbyist would be LEAST likely to have an informal discussion about a pending policy matter with which of the following?

a. A member of the House in whose district the corporation has a plant
b. A member of the White House staff concerned about the issue
c. A member of the staff of the Senate committee handling a matter of concern to the corporation
d. A federal judge in whose court case important to the corporation is being heard
e. A journalist for a major newspaper concerned about the issue

20. Which of the following is a significant trend in the presidential nominating process over the past three decades?
a. Replacement of national party conventions by national primaries for each party
b. Increasing importance of presidential primaries rather than state conventions
c. A sharply declining role for political action committees (PACs)
d. Decreasing cost of campaigns
e. Increasing control by political party leaders over outcomes

21. Congressional standing committees are best described as

   a. Specially appointed investigative bodies
   b. Joint committees of the two houses of Congress
   c. Committees created for each session
   d. Permanent subject-matter committees
   e. Advisory staff agencies

22. All of the following powers are granted to the President by the Constitution EXCEPT

   a. Commissioning officers in the armed forces
   b. Addressing the Congress on the state of the union
   c. Receiving ambassadors
   d. Granting pardons for federal offenses
   e. Forming new cabinet-level departments

23. In which of the following did Congress move to regain powers previously lost to the executive branch?

   a. Budget and Impoundment Control Act
   b. Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act
   c. Presidential Disability Act
   d. Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
   e. Persian Gulf War Resolution

24. The data displayed in the table below best support which of the following statements?
a. The reelection rate is higher in the Senate than in the House.
b. The average vote won by Senate members surpasses that won by House members.
c. House seats are safer from election turnover than are Senate seats.
d. House members serve more terms than do Senators.
e. More members of the Senate win reelection by 60% or more of the vote than do members of the House.

25. Which of the following actions can Congress take if the Supreme Court finds a federal law unconstitutional?

a. Appeal the Court’s decision to the District of Columbia’s Court of Appeals.
b. Formally request the President veto the Court’s decision.
c. Remove certain members of the Court and replace them with new members.
d. Try to amend the Constitution.
e. Reenact the same law.

26. Which of the following statements about Congress is true?

a. Members of Congress only occasionally are interested in and pay attention to constituents.
b. The legislative process is frequently lengthy, decentralized, and characterized by compromise and bargaining.
c. Lobbyists and political action committees (PAC’s) successfully induce most members of Congress to trade their votes for campaign contributions.

d. The growth in the size of Congress as an organization is the principal cause of growth in the federal budget deficit.

e. Debate in both houses is structured by elaborate rules enacted by leaders of the majority party.

27. Which of the following is articulated in the War Powers Resolution?

a. The President may declare war.

b. The President must finance any war efforts from a special contingency fund.

c. The President must bring troops home from hostilities within 60 to 90 days unless Congress extends the time.

d. The President may not nationalize state militias without congressional consent.

e. The President may not send troops into hostilities without a declaration of war from Congress or a resolution from the United Nations.

28. In the 1992 election, the membership of Congress was altered significantly by an increase in the number of

a. Conservative Democrats

b. Liberal Republicans

c. Third-party representatives

d. Political independents

e. Minorities and women

29. Discrimination in public accommodations was made illegal in the United States as a direct result of the

a. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka

b. Supreme Court decision in Sweatt v. Painter

c. Civil Rights Act of 1964

d. Montgomery bus boycott

e. Voting Rights Act of 1965

30. Most of the individual protections of the Bill of Rights now apply to the states because of the Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Constitution’s

a. Preamble

b. Necessary and proper clause
c. Supremacy clause
d. Tenth Amendment
e. Fourteenth Amendment

31. In *McCulloch v. Maryland*, the Supreme Court established which of the following principles?

a. States cannot interfere with or tax the legitimate activities of the federal government.
b. The judicial branch cannot intervene in political disputes between the President and Congress.
c. The federal Bill of Rights places no limitations on the states.
d. The federal government has the power to regulate commerce.
e. It is within the judiciary’s authority to interpret the constitution.

32. Political socialization is the process by which

a. The use of private property is regulated by the government
b. Governments communicate with each other
c. Public attitudes toward government are measured and reported
d. Political values are passed to the next generation
e. Children are trained for successful occupations

33. Which of the following is the most important influence on the choice made by voters in Presidential elections?

a. Partisan identification
b. Party platform adopted at the national convention
c. Vice-presidential running mate
d. Endorsement by political incumbents
e. Appeal of the candidates’ spouses

34. The advantages of incumbency in congressional elections include which of the following?

I. Incumbents receive more campaign contributions than do challengers.
II. Incumbents are able to provide important services for individual voters.
III. The government provides campaign funds for incumbents.
IV. The President usually endorses incumbents for reelection.
V. Most American voters believe Congress does a good job.

a. I and II only

195
b. III and IV only

c. I, IV, and V only

d. II, III, and V only

e. III, IV, and V only

35. Which of the following statements about rules of procedure in the House and Senate is correct?

a. Debate by a determined minority in either chamber cannot be halted.
b. The rules in each chamber are determined by the majority whip.
c. The rules are specified in Article I of the Constitution.
d. The rules can be changed by the President during a national emergency.
e. The House operates more by formal rules, while the Senate operates more on informal understandings.

36. Which of the following procedures results in the removal of the President from office?

a. The House and Senate vote for impeachment, and the Supreme Court reaches a guilty verdict.
b. The House votes for impeachment, and the Senate conducts a trial and reaches a guilty verdict.
c. The House and Senate both vote for a bill of impeachment.
d. Only the House votes for a bill of impeachment.
e. A criminal court finds the President guilty of “high crimes and misdemeanors.”

37. Interest groups and political parties both promote United States democracy by

a. Expressing detailed, ideologically distinct programs
b. Centralizing public authority
c. Linking citizens to the political process
d. Increasing domination of the political process by elites
e. Lobbying members of Congress

38. Which of the following statements accurately describes the selection of the caseload for the United States Supreme Court?

a. The United States Constitution spells out all of the categories of cases that the Supreme Court must hear.
b. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has the authority to select the cases that the court will hear.
c. The Solicitor General in the Department of Justice determines the Supreme Court’s agenda.

d. The Supreme Court is free to choose the cases it hears with only a few limitations.

e. The Attorney General screens cases for consideration by the Court.

39. The boundaries of United States congressional districts are usually determined by

a. The Federal Election Commission (FEC)

b. The state legislatures

c. The House Rules Committee

d. A conference committee of the House and Senate

e. The director of the United States Census Bureau

40. Public monies are used to help finance which of the following campaigns?

   I. Presidential
   II. Congressional
   III. Gubernatorial

   a. I only
   b. II only
   c. I and II only
   d. II and III only
   e. I, II, and III

41. Diversity of public policy throughout the United States is primarily a consequence of

   a. Federalism
   b. Separation of Powers
   c. Innovation within bureaucratic agencies
   d. Decentralization in the Senate
   e. Lack of party discipline in the House

42. All of the following have contributed to an increase in presidential power in the post-1945 era EXCEPT

   a. Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War period.
   b. An increase in public expectations for services from the federal government
c. Economic and domestic problems such as inflation, unemployment, and civil rights issues
d. Increasing United States involvement in international affairs
e. Legislation granting the President the power to impound funds appropriated by Congress

43. One of the formal tools used by Congress for oversight of the bureaucracy is

a. The line-item veto
b. Authorization of spending
c. Impounding bills
d. Private bills
e. Senatorial courtesy

44. Decisions reached by the Supreme Court under the leadership of Chief Justice Earl Warren (1953-1969) did all of the following EXCEPT

a. Rule against malapportionment in state legislatures
b. Void state statutes that permitted school segregation
c. Invalidate state abortion statutes
d. Expand the rights of criminal defendants
e. Increase protection for First Amendment freedoms

45. The “Miranda Warning” represents an attempt to protect criminal suspects against

a. Unfair police interrogation
b. Biased jury selection
c. Imprisonment without trial
d. Illegal wiretapping
e. Unjustified police surveillance

46. The reserved powers of the state governments can best be described as those powers

a. Not specifically granted to the national government or denied to the states
b. Implied in the fifth amendment
c. Listed specifically in the Tenth Amendment
d. Exercised by both national and state governments
e. Granted to states as part of the implied powers doctrine

47. Critical elections in the United States have occurred
a. As a result of a temporary shift in the popular coalition supporting one or both parties  
b. Whenever a third party has secured more than fifteen percent of the presidential vote  
c. Each time a Republican has been elected  
d. When voter turnout has declined significantly from the previous election  
e. When groups of voters have changed their traditional patterns of party loyalties  

48. When 18 to 21 years old received the right to vote in 1971, in the 1972 national elections they did which of the following?  

a. Voted overwhelmingly for Republican candidates  
b. Voted overwhelmingly for Democratic candidates  
c. Voted overwhelmingly for radical candidates  
d. Turned out a lower rate than the rest of the electorate  
e. Turned out at the same rate as the rest of the electorate  

49. The largest amount of political coverage in newspapers during presidential campaigns is devoted to  

a. Day-to-day campaign activities  
b. The platforms of the major parties  
c. Candidates’ policy stance on domestic issues  
d. Candidates’ stance on foreign policy issues  
e. Candidates’ experience and qualifications  

50. A state has 11 electoral votes. In a presidential election, the Democratic candidate receives 48 percent of that state’s popular vote, the Republican candidate receives 40 percent of the vote, and an independent candidate receives 12 percent of the vote.  

If the state is similar to most other states, how will the electoral votes most likely be allocated?  

a. The Democratic candidate will receive 5 electoral votes, the Republican candidate will receive 4 electoral votes, and the independent will receive 2.  
b. The Democratic candidate will receive 6 electoral votes and the Republican will receive 5.  
c. The Democratic candidate will receive all 11 electoral votes.
d. The votes will not be allocated until there has been a runoff election between the Democratic and Republican candidates.
e. The House of Representatives will determine the allocation of the electoral votes.

51. Which of the following is the most accurate statement about political parties in the United States?

a. Parties increasingly identify themselves with coherent ideologies to attract large blocs of voters.
b. The percentage of voters identifying themselves as either Democrats or Republicans has been declining since the 1970’s.
c. National party organizations are generally the strongest party organizations.
d. It is increasingly difficult for third parties to gain more than two percent of the popular vote
e. Most candidates prefer to run as independents rather than as Democrats or Republicans

52. The congressional power that has been contested most frequently in the federal courts is the power to

a. Establish post offices
b. Coin money
c. Levy taxes
d. Regulate commerce with foreign nations
e. Regulate interstate commerce

53. Which of the following is an accurate statement about committees in Congress?

a. The work of a committee ends when it submits a bill to the full House or Senate for consideration.
b. An individual representative or senator can serve on only one committee and one subcommittee.
c. Membership on key committees such as House Rules and Senate Finance is limited to fixed terms.
d. Standing committees oversee the bureaucracy’s implementation of legislation.
e. Committee recommendations tend to have little influence on floor voting.
54. The request of recent Presidents for the line-item veto is a challenge to which of the following principles?
   a. Separation of Powers
   b. Senatorial courtesy
   c. Eminent domain
   d. Executive privilege
   e. Congressional oversight

55. Which of the following for an “iron triangle”?
   a. President, Congress, Supreme Court
   b. President, House majority leader, Senate majority leader
   c. Interest group, Senate majority leader, House majority leader
   d. Executive department, House majority leader, President
   e. Executive department, congressional committee, interest group

56. An election involving more than two candidates in which the person who receives the most votes is the winner is called
   a. A majority election
   b. A proportional election
   c. A plurality election
   d. A simple election
   e. An indirect election

57. Cabinet members often do not have a dominant influence on presidential decision-making because
   a. Cabinet members generally maintain close independent ties to Congress
   b. Cabinet members generally view their position only as a stepping-stone to further their own political ambitions
   c. Cabinet members are not permitted to disagree publicly with the President
   d. Presidential goals often conflict with the institutional goals of individual cabinet-level agencies
   e. Only half of all cabinet members can be members of the President’s party

58. A fundamental source of power for the federal bureaucracy lies in its
   a. Role in moving legislation out of sub-committees
   b. Role in mediating interstate conflicts
   c. Ability to convince Congress to fund most projects it supports
d. Ability to mobilize public opinion in support of legislative initiatives

e. Ability to set specific guidelines after receiving a general mandate from Congress

59. The establishment clause in the First Amendment does which of the following?

a. Guarantees freedom of speech to all citizens.
b. Prevents prior restraint of the press.
c. Prohibits the setting up of a state church.
d. Defines the concept of dual citizenship.
e. Allows citizens to enter freely into contracts with other citizens.

60. *Griswold v. Connecticut* and *Roe v. Wade* are similar Supreme Court cases in that both cases are based on the

a. Rights of gay men and lesbian women
b. Right of privacy
c. Right to an abortion
d. Right to freedom from cruel and unusual punishment
e. Right of women to equal protection before the law
[Students were interviewed regarding their level of engagement in the classroom through their experience with the instructional choices made by the teacher during the study.]

To participants:

Thank you for participating in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to get your perspective on your class experience and how the choices in the classroom shaped how much you felt connected with the material and how much you learned in the course. I want to repeat something from the first time you agreed to participate in this study: Our interview will be recorded, and transcribed, but your name will be removed and never connected with what you say.

Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little about the class. What were the choices I made that you remember the most?
2. Based on your experience as a student in the class, What is your opinion of the style of instruction you received?
3. Based on your experience as a student in the class, how did the instructional style impact your performance in class?
4. What role did I serve in the classroom environment during the class?
5. What role did you have in the classroom environment during the class?
6. What experiences did you and other students have to prepare you for completing the various activities during in-class activities?
7. How are your learning experiences in this class different from other classes you are enrolled in?
8. Would you please describe what your ideal learning environment in the classroom looks like?

9. How would you describe a classroom of students engaged in an activity which challenges them to think critically? Can you give me a concrete specific example?

10. How would you describe a classroom of students engaged in an activity which challenges them to apply their knowledge to current events/personal lives? Can you give me a concrete specific example?

11. What have you learned from the course? How have the instructional choices you experienced in the course played a role in your learning?

12. How can homework be utilized to better support your learning experiences in the classroom?

13. Other comments? What else would you like me to know about your experience as a student in the class?

Thank you for letting me interview you today.
APPENDIX F

ACTION RESEARCH STUDY CHECK-IN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
[Students will be interviewed regarding their level of engagement in the classroom through their experience with the instructional choices made by the teacher during the study.]

To participants:

Thank you for participating in this check-in. The purpose of this check-in is to obtain your perspective on your recent experiences in class and how the choices in the classroom are shaping your participation in class and the impact on your performance. I want to repeat something from the first time you agreed to participate in this study: Our interview will be recorded, and transcribed, but your name will be removed and never connected with what you say.

Check-In Interview Questions (Pick any 2 for each check-in)

1. What do you look forward to most in class on a daily basis? How does this impact your ability to apply knowledge to your personal life?
2. What changes, if any, have you observed in your own participation in class thus far?
3. What aspects of the class do you find yourself excelling in currently?
4. What difficulties have you experienced in the class thus far? How can you utilize this as a growth learning experience?
5. What is your biggest takeaway from today’s class?
6. Other comments? What else would you like me to know about your experience as a student in the class?
APPENDIX G

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
EXEMPTION GRANTED

Sherman Dorn
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West
602/543-6379
Sherman.Dorn@asu.edu

Dear Sherman Dorn:

On 11/10/2017 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Review:</th>
<th>Initial Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Instructional Choices to Increase Student Achievement and Student Engagement in Social Studies Learning Environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator:</td>
<td>Sherman Dorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB ID:</td>
<td>STUDY00007102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Title:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant ID:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Documents Reviewed: | • Lazarus Survey.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);
  • Sean Lazarus IRB Recruit Consent Form - Parent-Guardian changed.pdf, Category: Consent Form;
  • Lazarus School Permission AR Project.pdf, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc);
  • Lazarus Research Study Check-In Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey... |
The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (1) Educational settings on 11/10/2017.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Sean Lazarus
To: Arizona State University Institutional Review Board  
Re: Action Research Project  
September 20, 2017  

Mr. Sean Lazarus is a teacher at the High School of Fashion Industries who works as a Social Studies Teacher. He is also a doctoral student at Arizona State University currently working on an action research project in which he is examining how flipped classroom models potentially impact student engagement and achievement within the classroom learning environment. Mr. Lazarus will be examining the efficacy of student-driven instruction under the framework of a flipped classroom instructional model in the pursuit to increase rigor, student engagement, and achievement in the classroom. Mr. Lazarus has permission to conduct this action research work. He also has permission to administer surveys that relate to the project and conduct interviews that are consistent with the aim of the action research project. In all instances, Mr. Lazarus has agreed to use coded identifiers for students to protect their anonymity. Further, Mr. Lazarus has permission to conduct the surveys and interviews with students after seeking and obtaining parental permission, if necessary, and student assent.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (212) 255-5151 or by email at arodrigues@schools.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

Andre Rodrigues  
Assistant Principal, Department of Social Studies  
High School of Fashion Industries
APPENDIX I

STUDENT CONSENT FORM
Dear Prospective Student Participant:

My name is Sean Lazarus and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Sherman Dorn, who is a professor in the MLFTC at ASU. We are conducting a research study focusing on the impact of different instructional choices on student engagement and achievement. The purpose of the survey and interview is to better understand student engagement as well as achievement in understanding high school social studies content.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in a questionnaire, pretest and posttest, and one-to-one interviews concerning your knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs toward the instructional choices in your class. We anticipate the questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Additionally, we anticipate the initial interview will take approximately 45 minutes with any follow-up interviews being short, 2-3 minute check-ins. The primary interview will be audio recorded, transcribed, and then all names removed from the transcript before any further study of the transcripts occurs. Furthermore, grades and test data, such as your score on one practice Regents examination multiple-choice section and related Regents exam, will be utilized as part of the research project to measure performance and effectiveness of the instructional choices incorporated into the study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty whatsoever. The choice to participate or not participate will have no impact on your grades or standing within the class/school.

If you are at least 18 years of age, you can consent by yourself to participate in this study.

If you are under 18 years of age, a parent/guardian must consent for you to participate in this study, and this form serves as your assent to participation once a parent/guardian consents to participation.

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits for participation include the opportunity for you to reflect on and think more about the impact of my instructional choices on your engagement and learning in class. Interview responses may also inform future versions of the study, and educational policy and curriculum development at the High School of Fashion Industries.
As a result, there is potential to substantially improve the experiences of our current and future students. There are no foreseeable risks to your participation.

Your responses are and will remain confidential throughout the duration of the study. Results from this study may be used in a dissertation, reports, presentations, or publications. However, your name will be omitted. By signing below, you are acknowledging that you wish to be part of the study as described above.

Student Name_________________________________________ Date__________________
Student Signature_________________________________________ Date__________________

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Sherman Dorn at sherman.dorn@asu.edu or Sean Lazarus at sflazarus@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Sean F. Lazarus, Doctoral Student
Sherman Dorn, Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you may contact Sherman Dorn at sherman.dorn@asu.edu (602-543-6379) or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.
APPENDIX J

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM
Dear Parent/Guardian of Prospective Student Participant:

My name is Sean Lazarus and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Sherman Dorn, who is a professor in the MLFTC at ASU. We are conducting a research study focusing on the impact of different instructional choices on student engagement and achievement. The purpose of the survey and interview is to better understand student engagement as well as achievement in understanding high school social studies content.

We are asking for your student’s help, which will involve their participation in a questionnaire, pretest and posttest, and one-to-one interviews concerning their knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs toward the instructional choices in their class. We anticipate the questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Additionally, we anticipate the initial interview will take approximately 45 minutes with any follow-up interviews being short, 2-3 minute check-ins. The primary interview will be audio recorded, transcribed, and then all names removed from the transcript before any further study of the transcripts occurs. Furthermore, grades and test data, such as your student’s score on one practice Regents examination multiple-choice section and related Regents exam, will be used as part of the research project to measure performance and effectiveness of the instructional choices incorporated into the study.

Your student’s participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose not to permit participation or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty whatsoever. The choice to participate or not participate will have no impact on your student’s grades or standing within the class/school. If your student is under 18 years of age, you must consent for the student to participate in this study, and they will have the opportunity to agree (assent) in addition to your consent.

We cannot promise any benefits to your student or others from taking part in this research. However, possible benefits for participation include the opportunity for your student to reflect on and think more about the impact of my instructional choices on their engagement and learning in class. Interview responses may also inform future versions of the study, and educational policy and curriculum development at the High School of Fashion Industries. As a result, there is potential to substantially improve the experiences of our current and future students. There are no foreseeable risks to your student’s participation.
Your student’s responses are and will remain confidential throughout the duration of the study. Results from this study may be used in a dissertation, reports, presentations, or publications. However, your student’s name will be omitted. By signing below, you are acknowledging that you permit your student to be part of the study as described above.

Parent/Guardian Name_________________________________ Date________________
Parent/Guardian Signature_________________________________ Date________________

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Sherman Dorn at sherman.dorn@asu.edu or Sean Lazarus at sflazarus@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Sean F. Lazarus, Doctoral Student
Sherman Dorn, Professor

If you have any questions about your student’s rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel your student has been placed at risk, you may contact Sherman Dorn at sherman.dorn@asu.edu (602-543-6379) or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.