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Examining the Association between Teacher Political Efficacy and Educational Policy Engagement

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EXAMINING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TEACHER POLITICAL EFFICACY
AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY ENGAGEMENT

by

MALINDA COBB

(Under the Direction of Jason LaFrance)

ABSTRACT

As state control over education increases, it is important to examine the teacher's
role in the educational policy making process. Currently, there is little research on
Georgia's educational policy systems. This study analyzed relevant variables to
determine predictors of teacher participation. A 30 question instrument designed to
measure teacher political efficacy and engagement was developed and administered.
Demographic variables were analyzed to determine possible factors influencing efficacy
and engagement. Findings showed that female teachers are predicted to participate more
frequently in educational policy activities than males. Taking coursework in policy,
having higher levels of internal political efficacy and having higher levels of perceived
political self-efficacy all predict greater levels of policy engagement. Teachers' external
political efficacy, generation, levels of trust at the school level, and levels of trust at the
system level appear to be unrelated to teacher policy engagement activities as measured
by this instrument. Educational leaders wishing to influence teacher political efficacy and
engagement should support teacher involvement in professional organizations, offer
coursework in policy, and provide a variety of policy engagement activities.

INDEX WORDS: Educational policy, Engagement, Generational values, Social
cognitive theory, Teacher political efficacy, Teacher political efficacy measure

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AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY ENGAGEMENT

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my loving family, especially

- my husband, Michael, for listening, being a sounding board, and taking care of our newborn and home so that I could study and write. Your sacrifice has been the greatest, and I love you for it.

- my parents, Marie and Jimmie Boland, for making my education possible and for believing that education matters.

- my in-laws, Howard and Jan Deardorff, for taking care of Cooper and giving me time to write.

- my son, Cooper. I wish for you a life rich with experiences and wisdom. Always believe in your dreams, pursue them with passion, and never stop learning.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is more important than ever for educational leaders to communicate with public policy makers. As a result of the emotionally charged language of the 1980's *A Nation at Risk* and the passing of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, it can be argued that educational policy today has been influenced more by public policy makers than educators. A study by Mitchell (1984) found a steady increase in entries related to education policy in the Educational Resources Information Center database between 1969 and 1981. Similarly, Cibulka (1995) noted that educational policy studies were replacing the study of educational politics popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Ingersoll (2003) and Cameron (2005) argue that current educational policy practices have marginalized teachers' voices into non-existence.

With the increasing importance of educational policy studies, it is necessary for educational leaders to learn more about what motivates teachers to actively engage in the educational policy making process. Currently, the seeming silence of their voices in the process is alarmingly deafening. It would be nearly impossible to study every potential factor impacting an educator's willingness to participate in the policy making process, but using Simon's satisficing problem-solving model, it is possible for educational leaders to identify some of the potential barriers for teacher participation and develop a plan for action.

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<center>**Overview of Relevant Literature**</center>

Historical Context

In order to better understand the increasing need for examining state educational policy making, it is first important to look at the historical changes in educational control. The Colonialists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had two beliefs about education: only a few people needed formal education and education's purpose was to create conformity (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Parents were largely responsible for their children's education and played active roles in the daily teaching and curriculum setting (Gryphon & Meyer, 2003).

With the founding of a democratic society, people began to consider the idea that "the masses" should be educated so that all citizens could make educated decisions (Marsh & Willis, 2007). By the end of the nineteenth century, bureaucratic principles developed by educators such as Horace Mann began to regulate new schools, prescribe methods of teacher training and certification, and enforce compulsory attendance laws in attempts to create a common school (Gryphon & Meyer, 2003; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Abolishing rate bills so that state taxes would pay teachers' salaries led to the creation of free public schools and increased state control of education (Gryphon & Meyer).

The start of The Cold War and the launching of Sputnik in October 1957 worried Americans that their math and science programs were inferior. Inadvertently, Sputnik changed the public's expectations of educators. Society demanded teachers with specialized content knowledge. Organizations such as the National Science Foundation believed teachers should not make curriculum decisions and felt, instead, that experts in the field should determine the curriculum (Cuban, 1995). Their "teacherproof" (Marsh &

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Willis, 2007, p. 55) curriculum packages came with specific instructions and required training to ensure that teachers delivered the material correctly. As the public's view of teachers changed, politicians and business experts began filling the role of educational policy makers.

With the passing of federal legislation during the Johnson administration, federal and state control took on an even larger role as states mandated policies and procedures in order to receive federal funding (Marsh & Willis, 2007; Cuban 1995). The value of the business model was reinforced during the 1980s with the release of *A Nation at Risk*, which caused state legislators to prescribe graduation requirements and place greater emphasis on state achievement tests. Educators were now responsible for implementing policies they had no voice in creating (Marsh & Willis).

A Nation at Risk influenced the mindset of Americans; they saw the state of education as critical and in need of desperate repair. Critics have since attacked the report on the basis that it contained flawed logic and misrepresented information (Good, 2010; Bracey, 2008; Cameron, 2005; Bracey, 2003). Terrell Bell, then U.S. Commissioner of Education, later acknowledged that one of the purposes of the report was to help save the Department of Education from being eliminated as a cabinet level agency by establishing a need for educational reform (Good, 2010; Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Bell, 1988). Despite the flaws of the report, the effects on educational policy and education in general have been long-lasting. One of the most damaging residual effects is that it paved the way for "educators to take the blame whenever the public might decide that the latest round of reforms had failed to solve national problems" (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 61).

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It is no surprise that educators have become reluctant to participate in the educational policy making process. By understanding the factors related to teachers' willingness to participate, educational leaders can help remove the barriers preventing participation. Because few studies on the role of teachers in the education policy process exist, examining several parallel studies in related fields may yield instruments and findings that could be adapted to education. Building on the research of political science and social cognitive theorists, it is possible for education leaders to develop a measure of teacher political efficacy in hopes of connecting teachers' willingness to participate with available engagement opportunities.

The Educational Policy Process

According to Anderson (2006), public policy is a process where the agenda is set, the policy is formulated, adopted, implemented, and evaluated (see Figure 1). Throughout this process, the actors are involved and may alter the plans as needed. The policy process involves the actors during the entire process. Ideally, educators and policy makers will work together to set the agenda and formulate ideas for action. The policy makers will get the policies adopted. After the government adopts the solution, educators will implement the policy. Together the two groups will evaluate the policy and determine if changes needed to be made. Educators need to have a clear understanding of the policy process if they are planning to become active participants.
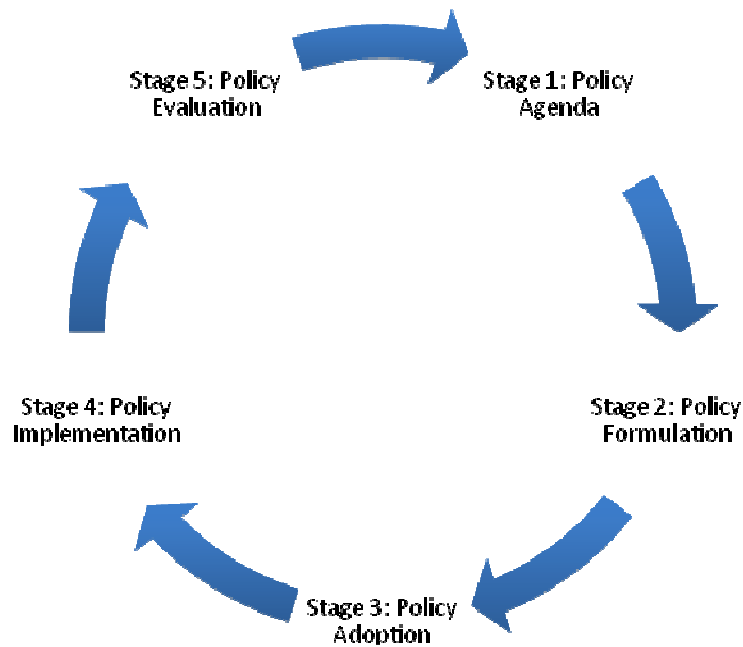
Figure 1. The policy process as a cycle. Adapted from *Public Policymaking* by J. Anderson, 2006.

Political Efficacy

Campbell, Gurin, and Miller (1954) coined the term *political efficacy* and defined it as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties" (p. 187). From their research, they developed an instrument to measure a person's political efficacy. While their original instrument has been applied and tested for more than 50 years, the version currently used by the American National Election Studies (NES) has been repeatedly analyzed and adapted and is considered a valid and reliable instrument (Clarke, Kornberg, & Scotto, 2010; Morrell, 2003; Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991; Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990; Zimmerman, 1989; Acock, Clarke, & Stewart, 1985).

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Generational Values

A study conducted by Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002) suggests that a person's generational values may predict his or her willingness to participate in politics and policy making. Each generation has distinct characteristics that determine political values and engagement. Understanding teachers' generational intelligences can help educational leaders understand teachers' political habits (Lovely, 2010; O'Donovan, 2009). For example, if we know that Generation Xers are more likely to participate by signing a petition, educational leaders can arrange for those opportunities to occur (O'Donovan, 2009). Examining the values of the Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and the Millennials is important because they make up the workforce currently employed in our school systems.

Gender Ideology

Another theory worth exploring is the political habits of educators according to their sex. Studies conducted by Paxton and Kunovich (2003) and Inglehart and Norris (2000) indicate that women are less likely than men to participate in the policy process. While they are more likely to vote, they are less willing to get involved in the process. According to The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (2011), there are 94,364 females and 22,903 males employed as teachers in Georgia's PK-12 public schools. Understanding gender ideology may help educational leaders empower women to become more active.

Prior Coursework

Milligan, Moretti, and Oreopoulos (2004) found that the more information a person has on a topic the more likely he or she is to participate in politics. Therefore,

keeping teachers informed of the policy process and allowing them access is a critical component in removing barriers (Anderson, 2006). Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2003) found that adolescents who participated in civic education during high school were more likely to become active participants as adults. Forty-seven percent of students involved in the study said that their interest increased as a result of civic coursework with open class discussions (Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003). Flanagan and Levine's (2010) meta-analysis also found that college students actively engaged in "ambitious courses in which students analyze and address social problems increase civic knowledge and narrow gaps in civic engagement among students" (p. 170). Offering course work in educational policy may also increase the likelihood of active participation during teachers' professional careers.

Trust

If the school is viewed as a miniature social system (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Bowen, 2004), it is possible to conclude that teachers' willingness to participate at the local level may be a predictor of their willingness to participate on a larger scale. In organizational structures with a hierarchy of authority like most school systems (teachers-principals-superintendents-school boards), it is possible for teachers who do not trust the school system to simply comply and feel as if they lack the power to make a change (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Bidwell, 1965). Trust is the foundation for teamwork and engagement (Lencioni, 2011; Lencioni 2002). Therefore, it is imperative for educational leaders to appropriately use their sources of power (Sergiovanni, 1992; Mintzberg, 1983; Etzioni, 1975) to create a trusting environment.

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Problem Statement

As state control over education increases, it is important to examine the teacher's role in the educational policy making process. While state policies are ultimately made into law by our state legislators, there are missing voices from our state's teachers and educational leaders concerning agenda setting and policy formulation. Often, educators are not involved in the process until the implementation stage. By taking a more active role at the beginning of the process, educators can have a greater influence on their own profession.

Currently, there is little research on Georgia's educational policy systems. Knowing that Georgia has a traditionalistic political culture (Fowler, 2004), it is not surprising that many educators exhibit an external locus of control (Rotter, 1954; Duttweiler, 1984) and feel that they have no voice. The challenge for educational leaders in a traditionalistic political culture is identifying the most influential policy actors and emphasizing change as it relates to "successful past changes in the school district and to other local traditions" (Fowler, 2004). Considering that teachers make up the largest number of employees in the education field, they could become the most influential policy actors.

In order to get teachers more involved in the entire process, especially agenda setting and policy formulation, this study will attempt to determine predictors of teacher participation. "Leaders who wish to be ahead of the game rather than always trying to figure out what the game is need to understand these first stages, know how to follow them, and have the skill to influence them" (Fowler, 2004, p. 169). Understanding the barriers to participation will help educational leaders provide better support systems for

all educators and policy makers. The purpose of this study is to analyze factors associated with Georgia educators as policy actors.

Research Question

This study will seek to answer one overarching question: Does teacher political efficacy predict active engagement in the educational policy process? Supporting questions will explore several theories developed during the review of the literature. In what, if any, educational policy engagement activities are teachers participating? Is there a relationship between teachers' sex and political efficacy? Does a teacher's sex predict educational policy engagement? Do generational values predict levels of professional engagement? Does prior coursework predict teacher participation in the policy making process? Does social trust in the local school system predict levels of professional engagement on a larger scale?

Significance of the Study

This study is important because it could change the way educational policy is set in Georgia. This information would be valuable to state legislators, educational organizations, and educators. All parties have a responsibility to the other: state legislators need to solicit input from educators (classroom teachers, administrators, college professors, curriculum specialists) before creating educational policies; educators must accept the responsibility of being heard. In order for any policy to be effective all participants need to play an active role in the process. If they do not, the effectiveness of the policy will be greatly diminished.

Method

This correlational study was designed to examine the predictive nature of several factors that may be associated with PK-12 teachers' willingness to participate in the educational policy making process. A 30 question instrument (see Appendix A for a copy of the instrument) designed to measure teacher political efficacy and engagement was administered. Demographic variables were used to determine possible factors influencing efficacy and engagement. The questionnaire consisted of four distinct measures. All measures were previously tested for validity and reliability. Since the items in all four scales were adapted to specifically measure educational policy perspectives rather than global politics, a focus group was used to review the instrument tested in a pilot study. The dependent variables in this study were participants' current levels of efficacy and engagement. The independent variables explored include generational values, gender ideologies, prior coursework, and social trust.

Participants

For the pilot study, all certified PK-12 teachers in two non-Georgia school system were invited to complete a 30 item electronic questionnaire. There were 1,690 certified PK-12 teachers in the selected districts. The researcher worked with a designated representative from each system to send an email invitation to participants. No financial incentives were offered for participation. No identifiable information was collected.

The state of Georgia is comprised of sixteen Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA). Using cluster sampling, one RESA district was selected as a representative group for the entire state to participate in the final study. The RESA district selected is representative of the entire state with one large urban school system,

one large suburban school system, one large rural school system and nine small rural school systems. All school systems in the selected RESA district (5,369 certified PK-12 teachers) were invited to participate in the study. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. No financial incentives were offered for participation in the study.

Instrument

The first 30 questions were arranged according to the constructs being measured: *external political efficacy* (Campbell et al., 1954), *internal political efficacy*, (Niemi et al., 1991; Morrell, 2005) *perceived political self-efficacy* (Caprara, Vecchione, Capanna, & Mebane, 2009), and *teacher engagement* (Levine, 2007; Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins, 2002). Four demographic variables were included for the purpose of identifying factors influencing efficacy and engagement. Demographic variables included the following: sex, self-identified generation, information concerning prior coursework (previous professional learning or course work in the area of policy) and social trust ("I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on educational matters at the building level").

The instrument was loaded into Survey Monkey® for distribution to participants. Participants remained anonymous throughout the data collection process. No identifiers or log-in codes were used by participants for gaining access to the instrument. The link was forwarded to an authorized personnel member from each participating school system. Participants were invited to participate by completing the online questionnaire.

Procedure

The instrument was reviewed for clarity and appropriateness of the adapted questions by a focus group of stakeholders. The focus group consisted of one guidance counselor, one media specialist, one instructional coach, three teachers, and one political

science professor. Based on the feedback from the focus group, the instrument was adjusted accordingly. An open-ended, optional question ("Were any of the questions on this page confusing or difficult to understand? If so, which ones?") was added to each page of the instrument to allow pilot participants the opportunity to provide feedback on the readability and ease of answering the questions.

For the pilot study, two non-Georgia school systems ($n = 1,690$) were contacted and permission was obtained to complete the pilot questionnaire. Each system's designated person forwarded the participant letter containing the electronic link (see Appendix B for a copy of the letter) to the teachers via email. The questionnaire remained open for one week. During that time, 309 PK-12 certified teachers completed the questionnaire. The data was analyzed for internal consistency. No adjustments were needed to items. The open-ended questions were removed from each page of the instrument and the instrument was again loaded into Survey Monkey® for distribution in the full study.

The superintendent in each of the twelve school systems within the selected RESA was contacted via email (see Appendices C-F for copies of the letters used) to obtain permission to complete the study. Five school systems agreed to participate ($n = 4,580$), one declined and six did not respond. Once permission was granted in the five school systems, the superintendent designated a system-level contact person (e.g., the Human Resource Office) to serve as a liaison between the system's teachers and the researcher. The researcher provided the authorized contact person with an introductory pre-notification letter to send via email one week prior to the administration of the actual instrument. Three days later, the questionnaire was sent via email to all qualified

participants from the designated person. The researcher provided the authorized contact person with a post-notification letter to send to respondents two weeks after the questionnaire was sent. Whether the school systems chose to send the pre- and post-notification letters was dependent upon system policies. This researcher provided both letters in hopes of securing a larger response pool.

The questionnaire remained open for one additional week after the post-notification letter was sent (a total of three weeks). After that time, responses were analyzed to determine possible factors influencing teachers' willingness to become active participants in the educational policy setting process. Questionnaire responses were analyzed using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the statistical significance between the educators' answers based on generational values. The *t* test was used to determine the statistical significance at the .05 level between male and female educators' efficacy and engagement. Pearson's correlation coefficients (r) were calculated for all items to determine the relationship among the variables engagement, external political efficacy, internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy, sex, professional learning experiences, and trust at the school and system level. Once the correlations were found, a regression analysis was completed to determine whether the variables significantly predicted engagement. Reliability was determined by analyzing questions for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. Results from the pilot study were compared to the results from the full study to see if the instrument performed similarly in the two settings. Construct validity was used to determine whether the scores correlated as expected. The data was reported in narrative form and significant findings were highlighted in embedded tables.

Delimitations

For this study, the questionnaire was administered to teachers and certified support personnel only. Special interest groups, legislators, administrators, students, and parents could have been included. However, participation was limited to teachers because they represent the largest number of educators in the state. Educational leaders can better serve the entire community if armed with an understanding of factors that motivate teachers to participate in policy making. Further, a non-randomly selected cluster sampling of one RESA district in the state was used as a representative group of the state rather than sampling the entire state. The choice was made to focus on one RESA district rather than the entire state for feasibility reasons. Because the research used Simon's satisficing problem-solving model, not all barriers and possible solutions were examined.

Limitations

Since political climates change, the implications of this study may not be applicable beyond a reasonable number of years. Excluding other policy actors from the study limited the population and number of perspectives. Additionally, the research questionnaire solicited self-reported data rather than actual data. Self-reported scores do not necessarily indicate actual engagement.

Definition of Terms

Teachers as used in this study refer specifically to fully certified classroom teachers or fully certified support personnel such as media specialists or guidance counselors. Only responses from certified PK-12 teachers and support personnel were analyzed.

Educational policy refers to government laws, rules, regulations, actions, and funding priorities related to an education problem or matter of concern.

Educational policy engagement refers to any actions taken that may directly or indirectly influence any part of the educational policy process.

Policy actors refer to anyone who is actively involved in the policy process. This encompasses all stages of the process including agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

Political efficacy refers to one's willingness to participate in the political process.

Policy makers refer to any legislative or administrative person who has access to writing policy.

Baby Boomers include those born approximately between 1943 and 1964. They most closely identify with Kennedy's assassination, Vietnam and Woodstock as formative events from their youth.

Generation Xers include those born approximately between 1960 and 1981. They most closely identify with the Challenger disaster, Persian Gulf War, and MTV as formative events from their youth.

Millennials include those born approximately between 1976 and 2004. They most closely identify with 9/11, Columbine, and the Internet as formative events from their youth.

Summary

The goal of this study is to examine the predictive nature of several factors that may be associated with PK-12 teachers' willingness to participate in the educational policy making process. Using a quantitative approach, a questionnaire will be

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administered and analyzed in hopes of identifying barriers and possible solutions. Since few studies on this topic exist, this study is needed to learn more about Georgia's educational policy systems.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE

Over the past 25 years, the role of state government in determining local

educational policies has increased and will continue to do so (Fowler, 2004). Teachers

have gone from having full control in their one room classrooms to having limited control

over daily curricular and policy decisions. Ingersoll (2003) identified areas over which

teachers felt they had control and power. Of the twenty-seven key decisions measured,

Ingersoll (2003) found only two areas that teachers reported feeling they had a "major"

influence (selecting classroom concepts taught and selecting classroom teaching

techniques). Twenty-one of the twenty-seven areas measured fell between "none" and

"minor" influence. If teachers feel that they have little influence over their daily jobs, is it

any surprise that the majority of teachers embrace new policies with a "this too shall

pass" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p.135) attitude and approach?

Historical Context

The Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees that education shall

remain a right of each state. This is because our founding fathers viewed education as a

state and local responsibility. According to Title 20 of the United States Code 1232a,:

No provision of any applicable program shall be construed to authorize any

department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any

direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction,

administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school

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system, or over the selection of library resources, textbooks, or other printed or

published instructional materials by any educational institution or school system.

Despite the fact that the responsibility of education belongs to the states, it is nearly

impossible to discuss the history of education policy without examining three historical

federal events and the role they played in shaping our current state educational policy

system: *Sputnik*, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and *A Nation at Risk*.

Sputnik's Educational Influence

When the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik* in October 1957, America became

worried that its math and science programs were inferior. A demand for increased

emphasis on math, science, and foreign language resulted in the passage of the National

Defense Education Act in 1958 (Cuban, 1995). Prior to *Sputnik*, curriculum leaders

hoped for a national curriculum to increase the likelihood of interstate information

sharing. After Sputnik, however, people called for a national curriculum as a way of

existence. Those who objected did so because a national curriculum seemed to go against

the principles of democracy. Those who supported the movement believed that it was the

only way The United States could remain superior and saw it as a means of survival.

In addition to curriculum changes, *Sputnik* inadvertently changed the public's

expectations of teachers. Society demanded teachers who specialized in specific content

knowledge. Teachers were expected to be better trained than teachers of the past. Even

though the federal government was not allowed to prescribe curriculum, it influenced

curriculum decisions by providing funding for "producing textbooks, classroom

materials, and training teachers" (Cuban, 1995, p. 220) through programs such as the

National Science Foundation. Organizations like The National Science Foundation

believed that teachers should not make curriculum decisions and felt, instead, that experts in the field should determine the curriculum. This time period became known as the "Adoption Era" (Fullan, 2001, p. 5).

The curriculum packages created by these experts became a part of the federally supported curriculum reform movement. Teachers were viewed as "insufficiently knowledgeable" (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 55). They were not trusted to make decisions about curriculum. Therefore, the "teacherproof" curriculum packages came with specific instructions and required training to ensure that teachers would deliver the material correctly (Marsh & Willis, 2007). By the 1976-1977 fiscal year, 60% of school districts were implementing one of the federally created science programs in middle and high school (Cuban, 1995). As Fullan states, "one doesn't have to believe *Sputnik* was the literal cause of the large-scale reform in the United States …to know that something very different was in the air in the 1960s" (2001, p. 4).

Johnson and *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act*

Several influential educational laws were passed under President Johnson's (1963-1969) and President Nixon's (1969-1974) administrations as a way to "end poverty and promote social justice" (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 55). One of the laws most influential in changing the role of the federal government in education was the passing of *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) in 1965. The ESEA focused on low-income students by offering classes for "talented and underachieving youth, enrichment programs, and scores of other activities" (Cuban, 1995, p. 228). Johnson saw the act as a way of declaring war on poverty in our country (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Under Johnson, "federal school spending went from practically nothing to $16.2 billion. It grew to $28.5 billion under Nixon, and to $32.3 billion under President Carter" (Cameron, 2005 p. 144). Even with this introduction of significant federal funds, only six to seven percent of a states' educational budget comes from federal funds (Cameron, 2005; Ingersoll, 2003). During Carter's administration, the department of education was elevated to a cabinet level status. It may seem unimaginable in today's political rhetoric, but Carter was the first president to run for office with an educational platform (Cameron, 2005).

Although President Reagan tried to eliminate the department of education as a cabinet level agency and reduce the amount allocated to education, he was unsuccessful. Since then, the federal government has continued to impose requirements for states who wish to receive federal dollars. As a result of the growth of federal requirements and private educational agencies, state and local school systems are no longer the independent governing bodies they once were (Ingersoll, 2003). Elmore refers to these external forces as "unwarranted intrusions" (2006, p. 201).

While education remained a responsibility of the states, policy elites changed their practices to meet the criteria needed to receive federal funding. Tyack and Cuban (1995) define these *policy elites* as "people who managed the economy, who had privileged access to the media and to political officials, who controlled foundations, who were educational leaders in the universities and in city and state superintendencies and who redesigned and led organizations of many kinds" (p. 8). These policy elites began to set the educational agenda, diagnose problems, prescribe solutions, and influence what should *not* be on the educational agenda (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Teachers were not

considered valued stakeholders to the policy elites. When examining the "Who Does What?" section of President G. H. W. Bush's *American 2000*, Tyack and Cuban (1995) point out that it lists federal and state officials, the business community, and parents as "key actors" while lowering teachers to one among many groups "active at the community level" (p. 135). With teachers being relegated to the bottom of the list, it is not surprising that public perception of teachers has also dropped.

A Nation at Risk

During the 1980's, more than 700 national reports were issued concerning the state of education (Marsh & Willis, 2007). The one that had the greatest impact was *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. With its inflammatory language and rhetoric, the report placed the American educational system alongside global systems and created a national security threat and painted a grim picture of failing schools. One need look no farther than the opening pages of the report to find such rhetoric: "Our Nation is at risk… The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people." Americans saw the state of education as critical and in need of desperate repair and demanded reform.

Critics have since attacked the report on the basis that it contained flawed logic and misrepresented information (Good, 2010; Bracey, 2008; Cameron, 2005; Bracey, 2003). Terrell Bell, then U.S. Commissioner of Education, later acknowledged that one of the purposes of the report was to help save the Department of Education from being eliminated as a cabinet level agency by establishing a need for educational reform

(Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Bell, 1988). Despite the flaws of the report, the effects on educational policy and education in general have been long-lasting.

One of the most damaging residual effects is that it paved the way for "educators to take the blame whenever the public might decide that the latest round of reforms had failed to solve national problems" (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 61). Additionally, it laid the groundwork for further state and national reform movements. Then current National Education Association (NEA) president, Don Cameron, has referred to this report as the report "that launched a prolonged education-reform era… in the report's aftermath, legitimate efforts to improve education often took a backseat to political spinning and finger-pointing" (Cameron, 2005, p. 145-146). A 2003 study found that 76% of teachers agreed that teachers are often made the scapegoats for all of the problems facing education (Ingersoll, 2003).

Significance of Historical Context

As political agendas changed and private corporations capitalized on those changes, educators found themselves riding a never-ending wave of reform. This trend is known as *policy churn* (Hess, 1999) and has, unfortunately, been the predominate pattern in American educational policy (Elmore, 2006). As educational policies changed, teachers learned that if they waited long enough, the current practice would fade into something new. Teachers realized that once they closed their doors, "they could, if they chose, comply only symbolically…or not at all…or teachers could respond to reforms by hybridizing them, blending the old and new by selecting those parts that made their jobs more efficient or satisfying" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 9). As a result, many reform models failed to achieve any actual improvement (Elmore, 2006).

Leading researchers have argued that true change resulting in improvement must come from the inside (Elmore, 2006; Fullan, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Policy changes for the sake of symbolically bolstering political agendas are not effective (Elmore, 2006). Fullan (2001) suggests that there must be a combination of inside and outside forces working together. "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think – it's as simple and as complex as that" (Fullan, 2001, p. 115).

Fullan (2001) suggests government agencies spend time getting to know the people and their problems in an attempt to understand the culture of the problems. He suggests that policy makers remember that they often live in the moment of policy setting, but are rarely affected by the implementations themselves. Often, by the time the initiative is implemented, the policy maker has moved on to another agenda. Fullan warns that high-stakes accountability sanctions are not effective at bringing about change because they fail to change the behaviors and beliefs of those they seek to reform. Instead, he suggests that successful states have invested in capacity-building in order to bring about cultural change rather than simply changing the structure.

Likewise, Ingersoll's 2003 findings suggest that the degree of teacher control makes a difference in how well the school functions. Ingersoll also suggests that policy makers take time getting to know those they seek to reform. The findings from Ingersoll's research suggest that many top-down school reforms lack a deep understanding of teachers' work and the way schools actually operate. Cameron (2005) argues that successful change and reform will only come about if teachers are included in the process. The challenge educational leaders face is helping educators find their voice, become actively engaged, and stop top-down approaches to reform and change.

The Education Policy Process

Public policy is a process where the issue is defined, the agenda is set, the policy is formulated, adopted, implemented, and evaluated (Anderson, 2006; Fowler, 2004). Throughout this process, the actors are involved and may alter the plans as needed. The policy process involves the actors during the entire process. Ideally, educators and policy makers work together to set the agenda and formulate ideas for action. The policy makers get the policies adopted. After the government adopts the solution, educators implement the policy. Together the two groups evaluate the policy and determine if changes need to be made. Since state governments "are more active in education policy than ever before" (Fowler, 2004, p.21), educators need to have a clear understanding of the policy process if they are planning to become active participants.

If educators and policy makers worked together to evaluate the effectiveness of a policy, they would gain a broader perspective. For example, we know that there is a correlation between high-stakes testing and school drop-out rates (Madaus & Kellaghan, 1995). If educators and policy makers worked together to inform the other, this problem would be evaluated and revised. Instead, we have two separate bodies working independent of one another and the drop-out rate continues to rise.

Unlike many educators, businesses and politicians seem to understand the importance of *access*. "To have influence and be able to help shape governmental decisions, a group must have access, or the opportunity to express its viewpoints to decision-makers" (Anderson, 2006, p. 20). If educators want to have a greater influence on the decisions being made by policy makers, they have to be willing to take risks and vocalize their opinions. Fowler (2004) argues that it is essential for educators to learn

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how to create issue statements using active verb terminology ("pass a bond issue to build a middle school next year" rather than "more funding for schools") if they wish to be taken seriously.

As educational leaders, it is our responsibility to understand the educational policy process so that we can better lead our teachers to become more actively engaged. "The time is long past when education administrators could sit on the sidelines while others make important policy decisions for schools" (Fowler, 2004, p. xi). It is essential for school leaders to be aware of electoral cycles and understand the impacts they may have.

There are three types of political cultures: traditionalistic, moralistic, and individualistic (Fowler, 2004). States tend to be categorized as having attributes of one or a combination of two political cultures. Georgia has a strong traditionalistic culture (Fowler, 2004). As educational leaders, it is important to understand the characteristics of a traditionalistic political culture. One characteristic of this political culture is "the belief that an established elite should provide political leadership" (Fowler, 2004, p. 95). Active engagement in the policy process is considered a privilege in this political culture. Unfortunately, this political culture often discourages participation and voter turn-out (Fowler, 2004). This is why it is essential for education leaders to help teachers identify the local elite and seek their support.

Participants wishing to influence policy formulation must follow these general principles: know the process, follow government activity, work with others, and set priorities (Fowler, 2004). Typically there are three approaches to influencing legislatures and agencies: government relations, working through professional organizations, and

lobbying (Fowler, 2004). Currently in Georgia, two major professional education organizations are in place: Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) and Georgia Association of Educators (GAE). Of Georgia's 127,322 educators (Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2010), 82,421 belong to PAGE (PAGE, 2011) and 42,000 belong to GAE (GAE, 2011). This is important information to consider since these two agencies provide teachers with access to state policy makers.

Since its inception in 1975, PAGE's membership has grown from 432 members to 82,421 in 2011 (see Figure 2). The growth of a state-specific professional organization may be correlated with the increasing control of state policy makers. Both PAGE and GAE send electronic legislative updates, create electronic mailing lists, and make access to key policy actors available to its members and encourage participation. In 2011 alone, the Georgia General Assembly introduced 61 education related bills (PAGE, 2011). If keeping abreast of policy is critical to active engagement (Fowler, 2004), educators will have to rely on resources like PAGE and GAE.
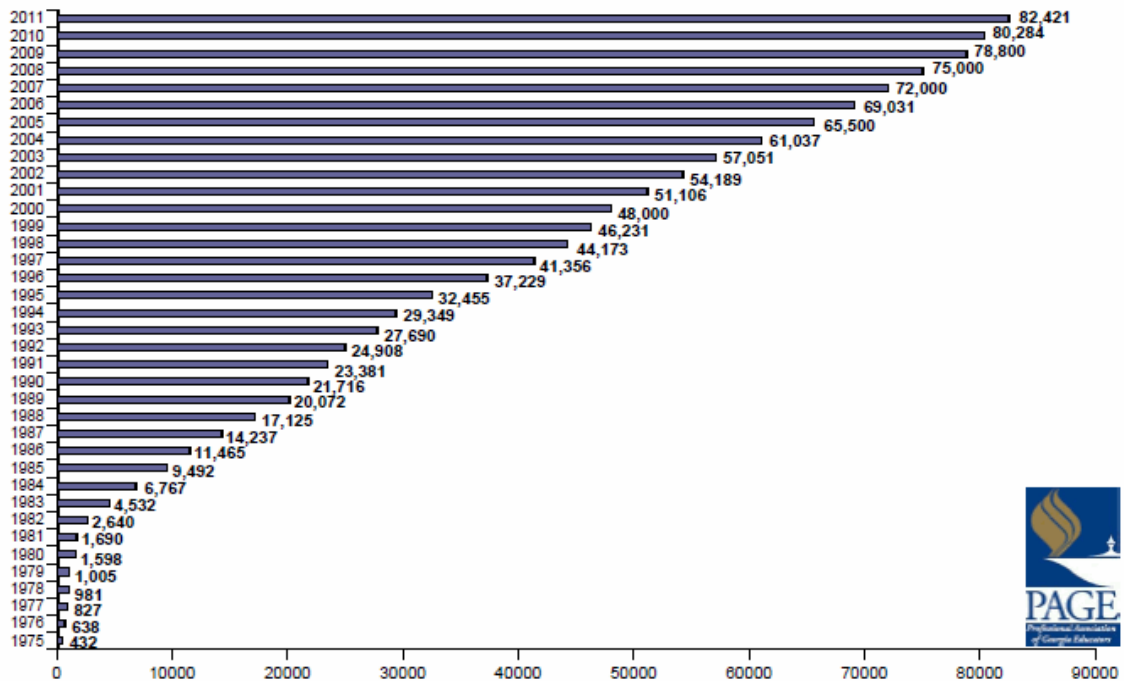
Figure 2. PAGE membership growth chart from, 1975-2011. (PAGE Membership Website)

Political Efficacy and Measures

In 1952, the Carnegie Cooperation of New York gave the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan a grant to complete a nation-wide survey of voting behaviors in the 1952 presidential election. Researchers Campbell, Gurin, and Miller released their findings in 1954 in a book called *The Voter Decides*. As a part of their research, Campbell et al. (1954) developed four scales to measure what they termed *sense of political efficacy*. Political efficacy was defined as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change"

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(Campbell et al., 1954, p. 187). The original construct contained five items used to measure political efficacy asking for a simple "agree" or "disagree" response:

1. I don't think public officials care much what people like me think. (NOCARE)

2. The way people vote is the main thing that decides how things are run in this country.

3. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things. (VOTING)

4. People like me don't have any say about what the government does. (NOSAY)

5. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on. (COMPLEX) (Campbell et al., 1954, pp. 187-188)

"Disagree" responses to items 1, 3, 4, and 5 and an "agree" response to item 2 were all coded as "efficacious." Since item two was ambiguous and had a large percent of error, it was dropped (Campbell et al., 1964) from the scale and the remaining four items became the standard measure for assessing a citizen's political efficacy on measures such as the National Election Survey (NES) (Clarke, et al., 2010; Morrell, 2003; Caprara, Vecchione, Capanna & Mebane, 2009; Niemi et al., 1991; Craig et al., 1990; Zimmerman, 1989; Acock at al., 1985). Between 1968-1980, two additional items were added to the NES to measure political efficacy: (1) "Generally speaking, those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly" and (2) "Parties are only interested in people's votes but not in their opinions" (Morrell, 2003).

In 1959, Lane challenged the uni-dimensional instrument and suggested that a distinction should be made between *internal* and *external* political efficacy. It was not until the 1970's, however, that Lane's theories were put into practice when leading scholars such as Balch, Coleman, Davis, and Converse concluded through empirical research that political efficacy had two dimensions (Caprara et al., 2009; Morrell, 2003; Niemi et al., 1991).

Internal political efficacy refers to "one's beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate in politics" (Niemi et al., 1991, p. 1407). A number of studies have shown that a person's internal political efficacy impacts both conventional and non-conventional political participation (Caprara et al., 2009). Other studies have shown a strong correlation between a person's internal political efficacy and perceived competence and other indicators of engagement (Caprara et al., 2009). *External political efficacy* refers to "beliefs about the responsiveness of governmental authorities and institutions to citizen demands" (Niemi et al., 1991). Studies have shown that external political efficacy is most often associated with a person's trust in the functioning of the political system (Caprara, et al., 2009).

Although it was widely accepted that political efficacy should be measured in two dimensions, the NES continued to use the measures in a uni-dimensional approach in hopes of getting "multidimensional" results (Clark et al., 1990; Zimmerman, 1989). Attempts were made to categorize the six items as either internal or external (Morrell, 2003; Clark et al., 1990; Acock et al., 1985), but questions about item validity remained (Seligson, 1980). Additionally, item four (VOTING) repeatedly tested poorly on studies and its inclusion in political efficacy surveys was questioned (Caprara et al., 2009).

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Therefore, the NES developed new measures of political efficacy for testing in its 1987

Pilot Study (Morrell, 2003; Niemi et al., 1991).

The revised questions included the three original items (items NOCARE,

NOSAY, and COMPLEX listed above) and six new items:

1. I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics.

2. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues
   facing our country.

3. Other people seem to have an easier time understanding complicated issues
   than I do.

4. I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.

5. I often don't feel sure of myself when talking with other people about politics
   and government.

6. I think that I am as well informed about politics and government as most
   people. (Morrell, 2003, p. 590)

Results from the pilot study suggest that items 1, 2, 4, and 6 above loaded the best as

indicators of internal efficacy. These four items and the three from the original scale were

included in the 1988 NES instrument (Morrell, 2003; Niemi et al., 1991; Clark et al.,

1990). Niemi et al., (1991) conducted a follow-up study and found that the four new

items proved to be valid and reliable measures of internal political efficacy. The original

items NOSAY and NOCARE were proven to measure external political efficacy.

COMPLEX fell between internal and external (Morrell, 2003; Niemi et al., 1991).

Since that time, a number of researchers have used the items as they appear,

altered the tested items, and created their own items (Morrell, 2003). Morrell notes that

the most common mistake made in developing original items is not differentiating

between internal and external political efficacy (Morrell, 2003). Since the four new

internal efficacy items have been repeatedly tested and proven effective, Morrell suggests

that future researchers use the four items to "increase our knowledge of internal efficacy"

(Morrell, 2003, p. 601). Because the items are negatively worded, they have been

criticized for the possibility of acquiescence bias. However, a 2010 extensive study has

shown that the negative wording does not alter the outcome (Clarke, et al., 2010).

Based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (2001), Caprara, Vecchione,

Capanna, and Mebane (2009) adapted the NES political efficacy questions to create an

instrument to measure a person's *perceived* political self-efficacy. Believing that a

person's own self-efficacy was the basis for political efficacy, Caprara et al. (2009) argue

that "unless people believe they can produce desired outcomes, they have little incentive

to address challenging tasks, purpose challenging goals, and to persevere in the face of

difficulties" (pp. 1003-1004). Caprara et al. (2009) suggest that a person *exercising*

political efficacy (also referred to as *engagement*) include activities such as campaigning

for political parties, petitioning, fundraising, mobilizing voters, choosing candidates,

keeping in contact with one's own representatives, lobbying, negotiating with other

factions within one's own part as well as with other parties.

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), suggests that perceived efficacy should

be studied in two parts: individual and collective efficacy (Caprara et al., 2009).

Individual efficacy refers to a person's beliefs about their own capacity. Collective

efficacy refers to the beliefs about that capacity of the group, in the case of this study –

teachers as a group. The purpose of their added measures is to bridge the gap between social cognitive theory and political efficacy.

Their instrument, Perceived-Political Self-Efficacy (P-PSE), contains 10 items designed to measure individual efficacy. In a study ($n =1673$), the instrument was found to have good validity and internal consistency ($\alpha = .91$). Construct validity was establish in a second study ($n = 632$). The ten item P-PSE scale was used along with Niemi et al.'s (1991) four internal political efficacy items and Campbell et al.'s (1954) original four items. Additionally, they included indicators of participation (or engagement) to determine the relationship between efficacy and engagement.

Findings demonstrated high factor loadings on all items except Campbell et al.'s (1954) VOTING item (.22). Items from the P-PSE, Niemi et al. (1991), and Campbell et al. (1954) instruments had a positive correlation of .60 and .33, respectively (Caprara et al., 2009). The P-PSE Scale also had the highest correlation for participation, indicating that this instrument is a good predictor for political engagement. The four items with the highest factor loading were designated as representative items to be used in further research requiring a smaller item bank (Perceived-Political Self-Efficacy-Revised (P-PSE-R). On the P-PSE-R, respondents were asked to rank their perceived capabilities of completing four items using a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely). Those items are listed below:

1. Maintain personal relationships with representatives of national government authorities.

2. Play a decisive role in the choice of the leaders of political movements to which you belong, or to which you are near.

3. Carry out an effective information campaign for the political movement or party with which you concur regarding beliefs and programs.

4. Use the means you have as a citizen to critically monitor the actions of your political representatives.

Morrell (2005) argues that there is a common ground to be found between the world of political science and social cognitive theory. He suggests that political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy are really quite similar. Political scientists continue to use political efficacy to measure efficacy in a global context, while self-efficacy measures efficacy in a specified context. In a 2005 study, Morrell altered the four internal political efficacy items (Niemi et al., 1991) by inserting situation-specific context into the item. [Example: "I consider myself well-qualified to participate in *politics*" became "I consider myself well-qualified to participate in *the group decision-making process*."]. His findings indicate that further research should be completed in this area and political scientists and political theorists should consider the importance of situation-specific internal efficacy.

Teacher Political Efficacy Studies

There is a gap in the literature between the field of political science's study of *civic political efficacy* and the field of education's study of *teacher political efficacy*. After an extensive review of the literature, a limited number of studies on the topic of teacher political efficacy could be found. Two such studies (Hammon, 2010; Estes, Owens, & Zipperlen, 2010) were completed within the past two years. Both studies cited the need for an instrument to measure teacher political efficacy. Unable to find one, both

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studies created and tested their own instruments. Table 1 highlights the key finding of each study.

Teacher Political Self-Efficacy Instrument

The purpose of Hammon's (2010) study was to create a valid and reliable instrument to measure teacher political self-efficacy. Hammon also looked for a correlation between several factors and a teacher's political self-efficacy. Using Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977) as a theoretical framework, Hammon (2010) created the Teacher Political Self-Efficacy Scale (TPSE Scale). The TPSE Scale was pilot tested and used in two studies to establish reliability and validity.

The 20 question TPSE Scale (Hammon, 2010) was designed as a means of measuring teacher political self-efficacy. The TPSE Scale used a five-point Likert scale response format (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral/undecided, agree, strongly agree). The questionnaire used in the first study only contained the 20 TPSE Scale items. The TPSE Scale was piloted with a small group (n =43) of graduate students resulting in a coefficient alpha of .892.

In Hammon's (2010) first study, non-randomly selected schools in two systems were invited to participate. The target population for the scale was any certified K-12 classroom teacher. According to Hammon (2010), the recommended sample size should reflect five times the number of items being tested. Since the TPSE Scale had 20 questions, a minimum of 100 classroom teachers was targeted. In the first study, 287 teachers were invited to participate; 48 completed questionnaires were usable (16.7%).

A pre-survey message was sent via email prior to the questionnaire link being sent to participants. After the data was collected, an item analysis was completed with a

reliability coefficient computed at .939. Therefore, no items were deleted from the instrument.

The purpose of the second study was to establish construct validity by analyzing the relationship between the TPSE Scale and other construct independent variables. Additional constructs used were Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk's 12 item *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale – Short Form (TES),* Caprara et al.'s 10 item *Perceived Political Self-Efficacy (P-PSE) Scale,* the four strongest items from the NES Election Studies, and ten items from political science research used to measure political engagement (Hammon, 2010). In addition to the four constructs, demographical variables were added to the questionnaire: level of education, years of experience, gender, setting, and school funding adequacy (Hammon, 2010). A pre-survey message was sent prior to the questionnaire link being sent to participants. One thousand teachers from two non-randomly selected school systems and 90 doctoral students who were also K-12 teachers ($n = 1090$) were invited to participate; 103 completed questionnaires were usable (9.4%).

A reliability coefficient alpha for the TPSE was computed at .858 for the second study. Results from the first and second study were combined ($n = 151$) for a coefficient alpha of .899. Corrected item-total correlations were re-examined. Removing item 6 (corrected item-total correlation .313) would increase the coefficient to .902. While an overall coefficient alpha of .899 is acceptable, Hammon (2010) suggests that consideration be given to replacing item six before administering the scale to a new sample.

Findings indicate an overall low teacher political-self efficacy (Hammon, 2010). This supports the literature's description of the marginalized teacher voice in educational

policy. There was a positive and statistically significant relation between a teacher's

TPSE and engagement; the higher the TPSE, the more likely they were to be actively

engaged (Hammon, 2010). This supports political science research linking motivation to

engagement. There was also a positive and statistically significant relationship between

TPSE and teacher citizen political efficacy; as their citizen political efficacy increased so

did their TPSE (Hammon, 2010).

Males reported positive and statistically higher levels of TPSE than females, but

no statistical difference was found in their level of engagement. Teachers with prior

experiences with civic engagement reported higher levels of TPSE. Teachers with

advanced degrees reported positive and significantly higher levels of TPSE. Teachers

with more experience also reported significantly higher levels of TPSE.

Upon examining the wording of the items in Hammon's TPSE Scale, the 20 items

were written as *engagement* rather than a person's *perceived capabilities* as social

cognitive theorists suggests (Bandura, 2006). For example, item 1 asks respondents to

agree or disagree using a five point Likert scale with this statement: "I state my opinions

about education policy issues openly even in public and challenging settings" (Hammon,

2010, p. 119). Using Bandura's (2006) guide for constructing self-efficacy scales, the

item should have asked respondents to indicate whether they felt they were *capable* of

stating their opinions. When creating self-efficacy scales, "the items should be phrased in

terms of *can do* rather than *will do*. *Can* is a judgment of capability; *will* is a statement of

intention" (Bandura, 2006, p. 308). Since the TPSE Scale really measured a teacher's

level of intention or engagement, it is not surprising that such a strong correlation existed

between the TPSE scores and engagement. With this egregious error, using the TPSE

Scale to measure teacher political self-efficacy would not yield the desired results.

Therefore, the scale should not be used.

Political Advocacy Scale of Efficacy for Teachers Instrument

Like Georgia, Texas has a Traditionalistic Political Culture and its teachers "have maintained a culture that does little to positively impact educational decisions made by state officials" (Estes, Owens & Zipperlen, 2010). The purpose of Estes et al.'s (2010) study was to determine if a correlation existed between politically-oriented experiences and a teacher's sense of political efficacy. If so, it may be possible to provide politically-oriented experiences for the pre-service students at their university in hopes of increasing their future political advocacy. Since Estes et al. (2010) were unable to find an existing instrument to measure teacher political efficacy, they created the Political Advocacy Scale of Efficacy for Teachers (PASET).

Using the principles of Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory and his recommendations for constructing self-efficacy scales (Bandura, 2001), Estes et al. (2010) developed their PASET instrument. Estes et al. (2010) also applied the revision suggestions by Deemer and Minke (1999) of the Gibson and Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale as a basis for creating their own content-specific political advocacy prompts. The pilot instrument contained nineteen questions. Teacher candidates in three randomly selected education classes were invited to voluntarily participate in the pilot questionnaire (n =110). Coded data from the pilot instrument was analyzed and Cronbach's alpha was used to determine internal reliability of the pilot version of the PASET. Nine items were removed from the instrument. Using the remaining ten questions, an acceptable internal reliability (α = .7065) was found. Validity of the ten

question instrument was established through expert review. Revisions from the experts included changing the wording of some prompts and reorganizing the order of the prompts. The final version of the PASET containing ten statements with a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree) was used for the full study.

In addition to the PASET, the final version contained a variety of demographic questions in order to determine certain characteristics in the final data analysis. Four non-randomly selected pre-service students were chosen to participate in the final study. Participants were selected based on GPA, professors' perceptions of candidates' ability to complete the study, and demographics (two male, two female; on Hispanic, three Caucasian; three ages 18-25 single/never married, one age 36-45 and married).

The four participants completed the PASET instrument. Pre-survey results indicated moderate degrees of self-efficacy with a mean score of 32.25 out of a possible 50. The study group was then escorted to the Summit on Public Education held in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Phi Delta Kappa, the Summit focused on current issues in education and provided opportunities for participants to interact with government officials. After the Summit, participants were given the post-survey using the PASET. Minimal gain was shown with a new mean score of 35.3 (three participants' PASET scores were higher, one was lower). Data from their findings suggest that intervention at the post-secondary level may have a positive impact on a teacher's political self-efficacy.

Table 1

Comparison of Teacher Political Self-Efficacy Studies

Author/Date	Instrument	Participants	Key Findings
Hammon/2010	Teacher Political Self-Efficacy Scale (TPSE Scale)	Pilot study : n =38 graduate students who were K-12 teachers First study: n =48 K-12 teachers from two school systems	The TPSE Scale was found to be reliable with a coefficient alpha of .892 in the pilot study and .939 in the first study
Hammon/2010	TPSE Scale, TES short form, P-PSE Scale, Niemi et al. (1991) NES internal political efficacy scale	Second study: n =103 K-12 teachers from two school systems and graduate students who were currently teaching K-12	The TPSE scale was found to be both reliable and valid; teachers reported an overall low TPSE; significant relationships found between TPSE and engagement, citizen political efficacy, gender, prior civic experiences advanced degrees and teaching experience
Estes, Owens, Zipperlen/2010	Political Advocacy Scale of Efficacy for Teachers (PASET)	Pilot study: n =110 students in three education courses Final study: n =4 pre-service education major students	Three of the four pre-service students given intervention treatment showed higher efficacy for political advocacy

Political Engagement and Influencing Factors

Based on the literature reviewed thus far, the role of teachers in the policy making process has been described as vacant, marginalized and missing. What actions can teachers take to become more actively engaged? What constitutes political engagement? According to Conway, Steuernagel, and Ahern (2005), being *politically active* refers to all actions that "attempt to influence, either directly or indirectly, what governments do: voting; contacting public officials; joining organizations that seek to influence

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executives, legislators, bureaucrats, and judges; and, less frequently, participating in strikes, boycotts, and protest demonstrations or marches" (p. 89). Being politically active can also include attending public meetings, discussing policy/politics with friends, family and co-workers, contributing to political campaigns, signing petitions, running for office, and joining professional or civic organizations (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007; Conway et al., 2005; Norris 2001). Keeter et al. (2002) identified 19 core indicators of engagement: 5 civic indicators (community problem solving, regular volunteering for a non-electoral organization, active membership in a group association, participation in fund-raising run/walk/ride and other fundraising for charity), 5 electoral indicators (regular voting, persuading others, displaying buttons, signs and stickers, campaign contributions, and volunteering for a candidate or political organization), and 9 political voice indicators (contacting officials, contacting the print media, contacting the broadcast media, protesting, email petitions, written petitions, boycotting, *buy*cotting, and canvassing). These 19 core indicators have since been used as established indicators to measure engagement in a more modern way than the traditional acts of voting and supporting political party actions (Levine, 2007; Colby et al., 2007).

Understanding what motivates a person to become political engaged could help educational leaders encourage teachers to participate in the policy process. Borrowing research from social cognitive theory and political science, it is possible that several demographic factors may influence how educators choose to actively participate or believe that such actions will make a difference. Four demographic factors will be explored: generational values, gender ideology, prior experiences, and trust.

Generational Values

A study conducted by Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002) suggests that a person's generational values may predict his or her willingness to participate in politics and policy making. Each generation has distinct characteristics that determine political values and engagement. In many ways, using generational intelligences is similar to using learning styles (Briggs & Meyers, 1977; Jung, 1927) or multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) to maximize the learning opportunity. Understanding teachers' generational intelligences can help educational leaders understand their political habits (Lovely, 2010; O'Donovan, 2009). For example, if we know that Generation Xers are more likely to participate by signing a petition, educational leaders can arrange for those opportunities to occur (O'Donovan, 2009; Keeter et al., 2002).

The Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement's 2009-2010 State Report Card, reports teacher demographics in terms of years of experience. If an assumption can be made that a correlation exists between years of experience and a teacher's age and the average teacher began teaching at the age of 21, the numbers represented in Table 2 from the Georgia State Report Card can be translated into generational groups: Baby Boomers (30+ years of experience) 5,539; Generation Xers (11-30 years experience) 55,329; Millennials (1-10 years experience) 56,399. However, with the current economy and Generation Xers' propensity to change jobs often, this is only an estimate and should be regarded as such.

Table 2

Georgia's PK-12 Teacher Workforce by Generations

Generation	Years of Experience	Estimated Ages*	Number of Teachers
Baby Boomers	30 + years	Ages 51+	5,539
Generation Xers	11-30 years	Ages 32-51	55 329
Millennials	1-10 years	Ages 22-31	56,399

Note. Age is based on the assumption that the teacher began teaching at age 21.
Adapted from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement 2009-2010 Report Card for the State of Georgia.

A 2009 report commissioned by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission found that the average age of teachers is 42 which would indicate that some of the Millennial numbers included in the table above are actually Generation Xers. (See Figure 3). Interestingly, the same report also shows a trend in the number of teachers age 61 and older who are staying in the workforce longer than teachers of a similar age have in the past. In fact, 2.455% of new teachers are reported to be 61 years old and older (see Figure 4). This, too, underscores that using experience as an indicator of age is a gross estimation at best. The report also gives the percentage of teachers at each age (see Figure 5). Considering the data was taken from the 2007-2008 workforce, today's Baby Boomers represented in Figure 5 are ages 48-64, Generation Xers ages 28-48 and Millennials ages >24-28. With recent budget and staffing cuts, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the group responsible for this report, can no longer support research functions. Therefore, no data more recent that 2007-2008 could be obtained. For the purpose of this study, the existing data is sufficient to support further study on Baby

Boomers, Generation X and Millennials as representative generations of the Georgia teacher workforce.
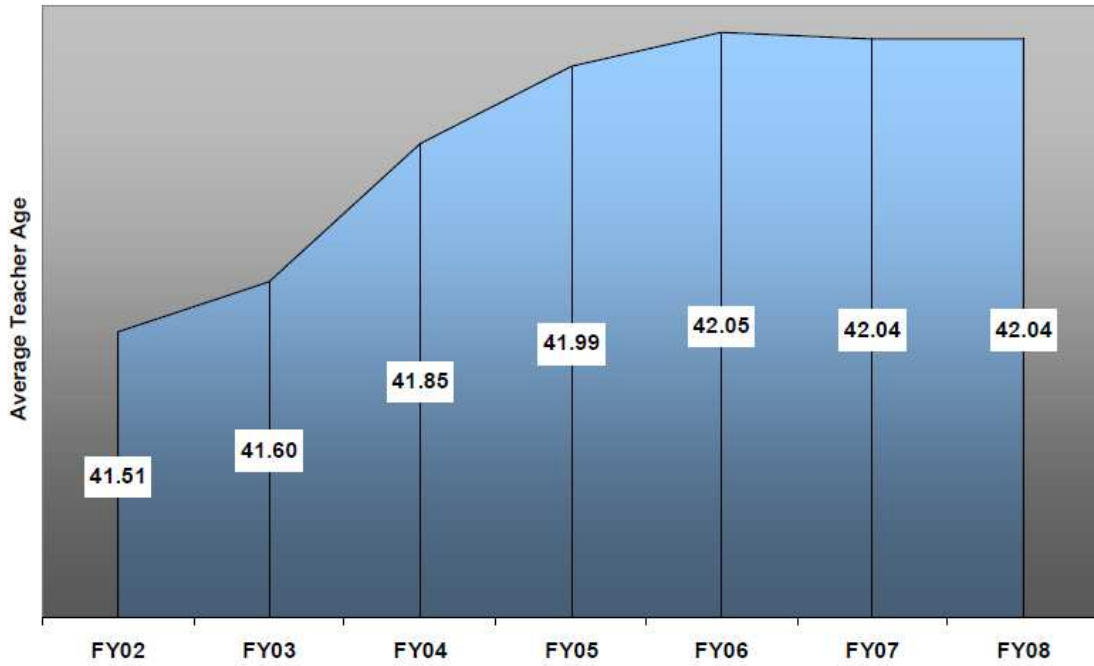
Figure 3. Average teacher age in Georgia from 2002-2008.
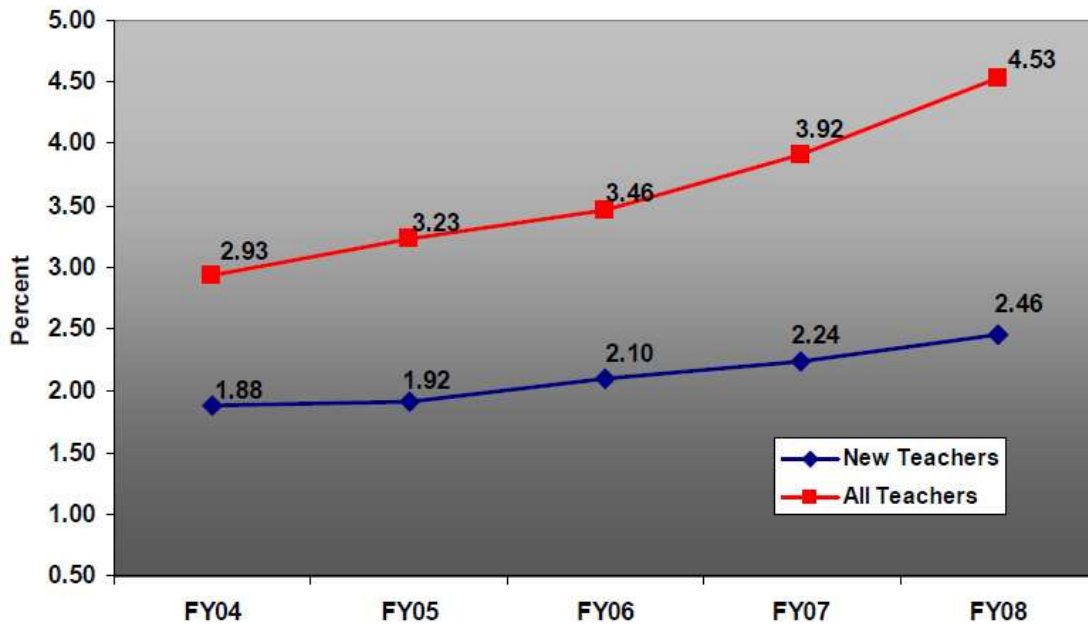
Figure 4. Percentage of teachers and new teachers age 61 and older
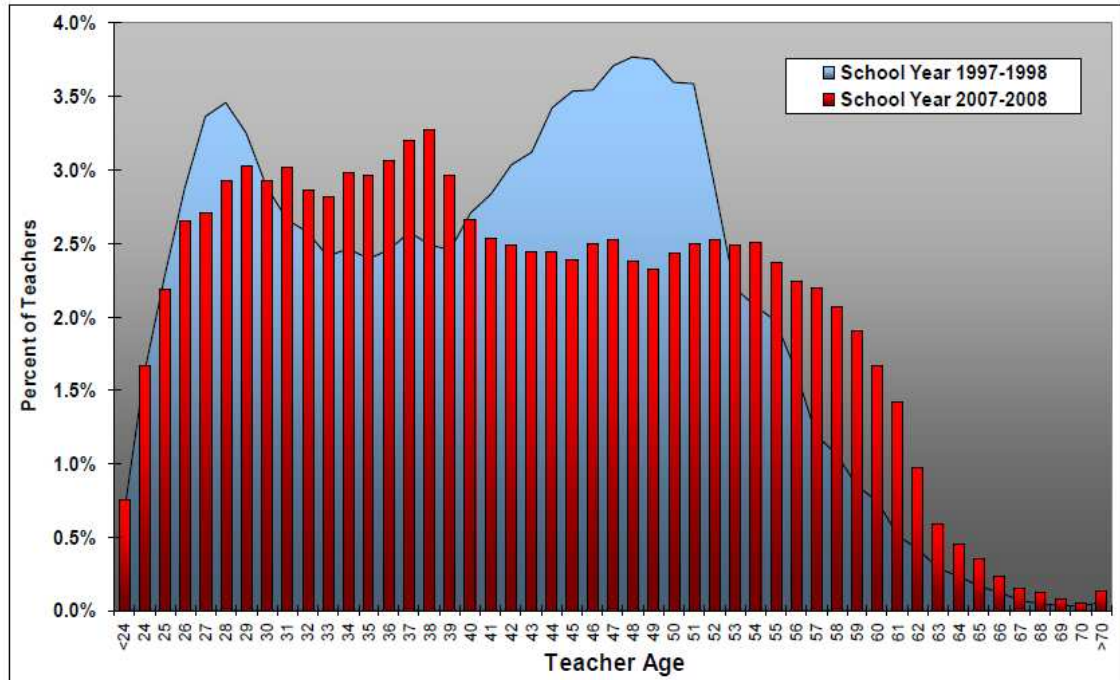
Figure 5. Percentage of Georgia teachers' ages

Each generation is influenced by the events of its childhood (Howe & Nadler, 2009; O'Donnovan, 2009; Levine, Flanagan & Gallay, 2008). These events shape the group's collective identity and behaviors. For example, many of the Millennials' values and philosophies were shaped by the images of Columbine, 9/11 and the War on Terror, AMBER alerts, and Code Adams (Howe & Nadler, 2009). In turn, Millennials are more adverse to risk taking and 81% of Millennials report their number one concern is "personal safety" (Howe & Nadler, 2009, p. 15). According to Howe and Nadler (2009), generational intelligences are based on five social theory rules:

1. The generation's collective identity is decisively shaped by its location in history – that is, by the historical setting of their childhood and by the social mood they encounter as they come of age into adulthood.

2. Contrasts in historical location often have direct and obvious consequences for a generation's life agenda or worldview.

3. Each new generation comes of age rebelling against older generations in a predictable manner.

4. A generation's basic attitudes, once shaped at an early age, remain surprisingly durable as the generation matures.

5. A generation, while encompassing individuals of every variety, gives rise to certain prevailing beliefs and priorities that are acknowledged by all.

Evidence of the five social theory rules can be found in each of the three generations.

Baby Boomers.

Baby Boomers, born approximately between 1943-1964, came of age during the Civil Rights movement, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Woodstock, Vietnam, the Cold War, Watergate and the sexual revolution (Lovely, 2010; Howe & Nadler, 2009; Keeter et al., 2002). When they were children, the population was primarily homogeneous, there was a wide gender-role gap, and community values were strong. They used pop culture as a vehicle of expressing their values. They are characterized by their activism of the 1960s.

Boomers are career focused and tend to remain in a job once they have established a career (Renn, 2008; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They want feedback on job performance only once a year with carefully collected documentation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They stay after school for meetings, attend other school functions and work long hours without expecting additional pay and often judge younger generations' willingness to balance work and family as a lack of commitment (Lovely, 2010; Renn,

2008). They value equality, unions, and don't hesitate to contact local representatives when problems arise (usually by phone or in person). They often resist site-based management and professional learning communities (Lovely, 2010).

Politically, Boomers turned away from civic participation and team playing and turned toward inner-life, self-perfection, and deeper meaning (Howe & Nadler, 2009). They are described politically as, "passionate culture warriors who trust their own values, show declining rates of civic engagement, and don't mind wielding harsh identity politics and us-versus-them polarization" (Howe & Nadler, 2009).

Generation X.

Generation Xers, born approximately between 1960-1981, came of age during a time of peace (Persian Gulf War being the exception), the Challenger disaster, increased divorce rates, financial recession, AIDS, *Saturday Night Live* political caricatures, MTV, lifestyle experimentation, and "under parenting" (Lovely, 2010; Howe & Nadler, 2009; Keeter et al., 2002; Cohn, 1992). Political bashing and carnival politics were the norm (Howe & Nadler, 2009; Halstead, 1999). They are characterized by their punk rock mohawks, suicidal grunge stars, gansta rappers, and goateed gamers (Howe & Nadler, 2009). They frequently carry significant credit card debt (Halstead, 1999) and are often described as "scrappy, pragmatic, and free-agents" (Howe & Nadler, 2009). Generation Xers value individualism (Howe, 2010), hence the explosion of the "personal computer" and on-line degree programs that can be completed at home (Costello, Lenholt, & Stryker, 2004).

At work, Generation Xers frequently reassess their career maps, become restless quickly, and are less loyal (Lovely, 2010; Renn, 2008; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They

prefer ongoing feedback for job performance (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002) and want to be promoted faster (Renn, 2008). They are described as creative, like having choices, and work well in teams—as long as they have some control over teammates and group procedures (Lovely, 2010; O'Donovan, 2009). They also strive to find a balance between work and family, often seeking work-from-home jobs (Lovely, 2010; Howe 2010). While Baby Boomer teachers can usually be found working in the building after the students leave, Generation Xers are more likely to be attending their child's sporting games with a Blackberry or iPhone in hand (Lovely, 2010).

In the current economic recession lay-offs, Generation Xers are resilient and able to bounce back to find new jobs (O'Donnovan, 2009). While Baby Boomers value equality, many Generations Xers and Millennials value *equity* (Lovely, 2010). As a result, they tend to support incentives like merit pay (Lovely, 2010).

Characterized as the most disengaged and apathetic political group in American history (Zukin, Ketter, Andolina, Jenkings, Delli Carpini, 2006; Halstead, 1999), Generation Xers have a political reputation of being resilient free agents who prefer to solve their own problems, demonstrate low rates of civic engagement, handle risk well, and seek ad-hoc solutions to problems as they arise (Howe & Nadler, 2009). They see the political system as irrelevant, ineffectual and unresponsive; they believe they can only make a positive difference by "circumventing" the system (Halstead, 1999; Cohn, 1992). They prefer to participate locally in run/walk/bike events for charity, signing petitions, boycotting products from companies they distrust, and *buy*cotting products from companies whose social and political values they support (Keeter, et al., 2002; Cohn 1992). They must be convinced and value data. When speaking to a group of Generation

Xers, former Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings once said, "In God we trust. All others bring data" (Howe, 2010). Generation Xers are also the generation least likely to be *asked to participate* or contribute to the political process (Keeter et al., 2002). As Howe stated during a panel discussion, the problem is cyclical: Xers do not contribute so politicians do not ask them to; therefore, they do not participate and politicians continue to ignore them (New America Foundation, recording, 2009)

Millennials.

The Millennials, born approximately between 1976 and 2004, came of age in a time when children were protected by a booming safety industry (car seat laws, helicopter parents, home child safety devices), Waco, Oklahoma City, 9/11, Enron, Bernard Madoff, readily accessible technology, and the economic crash of 2008 (Lovely, 1010; Howe & Nadler, 2009; Keeter et al., 2002). Millennials are described as special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, and pressured to achieve (Howe & Nadler, 2009). Unlike other generations, Millennials perceive themselves and being unique (Keeter et al., 2002) and 84% of them believe their generation will produce the next Bill Gates (66% percent think they already know that person, and 25% believe *they* are that person) (Howe & Nadler, 2002).

At work, Millennials require technology and often break what Baby Boomer and Generation X employees consider appropriate boundaries and hierarchy (Lovely, 2010; O'Donnovan, 2009). Lovely (2010) demonstrates this best in an article by including an email sent directly to the superintendent of a school system from a Millennial:

Dear Dr. Miller: Our school was supposed to have SMART Boards installed over winter break. But they aren't in our classrooms yet. Do you know what the holdup is? I asked my principal, but she has no clue.

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They want constant feedback from employers and expect to receive it instantly (usually electronically) (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). During the economic lay-offs, Millennials find themselves unable to cope as they have never been allowed to fail. They frequently respond by railing at human resource departments. It is not unusual for their parents to contact administrators and school boards on behalf of the children (Lovely, 2010; O'Donnovan, 2009).

When the students leave for the day, multi-tasking Millennial teachers can be found with friends catching a movie, going to a yoga class, and communicating on social media networks while grading papers and making plans for the next day (Lovely, 2010). They often Tweet, text and Facebook their students – something older generations find offensive (Lovely, 2010).

Politically, Millennials are more active than youth of other generations (Zukin et al., 2006). During the 2008 election, Millennials were actively involved in the campaign and there was a 15 point difference between youth support and the whole population support for President Obama during the 2008 elections (Levine, et al., 2008). Millennials prefer to network with their peers, are actively engaged in civic work, and trust that the government and other organizations will protect them (Howe & Nadler, 2009; Levine et al., 2008). They do not like the negative tone of Washington and favor those who propose compromise. They resent diversity training and choose to see society as "transracial" rather than "multiracial" (Howe & Nadler, 2009). Millennials are most likely to politically engage in volunteerism, online and social media outlets, boycott and buycott movements, and transnational youth networks (Levine, 2007).

Gender Ideology

Another theory worth exploring is the political habits of educators according to their sex. Studies conducted by Paxton and Kunovich (2003) and Inglehart and Norris (2000) indicate that women are less likely than men to actively participate in politics and the political process. According to The Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement (2011), there are 94, 364 females and 22,903 males employed as PK-12 teachers in Georgia. Considering the large number of females in this group, it is important to study their political habits and motivation.

Understanding gender ideology may help educational leaders empower women to become more active and help their voices be heard by the policy elite. Traditionally, women have dominated the field of education and other "pink collar ghetto" jobs. A pink collar ghetto job is described as one traditionally held by women, often with less pay than other white collar jobs, and frequently having little or no opportunities for advancement (Mastracci, 2004; Kessler-Harris, 2003; England, 1993). Sociologists contend that the very nature of their work environment leads these women to feel as if their opinions simply do not matter.

Norris (2001) reports that even after controlling for levels of education, gender differences were found in relation to political participation. For example, women were found to be less likely to support unconventional forms of political participation such as protests and strikes (Conway et al., 2005; Norris, 2001). They are also less likely to contribute to political campaigns, serve on local governing boards, and contact or converse with government officials (Conway et al., 2005; Norris 2001).

However, women are more likely than men to sign petitions and vote in presidential and non-presidential elections (Conway et al., 2005; Norris, 2001). Since 1980, the number of women voting in presidential and non-presidential elections has consistently outnumbered their male counterparts (Conway et al., 2005; Norris, 2001). Women tend to vote in the context of a larger perspective where men tend to vote in terms of their personal situation (Conway et al., 2005). Women are also more likely to have attended a public meeting (such as school board meeting), to have attended a public rally, or written to a state legislator (Conway et al., 2005).

Additionally, studies have shown that American women "continue to express less knowledge and interest in conventional politics, so that they are less likely to discuss politics or follow the events in the news" (Norris, 2001). Approximately 17% of U.S. Congress seats are held by females (Lawless and Fox, 2010, p. 21) representing a low number of women in policy elite roles. The United Nations argues that "women need to constitute 30% of national elites in order to exert meaningful influence on politics" (Paxton & Kunovich, 2003). A 1991 study found that female legislators were more likely than males to include citizens in the policy-making process" (Conway et al., 2005).

Traditionally, women have not developed a strong sense of political efficacy (Conway et al., 2005). They have taken on a more passive role and accepted that politics remain a "man's thing" (Conway et al., 2005, p. 23). As women become more educated, their sense of political efficacy increases and they are more likely to try to persuade others how to vote, attend political rallies and make campaign contributions – when asked to do so (Conway et al., 2005). Similarly, women who work outside of the home tend to be more active and knowledgeable (Conway et al., 2005).

Prior Course Work

According to group theory, access refers to the group's ability to communicate its viewpoints to decision-makers (Anderson, 2006). Without the ability to communicate ideas to those making the decisions, the group will not have influence over the process. Technology has made access to state legislators more accessible and instant, but has it changed teachers' engagement activities? Studies have shown that citizens without sufficient background and exposure to the policy process tend to shy away from the process. For example, Fedderson and Pesendorfer (1996) state that when a voter is unsure or uninformed, he or she will usually abstain from voting so that the votes from those better informed will carry more weight – even when the issue is considered "costless" (p. 408).

Milligan, Moretti, and Oreopoulos (2004) found that the more education a person has, the more likely he or she is to participate in politics. Therefore, keeping teachers informed of the policy process and allowing them access is a critical component in removing barriers (Anderson, 2006). Conway et al. (2005) argue that full political participation will only happen if all parties have equal access. As educational leaders, we are responsible for making certain that teachers remain informed and have adequate opportunities to participate in policy setting.

One proven way to impact civic engagement is through prior experiences and course work (Keeter, et al., 2002). Of the nearly 70% of adolescents who took some type of government/civics course in high school, 48% reported that their interest in politics increased as a result of the course (Keeter et al., 2002). Among the 40% of college

students who took a similar government/civics course, 47% reported an increase in interest (Keeter et al., 2002).

Supporting Keeter et al.'s (2002) findings of increased interest, adolescents who participated in civic education and activities during high school were found to be more likely to actively participant as adults. (Campbell, 2006; Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003) Flanagan and Levine's (2010) meta-analysis also found that college students actively engaged in "ambitious courses in which students analyze and address social problems increase civic knowledge and narrow gaps in civic engagement among students" (p. 170). Forty-seven percent of students involved in the studies said that their interest increased as a result of civic coursework with open class discussions (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Fifty-nine percent of high school seniors required to volunteer actually volunteered after graduating, compared to 37% of students who were not required (Flanagan & Levine, 2010).

Adolescents who regularly participated in discussions of politics with peers, parents and teachers report higher levels of political efficacy (Richardson, 2004). The results from Estes et al. (2010) demonstrated a similar pattern since three of the four students exposed to the policy process demonstrated higher levels of perceived political self-efficacy. Pasek, Feldman, Romer, and Jameson (2008) conducted a longitudinal study to determine whether participation in a civic program, Student Voices, had an impact on later participation. They found that students who had been in the program for two semesters reported greater self-efficacy for political participation (Pasek et al., 2008). These findings support the belief that early education programs can positively impact subsequent participation.

Colby et al. (2007) suggest five strategies for colleges to implement in their various disciplines as a part of their regular practice. These five strategies will likely increase students' political engagement after graduating. The five strategies include the following: political discussions and deliberation, political research and action projects, inviting speakers and program affiliated mentors to class, external placements in authentic civic experiences, and structured reflections. Implementing these strategies and offering similar professional learning course work in the area of educational policy may increase the likelihood of active participation during teachers' professional careers.

Trust and School Culture

If the school is viewed as a miniature social system (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Bowen, 2004), it is possible to conclude that teachers' willingness to participate at the local level may impact their willingness to participate on a larger scale. According to Weber (1947), in a pure bureaucracy, the chain of command is always followed and never questioned (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). As the size of school systems have grown, so has the level of bureaucracy and the hierarch of authority (Glantz, 1991). In organizational structures with a hierarchy of authority like we have in most school systems (teachers-principals-superintendents-school boards), it is possible for teachers who do not trust the school political system to simply comply and feel that they have no power to make a change (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Bidwell, 1965).

Educational leaders have the power to control internal environmental factors and can, therefore, create an environment that encourages teachers to actively participate (Bidwell & Kasarda, 1985). Weber defines power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite

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resistance" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 210). Therefore, it is imperative for educational

leaders to appropriately use their sources of power (Sergiovanni, 1992; Mintzberg, 1983;

Etzioni, 1975; French & Raven, 1959) to create a trusting environment. In environments

where leaders exert coercive and legitimate power, teachers may be more likely to accept

external policies without question.

Conversely, a leader who leads with referent power (French & Raven, 1959) is

more likely to develop a sense of "respect, trust, and loyalty among colleagues" (Hoy &

Miskel, 2002, p. 226). In schools with a more open, positive school climate (Halpin &

Croft, 1962) teachers are more likely to have a higher locus of control (Duttweiler, 1984;

Rotter, 1954). Environments built in trust are also more likely to be highly successful

(Ouchi, 1981). In settings where teachers' voices and opinions are valued, teachers are

more likely to participate in shared-decision making (Hoy & Tarter, 1992; Vroom &

Jago, 1988; Vroom & Yetton, 1973).

Ferdinand Tönnies, a communitarian sociologist, developed the theories of

gesellschaft and *gemeinschaft*. Gesellschaft "exists when connections within and among

people are based primarily on the rational pursuit of self-interests" (Sergiovanni, 1994, p.

57). Sergiovanni sees this as a primary characteristic of Weber's bureaucracy models.

Gemeinschaft "exists when connections within and among people are primarily based on

loyalties, purposes, and sentiments" (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 57).

According to Sergiovanni, when most educators begin their careers, they typically

resemble *gemeinschaft* and often change to *gesellschaft* after becoming jaded by the

bureaucracies of education. Sergiovanni believes that through the development of a

healthy community, teachers and leaders can remain in a state of *gemeinschaft*.

Sergiovanni argues that schools should operate on a social *covenant*. In a covenantal relationship, members are less likely to withdraw because they did not get something they wanted. Sergiovanni likens the social covenant to relationships such as marriages, families, and friendships; relationships that are larger than single decisions (Sergiovanni, 2000).

Members of a community must have trust. Putnam (2000) argues that social trust is the primary ingredient of social capital. Without social trust, members of a community do not trust one another to act in the best interest of the other. Sergiovanni notes that social capital and relational trust are "the DNA of community" (2005, p. 188) because they are so integral to the effective operation of the community. While most social theorists agree that trust is an integral part of a successful community, it is not clear which comes first: does trust cause people to participate or do people participate because they trust (Levine, 2007)?

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This correlational study was designed to examine the predictive nature of several factors that may be associated with PK-12 teachers' willingness to participate in the educational policy making process. A 30 question instrument (see Appendix A for a copy of the instrument) designed to measure teacher political efficacy and engagement was administered. Demographic variables were used to determine possible factors influencing efficacy and engagement. The questionnaire consisted of four distinct measures. All measures were previously tested for validity and reliability. Items in all four scales were adapted to specifically measure educational policy factors rather than global politics. Therefore, a pilot test was administered to determine reliability and validity of the adapted instrument. The dependent variables in this study were participants' current levels of efficacy and engagement. The independent variables explored include generational values, gender ideologies, prior coursework, and social trust.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer one overarching question: 1. Does teacher political efficacy predict active engagement in the educational policy process? Supporting questions will explore several theories developed during the review of the literature. The supporting questions are

2. In what, if any, educational policy engagement activities are teachers participating?

3. Is there a relationship between teachers' sex and political efficacy?

4. Does a teacher's sex predict educational policy engagement?

5. Do generational values predict levels of professional engagement?

6. Does prior coursework predict teacher participation in the policy making process?

7. Does social trust in the local school system predict levels of professional engagement on a larger scale?

Population

The questionnaire was administered to certified teachers and certified support personnel only. Special interest groups, legislators, administrators, students, and parents could have been included. Since the purpose of this study is to better understand what motivates teachers to participate in educational policy setting, participation was limited to PK-12 certified teachers. With a better understanding of teacher participation, educational leaders can help create a culture for promoting active engagement for all educators.

The state of Georgia is comprised of sixteen Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs). For feasibility reasons, a non-randomly selected cluster sampling of one RESA district in the state was used as a representative group of the state rather than sampling the entire state. The RESA district selected is representative of the entire state with one large urban school system ($n = 2,235$), one large suburban school system ($n = 1,492$), four medium sized rural school systems ($n = 1,196$) and six small rural school systems ($n = 446$). All systems in the selected RESA district ($n = 5,369$) were invited to participate in the study. Participation was completely voluntary and no financial incentives were offered.

Participants

Five school systems in the Georgia RESA district agreed to participate in this study ($n = 4{,}580$), one system declined, and six did not respond. Of those participating, one is a large urban system ($n = 2{,}235$), one is a large suburban system ($n = 1{,}492$), one is a large rural system ($n = 335$), and two are small rural systems ($n = 518$). Each system designated a representative who forwarded the link to the participants. A total of 701 PK-12 certified teachers completed the questionnaire.

Sample

In Hammon's (2010) original studies measuring teacher political self-efficacy, non-randomly selected teachers in two systems were invited to participate by completing an online survey – similar to conditions of this study. In Hammon's first study, 287 teachers were invited to participate; 48 completed the questionnaire (16.7%). In the second study 1,090 teachers were invited to participate; 103 completed the questionnaire (9.4%). Since participation in surface mail and email questionnaires has steadily decreased (Kaplowitz, Hadlock, Levine, 2004; Sheehan, 2001), the expected return rate for a survey link sent via email is .259 (Kaplowitz et al., 2004). Therefore, all systems in the RESA district were invited to participate to increase the likelihood of receiving enough data for a minimum sample size. With a desired alpha error rate of .01, power level of .90, and 2 degrees of freedom, the minimum sample size needed to detect a correlation of .323 (the lowest correlation found in Hammon's two studies) is 155. Since 701 teachers participated in the study (response rate = 15.3%), the minimum sample size of 155 was exceeded.

Focus Group

A focus group of stakeholders reviewed the adapted instrument for appropriateness of the questions. The focus group consisted of one guidance counselor, one media specialist, one instructional coach, three teachers, and one political science professor. Each member reviewed the items and made suggestions regarding the clarity of the questions and the ease of using the electronic questionnaire. Based on the feedback from the focus group, the instrument was altered accordingly. The revised instrument was loaded into Survey Monkey® for dissemination and data collection.

Pilot Study

Pilot Participants

For the pilot study, all certified PK-12 teachers in two non-Georgia school system were invited to complete a 30 item electronic survey. There were 1,690 certified PK-12 teachers in the selected districts. No financial incentives were offered for participation. No identifiable information was collected. The instrument and the data collection process were tested in non-Georgia school systems to test the reliability and validity of the instrument and not the educational policy climate in Georgia. The selected school systems are neighboring school systems, similar to the conditions of this study. One system is a small rural system ($n = 147$) while the second one is more suburban ($n = 1,543$) for a total of 1,690 certified PK-12 teachers. A total of 309 PK-12 certified teachers completed the pilot questionnaire (response rate = 18.3%).

Pilot Procedures

Once permission was granted, 1,690 certified PK-12 teachers in two non-Georgia school systems were invited to complete the electronic questionnaire (see Appendix B for

a copy of the letter). The researcher worked with a designated representative from each system to send an email invitation to participants. The designated person forwarded the link to the participating teachers. The link remained open for one week. A total of 309 PK-12 certified teachers completed the questionnaire. MiniTab® and Microsoft Excel software were used to analyze each construct for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. An item analysis for internal consistency produced reliable alpha coefficients (>0.7) for each construct: engagement (.747), external political efficacy (.735), internal political efficacy (.907), and perceived political self-efficacy (.908). Since the alpha for each construct would not have increased by omitting any items, all items were kept.

Construct validity was established by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficients. Statistical significance was calculated at the .05 level (see Table 3). External political efficacy was reverse scored so that higher scores would equate to higher levels of efficacy. Engagement was coded 1 for "yes" responses and 0 for "no" responses. According to the pilot data, all constructs except external political efficacy had a positive, statistically significant relationship to engagement. A review of the literature suggested that external political efficacy was less likely to predict engagement than internal political efficacy measures. Since the alpha score for external political efficacy was .735, the construct was retained. Results from the full study will be compared to the results from the pilot to further establish validity of the instrument.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Educational Policy Engagement, External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, and Perceived Political Self-Efficacy (Pilot Study)

	1	2	3	4
1. Engagement	---			
2. External Efficacy	-.049	---		
3. Internal Efficacy	.329*	-.169*	---	
4. Perceived Political Self-Efficacy	.416*	.062	.378*	---
M	.316	2.545	4.059	3.568
SD	.162	1.030	.916	1.020
Scale Min/Max Values	0, 1	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5
Cronbach's α	0.747	0.735	0.907	0.908

Note. Engagement coded Yes = 1, No = 0; n = 309
* $p < .05$

Each page of the electronic questionnaire contained an open-ended option for participants to provide feedback about the use of the instrument and the clarity of the questions. Comments were reviewed (see Appendix G for a list of pilot comments). Since most of the comments pertained to participants' views on the subject and not the instrument itself, no additional changes were made to the questionnaire items. The open-ended questions were removed from the questionnaire, and the revised instrument was loaded into Survey Monkey® for distribution to the study participants.

Instrument

The first construct measures external political efficacy. Originally developed by Campbell, Gurin, and Warren (1954), the items have been used by the American National Election Studies (NES) for the past fifty years. The five-point response Likert scale (strongly agree-strongly disagree) was tested with the items in this scale and found reliable and valid (Niemi et al., 1991).

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According to Niemi et al. (1991), question one "I don't think public officials care much what people like me think" (NO CARE) and question two "People like me don't have any say about what the government does" (NOSAY) primarily measure external political efficacy while question three "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on" (COMPLEX) measures both internal and external political efficacy. When compared to other internal political efficacy measures, both NOCARE and NOSAY associated weakly or not at all (.00 to .43) and COMPLEX was moderately correlated with the internal political efficacy measures (.25 to .43) as well as external political efficacy questions NOCARE and NOSAY (.31 to .46). Although all three questions have been used to traditionally measure external efficacy, COMPLEX has been shown to measure both internal and external political efficacy. Therefore, only NOCARE and NOSAY will be used to measure external political efficacy on this instrument.

For this questionnaire, both external political efficacy items have been altered slightly to measure teacher political efficacy rather than civic political efficacy. The first item was changed from "I don't think public officials care much what people like me think" to "I don't think public officials care much what teachers like me think." The second item was changed from "People like me don't have any say about what the government does" to "Teachers like me don't have any say about what the government does." The changes were made in hopes of making the instrument more specific to education.

The second construct measured teachers' internal political efficacy related to educational policy. This construct contains four items requiring a five-point Likert scale

response ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The original four items

developed and tested by the NES in 1987, read as follows:

1. I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in politics (SELFQUAL)

2. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues
   facing our country (UNDERSTAND)

3. I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people
   (PUBOFF)

4. I think I am better informed about politics than most people (INFORMED)

All four items have been tested and found valid and reliable with internal correlations

ranging from .46 to .64 (Niemi et al., 1991). Niemi et al. (1991) used a confirmatory

factor analysis and found that the four items have a high factor loading for internal

efficacy with UNDERSTAND at .73, SELFQUAL at .77, PUBOFF at .61 and

INFORMED at .81 (Niemi et al., 1991).

Morrell (2005) notes that measuring internal political efficacy using situation-

specific measures yields a more specific finding for efficacy related to a specific context.

Adapting the scales to a specific context also resolves the complaints made that

traditional efficacy scales measure global context. Since the purpose of this study is to

measure political efficacy in a specific context, adapting the scales will yield a more

specific finding. Therefore, the four items (Niemi et al., 1991), have been adapted

following the example of Morrell's (2005) study. For example, SELFQUAL has been

adapted to read "I consider myself well qualified to participate in the educational policy

process." Additionally, adapting the scales should yield a response more closely

correlated to internal self-efficacy scales measured in the third construct (designed to

measure a specific context). If this is proven to be true, it may eliminate the need for further use of political self-efficacy scales in future studies related to teacher political efficacy in favor of the four internal efficacy items most frequently used in political science (Morrell, 2005).

The third construct, the Perceived Political Self-Efficacy-Revised (P-PSE-R) scale (Caprara et al., 2009), measures teachers' perceived internal self-efficacy related to politics and policy. The items aim at measuring a person's perceived capabilities for participation in engagement. The P-PSE-R Scale contains the four statements with the highest factor loadings from the original P-PSE instrument. Participants are asked to evaluate how capable they feel in carrying out the action or behavior below using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from "not at all" to "completely").

1. Maintain personal relationships with representatives of national government authorities. (Factor .721)

2. Play a decisive role in the choice of the leaders of political movement to which you belong, or to which you are near. (Factor .795)

3. Carry out an effective information campaign for the political movement or party with which you concur regarding beliefs and programs. (Factor .829)

4. Use the means you have as a citizen to critically monitor the actions of your political representatives. (Factor .663)

For the purpose of this study, item one has been borrowed from Hammon's 2010 study where the item was adapted to read "Maintain relationships with representatives of state government authorities." This adaptation was appropriate since the purpose of Hammon's

study and this one is to measure the relationship between teachers and their state legislators.

Like the previous two constructs, the P-PSE-R scales have been adapted to measure education-related items. For example, item two (P-PSE-R2) has been adapted to read "Play a decisive role in the choice of leaders of the political movement you support for education-related reasons." Adapting the items to education specific contexts will yield a more specific perceived political self-efficacy score. All adaptations are indicated on the instrument in Appendix A.

The final construct was designed to measure teachers' education policy engagement. Indicators used by political scientists to measure modern civic engagement (Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002) have been adapted to specifically measure engagement in the educational policy process. Participants were asked to respond "yes" or "no" to whether they have participated in any of the nineteen indicators during the past 12 months. Questions have been adapted to make them specific to educational policy. For example, an indicator was changed from "worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live" to "worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the school where you work" (see Appendix H for a comparison of adapted indicators).

The original nineteen core indicators were developed during a two-year project funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The research had two goals: develop a reliable but concise set of indicators for civic and political engagement, with a special focus on youth aged 15-25 and to assess the civic and political health of the nation (Zukin, 2006). Researchers used a five-stage research design: expert panel, focus groups, questionnaire

pretesting and internet sampling, National Civic Engagement Survey I, and National

Civic Engagement Survey II (validation and verification).

In March and April 2001, two panels of experts who work with active youth were

convened and a discussion guide was developed (Zukin et al., 2006). Using the

discussion guides, 11 focus groups were conducted in four separate locations (Chicago,

New Jersey, North Carolina, and northern California). Groups were stratified by age into

one of the four generations: DotNets (or Millennials), Generation X, Baby Boomer, and

Matures with the majority coming from DotNets and Millenials.

Preliminary data from surveys conducted in Virginia and New Jersey during the

gubernatorial elections in the fall of 2001 was used for question wording experiments to

find the most reliable and valid way of measuring sets of behaviors. The second data set

was based on an Internet survey of 15 to 25 year-olds conducted by Knowledge

Networks. Between January 29, 2002 and February 25, 2002, 1166 members of the

Knowledge Networks panel who met the age requirements completed the self-

administered online questionnaire. The sample was stratified by education, with one

group consisting of those currently enrolled in high school ($n = 312$), a second group

comprised of college graduates and those with some history or college attendance ($n = 336$) and a final group of individuals who did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the

two previous groups ($n = 518$).

A national survey of 15 to 25 year-olds ($n = 1,200$) was conducted between

January and February of 2002. Findings were focused on volunteering, other civic and

political behaviors, attitudes toward politics, and high school and college experiences

related to public engagement. Two additional focus groups were conducted following the national telephone survey in order to gauge instrument validity.

Researchers then launched the primary data collection activity: the National Civic Engagement Survey (NCES), a 25-minute national telephone sample of 3,246 respondents conducted between April 4 and May 20, 2002 (Zukin et al., 2006; Keeter et al., 2002). Cohorts from the youngest generations were oversampled (DotNet, $n = 1001$, Generation X, $n = 1000$, Baby Boomers, $n = 604$, and Matures, $n = 602$) because of the focus on the younger generation.

The second national telephone survey ($n = 1,400$) was conducted with adults ages 18 and older following the 2002 national elections with the goal of testing the stability and reliability of the measures (Zukin et al., 2006). Data from other collection activities was used to correlate findings. Using factor analysis, the final nineteen items were categorized into three dimensions: civic indicators, political indicators, indicators of public voice.

Levine (2007) and CIRCLE (the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement) at the University of Maryland replicated the studies by Keeter et al. (2002) using the nineteen indicators in three main categories: community participation, political engagement and political voice. Their omnibus surveys support Keeter et al.'s (2002) list of civic indicators as valid forms of modern engagement. They note that although the list was "a useful compendium of indicators that are sufficiently frequent, respectable, and concrete," (Levine, 2007, p. 59) the list failed to include social networks, commitment to open-ended politics, and acts of resistance. Therefore, the indicator "Used a website, blog, or social network to express your opinion on an issue

related to education" was added to the original 19 core indicators for a total of 20 indicators.

After the focus group reviewed the instrument, five electoral indicator questions were changed. For example, the adapted item read "Within the past 12 months, did you vote in a local or state election for reasons related to education." The panel did not like having to mark "no" when they may have, in fact, voted but for reasons unrelated to education. Therefore, the five electoral indicators were changed on the questionnaire to ask for civic political engagement first ("Within the past 12 months, did you vote in a local or state election?"). Using the Question Logic feature of Survey Monkey®, participants who responded "No" were skipped to the next indicator. Those who answered "Yes" proceeded to a follow-up question ("Were your reasons for voting at least partly related to education?"). The five electoral indicators with their follow-up questions can be found in Appendix I.

For demographic variables, the questionnaire asked for the participants' sex, information concerning prior access to policy making ("I have taken a professional learning class or post-secondary course work in the area of policy") and trust ("I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on education problems or issues at my school" and "I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on local school system-level education problems or issues"). The instrument also asked participants to self-identify the generation with which they most closely identify themselves. Since the review of the literature is inconsistent in identifying the generations by dates, key historical and social events were used in the instrument descriptor rather than dates. Knowing that a person's generational value is shaped by events of childhood, using historical and social events to self-select a

generation is appropriate. An analysis of each item on the instrument can be found in Appendix J.

Data Collection Procedure

Before any data was collected, permission was obtained from Georgia Southern University's Internal Review Board (IRB). Due to variation in requirements from each school system, permission to conduct the full research was granted in stages. All documents related to IRB can be found in Appendices K, L and M.

The superintendent in each of the twelve school systems within the selected RESA was contacted via email to obtain permission to complete the study (see Appendices C-F for copies of letters used). Once permission was granted, the superintendent designated a contact person (e.g., the Human Resource Officer) to serve as a liaison between the system's teachers and the researcher. The researcher provided the authorized contact person with an introductory pre-notification letter to send via email one week prior to the administration of the actual instrument. One week later, the questionnaire link was sent via email from the authorized system-level person to all qualified participants. The researcher provide the authorized contact person with a post-notification letter to send to respondents two weeks after the questionnaire was sent. Whether or not the school systems chose to send the pre- and post-notification letters depended on system policies. Both pre- and post-notification letters were sent in hopes of securing a larger response pool (Kaplowitz et al., 2004; Sheehan, 2001; Dillman, 1978).

The questionnaire remained open for one additional week after the post-notification letter was sent (a total of three weeks). Due to variation in data distribution requirements, each system was assigned a unique link to the electronic questionnaire to

ensure that each system had access to the instrument for the same amount of time. For the purposes of data analysis, all data were combined into one data set. All data were exported from Survey Monkey® in an Excel spreadsheet. A total of 962 people began the questionnaire. After deleting responses from those who answered "no" to being a PK-12 certified teacher and listwise deleting incomplete questionnaires, the responses from the remaining 701 participants were used for analysis. This yielded an overall response rate of 15%.

The initial response rate among the systems varied before non-certified and incomplete responses were deleted. The large urban system had a response rate of 7.7%, the large suburban system had a response rate of 28%, the large rural system had a response rate of 90%, and the two smaller rural systems had a combined response rate of 12.9%. The only observed difference between the systems was the distribution of the questionnaire. In the large rural system with the highest response rate, the liaison encouraged participation and copied the researcher on the pre- and post- notification emails sent to the teachers. By contrast, the large urban system (with the lowest participation rate) asked the researcher to contact individual school principals directly to seek permission for the questionnaire to be forwarded. It was left to the discretion of individual principals to distribute the questionnaire. The remaining systems forwarded the information to teachers from a system-level liaison (one Human Resource director, one Superintendent Administrative Assistant, and one Assistant Superintendent).

Data Analysis

The data from the 701 participants was loaded from Excel into MiniTab® for analysis. The scores from the external political efficacy scales were reverse scored so that

higher scores equated to higher levels of efficacy. Similarly, all engagement scores were altered so that "no" responses were coded 0 and "yes" responses were coded 1. This was done so that higher scores would equate to higher levels of engagement. Dummy coding was also used for the other two dichotomous independent variables, sex and professional learning. Sex data were altered so that males were coded 1 and females were coded 0. Professional Learning scores were coded 0 for "no" and 1 for "yes."

For the five political indicators with follow-up questions, all Question Logic skipped questions were coded 0 for "no." A "no" response is appropriate since a "no" response to the first part of the question indicates that the teacher did not engage in the activity regardless of the reason. Responses from the follow-up questions were used in calculating engagement mean scores for the purpose of this study since only the follow-up question was specific to education.

Using Cronbach's alpha, an internal test of consistency was completed to determine the reliability of items within each construct. Composite scores were calculated for each of the four constructs: External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, P-PSE-R, and Teacher Engagement. Next, Pearson's correlation coefficients (r) were calculated to find statistically significant relationships among the variables engagement, external political efficacy, internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy, sex, professional learning experiences, and trust at the school and system level.

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) define Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as a "statistical procedure that compares the amount of between-groups variance in individual's scores with the amount of within-group variance" (p. 318). Therefore, engagement responses were analyzed using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to

determine the statistical significance between the educators' answers based on generational values. Since there were three categories for this qualitative variable, two dummy variables were assigned to Generation X and Baby Boomers, with Millennials serving as the reference group. Pairwise comparisons were calculated to show the mean difference between the generations.

Since the *t* test is appropriate for testing the significance between two sample means (Gall et al., 2007), a *t* test was used to determine the statistical significance of teacher engagement and teacher efficacy between male and female educators. Using composite scores from each construct and results from the demographic variables, a regression analysis was completed to determine the strongest predictors of teacher engagement. Statistical significance was computed at *p*-values of <.05 with a confidence interval of 95% for all tests.

Percentages of engagement indicators were calculated and placed into a bar graph in descending order to highlight the engagement indicators most commonly completed within the past 12 months. Percentages from the pilot and full study were also placed in a table beside Keeter et al.'s (2002) and Levine's (2007) findings to compare teacher engagement levels to engagement levels reported by the general public. Finally, data from the pilot study was compared to the findings of the study to see if the instrument performed similarly in both contexts. Construct validity was used to determine whether the scores correlated as expected based on the literature and previous studies. Findings will be reported in a narrative form and significant findings will be highlighted in embedded tables in the next chapter. After examining all data, conclusions will be drawn

about educators as policy actors and possible suggestions for increasing teacher

engagement will be examined.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYIS

This correlational study was designed to examine the predictive nature of several factors that may be associated with PK-12 teachers' willingness to participate in the educational policy making process. Three distinct constructs were used to measure three types of teacher political efficacy: external political efficacy, internal political efficacy, and perceived political self-efficacy. External political efficacy refers to one's belief that an individuals' voice can make a difference in large governmental or institutional decision making. Internal political efficacy refers to one's beliefs about his or her own ability to participate in government. Perceived political self-efficacy refers to one's own beliefs about his or her capabilities related to political participation. Both external and internal political efficacy measures have been used by political scientists since 1954. Political self-efficacy, however, is more frequently used by social cognitive theorists to measure a person's perceived capabilities. All three measures were used to report levels of teacher political efficacy. A third distinct measure was designed to capture current levels of teacher educational policy engagement. Using modern forms of engagement, a set of 20 core indicators were developed to specifically measure whether the participant completed the activity within the past 12 months. Demographic variables were used to determine possible factors influencing efficacy and engagement.

A 30 question instrument (see Appendix A for a copy of the instrument) designed to measure teacher political efficacy and engagement was administered. Although all measures were previously tested for validity and reliability, items in all four scales were

adapted to specifically measure educational policy factors rather than global politics. Therefore, a pilot test was administered to determine reliability and validity of the adapted instrument. The dependent variables in this study were participants' current levels of efficacy and engagement. The independent variables explored include generational values, gender ideologies, prior coursework, and social trust.

Adapted items were reviewed by a focus group and tested in a pilot study with 309 participants. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each subscale. The instrument was found to be reliable and administered to 701 participants. Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to determine statistical relationships among variables. An ANOVA test was completed to study the effects of generational data. t-Tests were completed to study the relationship of sex on engagement and efficacy. A regression analysis was completed to determine which variables significantly correlated with teacher engagement and to determine possible factors for predicting teacher engagement. Education policy engagement indicators were analyzed to determine active teacher participation types. All data was analyzed and significant findings are reported in tables and narrative form.

Research Questions

While this study seeks to answer one overarching question (question one), questions two through seven address the variables associated with the overarching question. The following research questions will be addressed individually throughout the data analysis:

1. Does teacher political efficacy predict active engagement in the educational policy process?

2. In what, if any, educational policy engagement activities are teachers participating?

3. Is there a relationship between teachers' sex and political efficacy?

4. Does a teacher's sex predict educational policy engagement?

5. Do generational values predict levels of professional engagement?

6. Does prior coursework predict teacher participation in the policy making process?

7. Does social trust in the local school system predict levels of professional engagement on a larger scale?

Respondents

There were 701 PK-12 certified teachers in the selected Georgia RESA district, including certified support personnel such as media specialists and guidance counselors, who completed the online questionnaire. Of the participants, 604 (86.2%) were female and 97 (13.8%) were male. Since the state of Georgia consists of 80.5% female teachers and 19.5% male teachers, the participant population represented slightly higher numbers of female teachers. Each generation was represented by the respondents; Millennials made up 14.8% of the teachers, Generation X represented 51.2%, and Baby Boomers represented 34%. Three hundred and twenty-eight (46.8%) of the teachers reported having taken a professional learning class or post-secondary course in the area of policy. The majority (53.5%) of the teachers reported feeling encouraged to voice their opinions on education problems or issues at their school "sometimes," while 24.2% "never or very rarely" felt encouraged. Similarly, 50.2% felt "sometimes" encouraged to voice their

opinion on local school system-level education problems or issues and 38.7% "never or very rarely" felt encouraged.

As a group, the teachers reported low levels of external political efficacy with 77.6% of teachers agreeing somewhat or strongly that public officials don't care much what teachers like them think (NO CARE) and 75.3% agreeing somewhat or strongly that teachers like them don't have any say about what the government does (NO SAY). By contrast, the group reported higher levels of internal political efficacy. Of the 701 participants, 89.8% felt qualified to participate in the educational policy process (SELF-QUAL), 92.4% felt they had a good understanding of the important educational policy issues facing our country (UNDERSTAND), 86.1% felt they could do as good a job in the educational policy process as most other people (PUBOFF), and 69.1% felt they were better informed about educational policy than most people (INFORMED).

Similarly, the group reported moderately high levels of perceived political self-efficacy. Of the 701 participants, 60% of the teachers felt mostly or completely capable of playing a decisive role in the choice of leaders of the political movement they support for education-related reasons. Fifty-two percent of the teachers felt somewhat or mostly capable of maintaining relationships with representatives of state and government authorities for education-related purposes. Sixty-two percent felt somewhat or mostly capable of carrying out an effective information campaign, and 61% felt somewhat or mostly capable of using the means available to them to critically monitor the educational policy related actions of their political representatives (see Appendix N for a complete list).

The respondents also reported high levels of engagement in several activities. The top three engagement activities were working with someone to solve a problem (84%), voting in a local or state election (71%), and joining or participating in an education-related group (68%).

Findings

Research Question 1: Does teacher political efficacy predict active engagement in the educational policy process?

In order to answer the overarching research question, the results from the external political efficacy, internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy and engagement scales were first analyzed for internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each subscale: external political efficacy $\alpha = .787$; internal political efficacy $\alpha = .842$; perceived political self-efficacy $\alpha = .915$; and educational policy engagement $\alpha = .767$. Since the alpha would not have increased for any measure by omitting any of the items, all items were retained and the scales were considered reliable. Next, Pearson's correlation coefficients were found by correlating all political efficacy composite scores with engagement composite scores (see Table 4). Unlike the results from the pilot study, all three political efficacy measures had a statistically significant correlation to engagement. Statistical analysis reveals that teachers' levels of engagement in the educational policy process was negatively and statistically related, at the .05 level of significance, to external political efficacy, and positively related with teachers' internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy. These results indicate that teachers who have higher levels of engagement also tend to demonstrate higher internal political efficacy and lower external political efficacy.

A multiple linear regression analysis was completed to determine whether efficacy predicts engagement (see Table 5). Regression results revealed that educational policy engagement is positively and significantly related to internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy. However, regression results suggest that teachers' external political efficacy appears to be unrelated to teacher policy engagement activities when all other variables are taken into account.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Educational Policy Engagement, External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, Perceived Political Self-Efficacy, Sex, Prior Professional Learning Experiences, and Trust at the School and System Level

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Engagement	---							
2. External Efficacy	-.129*	---						
3. Internal Efficacy	.326*	-.320*	---					
4. Political Self-Efficacy	.357*	-.167*	.448*	---				
5. Sex	-.116*	.022	.029	-.034	---			
6. Professional Learning	.196*	.007	.187*	.219*	.104*	---		
7. Trust (School Level)	.130*	.098*	.021	.095*	-.007	.101*	---	
8. Trust (System Level)	.121*	.149*	-.008	.09**	.062	.107*	.635*	---
M	0.290	2.126	4.195	3.534	0.138	0.467	1.981	1.724
SD	0.165	1.0	0.678	0.992	0.345	0.499	0.683	0.650
Scale Min/Max Values	0, 1	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5	0, 1	0, 1	1 to 3	1 to 3
Cronbach's α	0.767	0.787	0.842	0.915	--	--	--	--

Note. Engagement coded Yes = 1, No = 0; Sex coded Male = 1, Female = 0; Professional Learning Coded Yes = 1, No = 0; n = 701
* $p < .05$.

As demonstrated in Tables 4 and 5, Perceived Political Self-Efficacy had the strongest correlation to engagement; r = .357 (*p* = .00) and a t-ratio of 5.638 (*p* = .00). A one point increase in perceived political self-efficacy is expected to increase engagement by .037 points, controlling for all other variables. One may be 95% confident that the true population coefficient for perceived political self-efficacy may be as high as .049 and as

low as .024 points indicating that although P-PSE-R was the strongest predictor, it may account for as little as .024 and as much as .049 (out of 1) points in engagement. Assuming that perceived political self-efficacy increased by 5 points (the maximum on the scale), one could expect engagement levels to increase by .185 points.

Table 5

Regression of Engagement on External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, Perceived Political Self-Efficacy, Sex, Generation, Prior Professional Learning Experiences, and Trust at the School and System Level

Variable	b	se	95% CI	t
External Efficacy	-.007	.006	-.019, .005	-1.166
Internal Efficacy	.046	.010	.027, .065	4.689*
Political Self-Efficacy	.037	.006	.024, .049	5.638*
Sex	-.064	.017	-.096, -.031	-3.850*
Generation X	.021	.017	-.012, .054	1.279
Baby Boomer	.025	.018	-.010, .060	1.378
Professional Learning	.037	.012	.014, .061	3.185*
Trust (School Level)	.012	.011	-.009, .033	1.086
Trust (System Level)	.019	.011	-.003, .041	1.663
Intercept	-.101	.046	-.192, -.011	-2.191*

Note. $R^2 = .203$, adj. $R^2 = .193$, $F = 19.56*$, $df = 9,691$; $n = 701$.
*$p < .05$.

Research Question 2: In what, if any, educational policy engagement activities are teachers participating?

All educational policy engagement indicators were categorized into three types of engagement: electoral indicators, civic indicators, and political voice indicators. Participating in any of the three types of activities can influence various stages of the educational policy process. As a group, teachers reported high percentages of two electoral activities such as voting (71%) and persuading others how to vote (51%). Three civic activities had high percentages of participation with 84% of the teachers participating in community problem solving, 68% joining or participating in an

education-related group, and 47% volunteering for an education-related organization.

Four political voice activities also indicated moderate levels of participation: *buy*cotting

(44%), using a website, blog or social network site to voice their opinion (33%), signing

an email petition (29%), and contacting or visiting public official (26%). All findings for

research question two are presented in Figure 6.
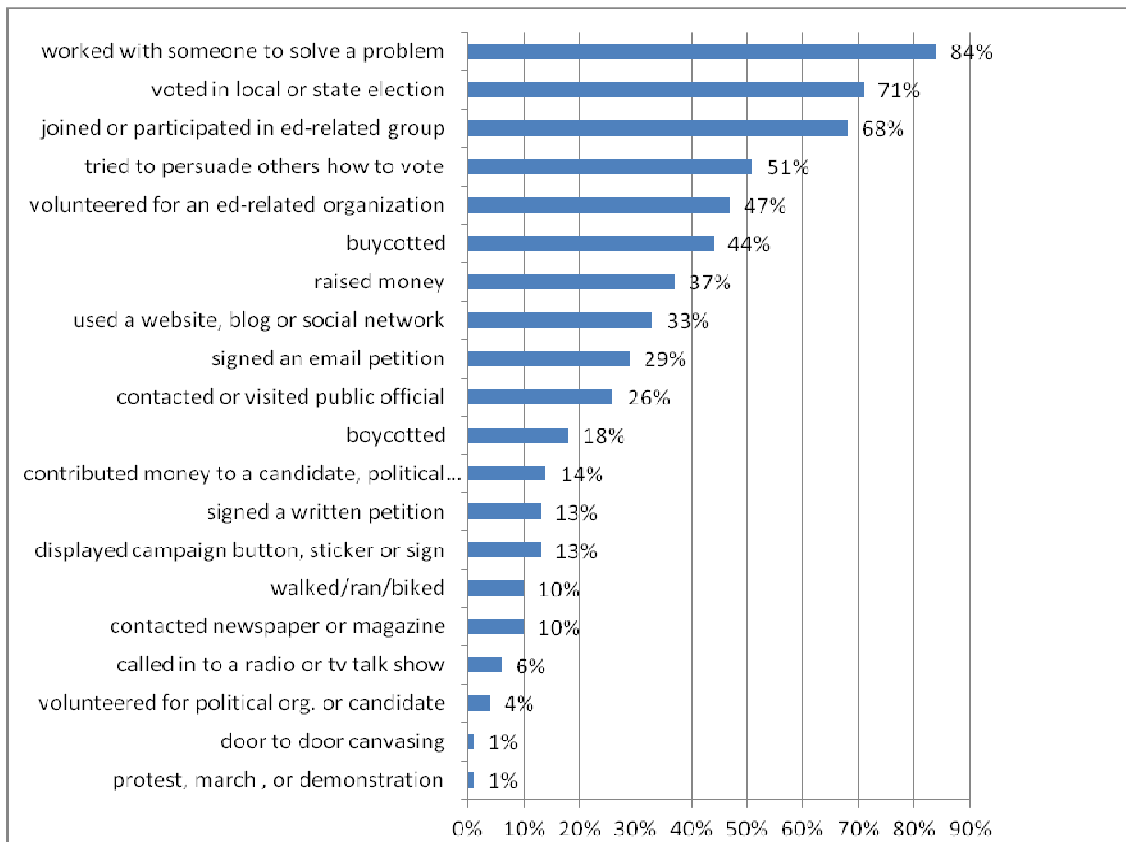
Figure 6. Teacher education-related engagement by percentage

    A comparison of the teachers' responses in both the pilot and full study to the

reported responses of the general public (see Table 6) suggests that teacher engagement

in education-related policy activities is higher than that of the general public for most

indicators. Examples of higher engagement were found in indicators such as working

with someone to solve a problem, voting in a local or state election, joining and

participating in a specific policy-related organization, and persuading others to vote.

Exceptions included displaying campaign signs, buttons, or stickers; contacting broadcast

media; protests/demonstration; signing a written petition; boycotting; door-to-door

canvassing; and running/walking/biking to raise awareness.

Table 6: *Engagement Comparison between the General Public and Teachers*

Engagement Indicator	General Public		Teachers	
	Keeter, 2002	Levine, 2007	Pilot Study	GA Study
voting	51%	26%, 56%	78%	71%
persuading others	33%	35%, 40%	62%	51%
displayed sign, button, sticker	26%	23%, 28%	15%	13%
contributing $ to campaign	13%	7%, 14%	12%	14%
volunteering for campaign/political group	6%	2%, 3%	7%	4%
contacting public officials	18%	11%, 22%	45%	26%
contacting print media	10%	7%, 11%	8%	10%
contacting broadcast media	8%	9%, 8%	4%	6%
protest/demonstration	4%	11%, 5%	9%	1%
email petition	12%	16%, 21%	39%	29%
written petition	23%	18%, 26%	17%	13%
social media (new item)			39%	33%
Boycotting	38%	30%, 38%	18%	18%
Buycotting	35%	29%, 33%	32%	44%
door-to-door canvassing	3%	3%, 2%	1%	1%
community (local) problem solving	21%	19%, 20%	87%	84%
volunteering for non-electoral organization	23%	19%, 24%	48%	47%
active membership in organization	31%	20%, 26%	63%	68%
fundraising run/walk/bike	14%	18%, 15%	9%	10%
raised money for charity (education)	31%	24%, 29%	37%	37%

Research Question 3: Is there a relationship between teachers' sex and political

efficacy?

Statistically significant relationships by sex for external political efficacy,

internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy and engagement were

calculated using *t* tests. Findings are reported in Table 7. There was a statistically

significant difference in education policy engagement scores between females and males.

There were no statistical differences, however, in external political efficacy, internal

political efficacy or perceived political self-efficacy between the sexes. Descriptive

statistics in Table 7 show that females participated in more educational policy

engagement activities than males did. Although this sample of teachers demonstrated

mean differences between the sexes in the efficacy scales, these differences can be

attributed to sampling error and probably do not reflect true population differences

between the sexes.

Table 7

Results of t-tests and Descriptive Statistics for Engagement, External Political Efficacy,
Internal Political Efficacy, and Perceived Political Self Efficacy by Sex

| Outcome | | Group | | | | | 95% CI for | | |
| | | Male | | | Female | | Mean | | |
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	Difference	t	df
Engagement	.242	.169	97	.298	.164	604	.0193, .0922	3.03*	126
External Efficacy	2.18	1.10	97	2.117	.992	604	-0.300, 0.172	-0.53	122
Internal Efficacy	4.24	0.724	97	4.187	0.671	604	-0.2131, .0975	-0.74	123
Self Efficacy	3.45	1.04	97	3.548	0.985	604	-0.126, 0.320	.86	125

* $p < .05$.

Research Question 4: Does a teacher's sex predict educational policy engagement?

The correlation coefficient between teachers' sex and engagement was calculated

($r = -.116$, $p = .00$) and found to be significant (see Table 4). The negative correlation

between sex and engagement must be interpreted within the context of the coding scheme

adopted for the variable sex where 1 = males and 0 = females. Since the correlation is

negative, this means that females had higher averages of educational policy engagement

than did males. Regression results indicate that educational policy engagement is positively and significantly related to a teacher's sex (see Table 5). The negative regression result for sex and engagement ($b_4 = -.064$) must be interpreted within the context of the coding scheme. Since the result is negative, this means females are predicted to participate more frequently in educational policy activities as measured by this instrument than males.

Research Question 5: Do generational values predict levels of professional engagement?

Results of the analysis of variance, presented in Table 8, show that there were statistically significant mean differences in levels of engagement reported among teachers from the three generations: Millennials (born approximately 1976-2004), Generation X (born approximately 1960-1981), and Baby Boomers (born approximately 1943-1964). Approximately 1% of variance in engagement in this sample is statistically related to generation with an adjusted R^2 of .008. Pairwise comparisons between the three groups were performed and results are presented in Table 9. There does not appear to be a substantial, or statistically significant, engagement difference between Generation Xers and Baby Boomers. If there were control for inflated Type 1 error rate, the difference between Generation Xers and Millennials would not be significant.

When all other variables are taken into account, regression results presented in Table 5 show no statistically significant relationship between generation and educational policy engagement activities as measured by this instrument.

Table 8

ANOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Levels of Engagement by Generation

Generation		Mean	SD	n	
Millennial		0.254	0.170	104	
Generation X		0.290	0.161	359	
Baby Boomer		0.307	0.168	238	
Source	SS	df	MS	F	
Group	0.201	2	0.100	3.69*	
Error	18.99	698	.0272		

Note. $R^2 = .01$, adj. $R^2 = 0.008$

* $p < .05$.

Table 9

Comparison of Engagement by Generation

Contrast	Estimated Mean Difference	Standard Error of Difference	95% CI of Difference
Generation X vs. Millennial	.036*	.018	.000, .072
Baby Boomer vs. Millennial	.053*	.019	.015, .091
Generation X vs. Baby Boomer	-.016	.014	.011, -.043

Note. $R^2 = .01$, adj. $R^2 = 0.008$

* $p < .05$.

Research Question 6: Does prior coursework predict teacher participation in the policy making process?

For the purpose of this questionnaire, prior coursework was measured by answering "yes" or "no" to one item: "I have taken a professional learning class or post-secondary course in the area of policy." Correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the relationship between prior course work experiences and educational policy engagement ($r = .196$, $p = .00$) and found to be statistically significant (see Table 4). Regression results in Table 5 show that educational policy engagement is positively and significantly related ($t = 3.185$, $p = .002$) to prior coursework in policy. In summary, taking coursework in policy predicts greater levels of policy engagement.

Research Question 7: Does social trust in the local school system predict levels of

professional engagement on a larger scale?

Two questions on the instrument were designed to measure teachers' trust at the

school and system level: "I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on education problems

at my school" and "I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on local and school system-

level education problems or issues." Response choices included, never or very rarely,

sometimes, and often. Calculated correlation coefficients (see Table 4) show a positive

and statistically significant relationship between educational policy engagement and trust

at the school ($r = .130$, $p = .00$) and the system-level ($r = .121$, $p = .00$). However,

regression results shown in Table 5 indicate that levels of teacher trust at the school level

and levels of trust at the system level appear to be unrelated to teacher policy engagement

activities when all other variables are taken into account.

Reliability and Validity

As described earlier, reliability coefficients were calculated for each measure.

Reliability coefficients range from 1.00 to 0.00. The closer to 1.0 the coefficient of

reliability is, the more reliable the scores. For educational research purposes, the

coefficient of reliability should be at least .70 and preferably higher (Fraenkel, Wallen, &

Hyun, 2012). The adapted measures from both the pilot study and the full study were

examined to determine internal consistency. Internal consistency examines "the extent to

which individuals who respond one way to a test item tend to respond the same way to

other items on the test" (Gall, et. al., 2007, p. 642). Since the alpha scores obtained for all

measures on both administrations of the instrument were above .7, all measures were

considered reliable for measuring their intended purpose: external political efficacy ($\alpha =$

.735, .787), internal political efficacy (α = .907, .842), perceived political self-efficacy (α = .908, .915), and educational policy engagement (α = .747, .767). Note: alpha scores reported here represent results from the pilot study and the full study, reported respectively.

Content validity of the instrument was established by reviewing the literature and analyzing the questions. A detailed item analysis was completed (see Appendix J for item analysis) to ensure that each item on the instrument matched the research questions outlined in the review of the literature. Sampling validity was completed to make sure all research questions were covered. Next, a group of experts in the field assessed the items for face validity to make sure that all questions on the instrument were appropriate for teachers. Suggestions from the focus group about the readability and ease of answering the questions were used to refine the instrument.

The instrument was then pilot tested with a group of PK-12 certified teachers (n = 309) in a non-Georgia state. The procedures of the pilot study were similar to those used in the study; correlations for demographic variables were expected to be different since the two groups are from different political climates. Analyzed correlation data from the pilot test (see Table 10) and the full study (see Table 4) were compared to the expected results from the literature review to establish construct validity. As expected from the literature review, external political efficacy produced the lowest alpha coefficient while both internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy produced higher alpha scores. Once all variables were accounted for in the regression analysis (see Tables 5 and 11), only internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy, and professional

learning were found to be significant predictors of engagement on both administrations of

the questionnaire.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Educational Policy Engagement, External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, and Perceived Political Self-Efficacy, Sex, Prior Professional Learning Experiences, and Trust at the School and System Level (Pilot Data)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Engagement	---							
2. External Efficacy	-.049	---						
3. Internal Efficacy	.329*	-.169*	---					
4. Political Self-Efficacy	.416*	.062	.378*	---				
5. Sex	-.060	.016	-.010	-.042	---			
6. Professional Learning	.300*	-.084	.155*	.215*	.051	---		
7. Trust (School Level)	.155*	.198*	.022	.203*	.026	.042	---	
8. Trust (System Level)	.255*	.219*	.022	.209*	.021	.002	.695*	---
M	.316	2.545	4.059	3.568	.181	.307	2.107	1.987
SD	.162	1.030	.916	1.020	.386	.462	.643	.693
Scale Min/Max Values	0, 1	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5	0, 1	0, 1	1 to 3	1 to 3
Cronbach's α	0.747	0.735	0.907	0.908	--	--	--	--

Note. Engagement coded Yes = 1, No = 0; Sex coded Male = 1, Female = 0; Professional Learning Coded Yes = 1, No = 0; n = 309
* $p < .05$

Table 11

Regression of Engagement on External Political Efficacy, Internal Political Efficacy, Perceived Political Self-Efficacy, Sex, Prior Professional Learning Experiences, and Trust at the School and System Level (Pilot Study)

Variable	b	se	95%CI	t
External Efficacy	-.010	.008	-.026, .006	-1.212
Internal Efficacy	.032	.010	.013, .051	3.344*
Political Self-Efficacy	.041	.009	.024, .059	4.757*
Sex	-.025	.020	-.065, .015	-1.228
Generation X	-.015	.021	-.057, .028	-.678
Baby Boomer	.011	.023	-.034, .056	.495
Professional Learning	.074	.018	.039, .109	4.203*
Trust (School Level)	-.020	.017	-.054, .014	-1.170
Trust (System Level)	.061	.016	.029, .092	3.799*
Intercept	-.031	.050	-.129, .067	-.620

Note. $R^2 = .301$, adj. $R^2 = .280$, $F = 14.290*$, df = 9,299; n = 309.
*$p < .05$.

Summary

Statistical analysis reveals that teachers' levels of engagement in the educational policy process was negatively and statistically related, at the .05 level of significance, to external political efficacy, and positively related with teachers' internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy. These results indicate that teachers who have higher levels of engagement also tend to demonstrate higher levels of internal political efficacy and lower levels of external political efficacy. There is evidence that a positive and statistically related relationship exists between teachers' levels of engagement and previous course work and levels of trust at their school and system level.

Results of the analysis of variance indicate that there were statistically significant mean differences in levels of engagement reported among teachers from the three

generations. However, regression results suggested no statistical relationship between generation and engagement when all variables were taken into consideration.

There was a statistically significant difference in education policy engagement scores between females and males. There were no statistical differences, however, in external political efficacy, internal political efficacy or perceived political self-efficacy between the sexes. Descriptive statistics show that females participated in more educational policy engagement activities than males did.

Finally, regression results indicate that educational policy engagement is positively and significantly related to internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy, sex, and prior course work in policy. Females are predicted to participate more frequently in educational policy activities as measured by this instrument than males. In summary, taking coursework in policy, having higher levels of internal political efficacy and having higher levels of perceived political self-efficacy all predict greater levels of policy engagement. Teachers' external political efficacy, generation, levels of trust at the school level, and levels of trust at the system level appear to be unrelated to teacher policy engagement activities as measured by this instrument.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This correlational study was designed to examine the predictive nature of several factors associated with PK-12 teachers' willingness to participate in the educational policy making process. Three distinct constructs were used to measure types of teacher political efficacy: external political efficacy, internal political efficacy, and perceived political self-efficacy. External political efficacy refers to one's belief that an individuals' voice can make a difference in large governmental or institutional decision making. Internal political efficacy refers to one's beliefs about his or her own ability to participate in government. Perceived political self-efficacy refers to one's own beliefs about his or her capabilities related to political participation. Both external and internal political efficacy measures have been used by political scientists since 1954. Political self-efficacy, however, is more frequently used by social cognitive theorists to measure a person's perceived capabilities. All three measures were used to report levels of teacher political efficacy. A third distinct measure was designed to capture current levels of teacher educational policy engagement. Using modern forms of engagement, a set of 20 core indicators were developed to specifically measure whether the participant completed the activity within the past 12 months. Demographic variables were used to determine possible factors influencing efficacy and engagement.

A 30 question instrument (see Appendix A for a copy of the instrument) designed to measure teacher political efficacy and engagement was administered. Although all measures were previously tested for validity and reliability, items in all four scales were

adapted to specifically measure educational policy factors rather than global politics. Therefore, adapted items were reviewed by a focus group and tested in a pilot study with 309 participants. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each subscale. The instrument was found to be reliable and subsequently administered to 701 participants. Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to determine statistical relationships among variables. An ANOVA test was completed to study the effects of generational data. t-Tests were completed to study the relationship of sex on engagement and efficacy. A regression analysis was completed to determine which variables most significantly correlated with teacher engagement. Education policy engagement indicators were analyzed to determine active teacher participation types. All data was analyzed and significant findings were reported in tables and narrative form.

Analysis of Research Findings

Statistical analysis reveals that teachers' levels of engagement in the educational policy process was negatively and statistically related, at the .05 level of significance, to external political efficacy, and positively related with teachers' internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy (research question 1). These results indicate that teachers who have higher levels of engagement also tend to demonstrate higher levels of internal political efficacy and lower levels of external political efficacy.

Based on an analysis of the reported data, teachers are participating in several educational policy engagement activities (research question 2). The top five activities were community problem solving, voting, joining an education-related organization, persuading others how to vote, and volunteering for an education-related organization.

When compared, the participation percentages for these activities were higher for teachers than the general public. This indicates that teachers are participating.

There was a statistically significant difference in education policy engagement scores between females and males (research question 3). There were no statistical differences, however, in external political efficacy, internal political efficacy or perceived political self-efficacy between the sexes. Descriptive statistics show that females participated in more educational policy engagement activities than males did (research question 4).

Results of the analysis of variance indicate that there were statistically significant mean differences in levels of engagement reported among teachers from the three generations (research question 5). However, regression results revealed no statistical relationship between generation and engagement when all variables were taken into consideration. Results of the analysis of variance indicate a positive and statistically related relationship exists between teachers' levels of engagement and previous course work (research question 6) and levels of trust at the school and system level. Regression results, however, suggested that levels of trust at the local and system level are not statistically significant when all variables were taken into consideration (research question 7).

In summary, regression results suggest that educational policy engagement is positively and significantly related to internal political efficacy, perceived political self-efficacy, and prior course work in policy. Females are predicted to participate more frequently in educational policy activities as measured by this instrument than males. Taking coursework in policy, having higher levels of internal political efficacy and

having higher levels of perceived political self-efficacy all predict greater levels of policy engagement. Teachers' external political efficacy, generation, levels of trust at the school level, and levels of trust at the system level appear to be unrelated to educational policy engagement activities.

Discussion of Research Findings

Efficacy (research question 1)

Although teachers in this study reported low levels of external efficacy (M = 2.126 out of 5), they were still willing to engage in activities such as voting (71%) and persuading others to vote (51%). However, other forms of conventional political participation indicated low levels of engagement: displaying campaign materials (13%), contributing money to a campaign (14%), and volunteering for a campaign or political group (4%). The percentage of teachers who contacted a public official for education-related reasons was higher than the general public, but it was still only 26%. Even though they are willing to contact public officials, they may still feel that no one is listening (leading to low external political efficacy scores). One pilot participant expressed this sentiment best by stating, "Teachers feel that their input is not considered or listened to. We send input to our congressmen and representatives but it always appears to fall on deaf ears."

This instrument did not distinguish between types of engagement (external types versus internal types), but rather looked at engagement as a whole. As such, no significant correlation was found between external political efficacy and engagement. It is possible that further analysis may find a correlation between external political efficacy and external types of engagement.

Despite their low external efficacy, the teachers reported high levels (M = 4.195 out of 5) of internal efficacy indicating that they believe they can make a difference. Since external political efficacy is most often associated with a person's trust in the functioning of the political system (Caprara et al., 2009), it is not surprising that teachers who distrust the system are still willing to participate as long as they have a high internal political efficacy. Their perceived political self-efficacy levels were also moderately high (M = 3.534 out of 5), indicating that teachers see themselves as *somewhat* or *mostly capable* of engaging in the process. Caprara et al. (2009) argue that a person's self-efficacy is the basis for political efficacy; unless they believe they can make a difference, there is little incentive to participate. According to the comments from the pilot study, teachers see themselves as capable but simply do not have time for greater engagement. For example, one participant wrote, "I am capable, but my responsibilities to my students and school limit the amount of time I have to devote to these types of activities. My other family and community commitments come first."

Similarly, a participant in the study emailed to say, "I felt my answers to this survey might be skewed as with all the policies in place there is no time to participate actively in getting any of them changed or having opportunity to give input." This would suggest that although educators view themselves as capable of participating, they do not feel that they have time to do so. As educational leaders, we can help teachers become more engaged by providing time and structural supports for teachers to participate. For example, leaders could invite public officials to meet with teachers rather than asking teachers to reach out to public officials.

Engagement (research question 2)

The predominate theory, as discussed in Chapter II, is that teachers do not play an active role in the educational policy making process (Cameron, 2005; Ingersoll, 200). Findings from this study, however, suggest that teachers are engaging in some political activities at higher rates than the average citizen. For example, the percentage of teachers who vote, persuade others to vote a particular way, and contact public officials was higher than the percentage of the general public for the same indicators. According to the definition given by Conway et al. (2005), teachers are *politically active*; teachers are expressing their political voices by voting, persuading others to do so, and contacting public officials for education-related reasons.

Additionally, they are involved in civic activities such as community problem solving, volunteering for non-electoral organizations, and maintaining active memberships in non-electoral organizations at rates higher than those in the general public. These findings make organizations such as the Georgia Association of Educators (GAE) and the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) a critical part of Georgia's educational policy making process. Since these organizations provide teachers with electronic legislative updates, electronic mailing lists, and access to policy makers, this could be why so many educators ranked engagement in these types of organizations as key engagement activities. This is significant for educational leaders because the teachers have identified these types of organizations as critical access points.

The question, therefore, is not are teachers participating, but are their voices being heard? We know from Cameron's (2005) and Ingersoll's (2003) studies that teachers do not feel their voices are heard. If teachers are engaging in traditional and non-traditional forms of political participation, as reported in this study, the task for educational leaders

and policy makers is making their voices count. This can be done by establishing a more effective way for teachers to directly impact the agenda setting and policy formulation processes.

Gender Ideology (research questions 3 and 4)

Females in the study reported slightly higher levels of engagement than did males. Since the majority of participants were female (86%), it is no surprise that voting was listed as the most common form of engagement since females are more likely than males to vote (Conway et al., 2005; Norris, 2001). Additionally, there was no significant difference between male and female efficacy levels (external, internal or perceived self-efficacy). Although the findings of this study contradict the literature presented in Chapter II (Conway et al., 2005; Paxton & Kunovich, 2003), other factors such as levels of education may account for this difference (Conway et al., 2005; Milligan et al., 2004). This was unexpected since Norris (2001) reported that after controlling for education levels, women in general were still less likely to participate than men. In the pilot study, sex was not a significant predictor of engagement indicating that neither males nor females engaged at rates higher than the other. Based on the findings of both studies, it can be concluded that teachers do not suffer from the "pink collar ghetto" mentality (Mastracci, 2004; Kessler-Harris, 2003; England, 1993) traditionally associated with jobs such as teaching.

Generation (research question 5)

While this study found that generational values do not predict levels of engagement, it did not analyze individual engagement indicators by generation. The engagement indicators used for this instrument (Levine, 2007; Keeter, et. al, 2001) were

intentionally chosen as a representation of engagement activities demonstrated by all generations. Therefore, the fact that no statistical difference among the generations was found supports the fact that the selected indicators reflect a balance.

Prior Coursework (research question 6)

Perhaps the most important finding from this study, teachers who had at least one course in policy indicated significantly higher levels of efficacy and engagement. This held true in both the full study and the pilot study. The finding supports Anderson's (2006) claim that people must understand the process if they wish to participate. This finding supports the literature presented in Chapter II suggesting that prior experiences and course work positively impact civic engagement (Estes et al., 2010; Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Pasek et al., 2008; Campbell, 2006; Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003; Keeter, et al., 2002).

Adding a course in education policy to undergraduate and graduate education programs of study could increase teachers' political efficacy and engagement. Additionally, educational leaders who wish to increase teachers' political efficacy and engagement could offer a professional learning course in policy. In fact, if done correctly, these courses could connect teachers with public officials (ex. guest speakers) while also fulfilling teachers' requirement for continued professional learning – since teachers reported not having time to participate, this opportunity would provide both access and time.

Trust and School Culture (research question 7)

According to the findings of this study, a teachers' willingness to express his or her own views at the school and local system level do not correlate with levels of

educational policy engagement. Despite the literature on the topic, a teacher's trust at the local level does not automatically transfer to trust of larger governmental agencies. It is possible, however, that teachers who feel there is too much bureaucracy for them to make a difference may be less willing to participate.

Conversely, the results from the pilot study indicated that trust at the system level did, in fact, predict engagement. Since the pilot study measured levels of trust and engagement in a non-Georgia school system, it may indicate that political cultures can influence engagement. Therefore, this topic should be studied further before any final conclusions are drawn about teachers as a group.

Instrument

An additional purpose of this study was to develop an instrument to measure teacher efficacy and engagement. According to the findings of this study, it may be necessary to use only the adapted Perceived- Political Self-Efficacy-Revised (P-PSE-R) scales as a way of measuring teacher internal efficacy. In both the pilot and full study, the P-PSE-R construct consistently had the highest alpha levels for internal consistency. These findings support using the P-PSE-R as a valid and reliable instrument for measuring perceived political self-efficacy. The results from this study, while specific to teachers, were similar to those found by Caprara et al. (2009) when measuring efficacy and engagement by the general public. As Morrell (2005) suggested, adapting the internal political efficacy scales to make them situation-specific produced higher alpha levels than those reported from the general public in previous studies. Therefore, it is suggested that future researchers use the adapted P-PSE-R scales to measure teacher internal self-

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efficacy or the adapted internal political efficacy scales if interested in only determining teachers' beliefs about their own ability; using both may prove unnecessary.

Conclusions

There is a positive, significant relationship between teachers' internal political efficacy and engagement; as internal political efficacy increases so does engagement. While external political efficacy does not appear to predict engagement, both internal political efficacy and perceived political self-efficacy do. As a group, Georgia teachers are willing to participate in private policy engagement activities. Their membership and involvement in educational organizations such as GAE or PAGE is critical since this is a primary form of their reported engagement. Teachers in Georgia appear to feel confident that their voices are being represented by such organizations. Their participation in professional learning or college course work related to policy significantly correlated with their levels of efficacy and engagement. As educational leaders, it is important to facilitate access to professional organizations and professional learning courses in policy if we wish to increase teacher political efficacy and engagement.

Implications

As state control over education increases, it is important to better understand the teacher's role in the educational policy making process. Since Georgia's teachers make up the largest number of employees in the education field, they can easily become the most influential policy actors. This research has provided an insight into Georgia's educational policy system by measuring teachers' levels of political efficacy and engagement. Using the results of this study as a representative sample of the entire state, educational leaders now know what activities teachers are currently involved in and

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which activities they are not. Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, educational leaders have the ability to increase teacher political efficacy and engagement by supporting teacher involvement in professional organizations, providing coursework in policy, and organizing a variety of engagement opportunities for teachers.

<div align="center">**Recommendations**</div>

Implementation for Practice

1. Educational leaders should provide opportunities for teachers to join and participate in professional organizations. This may be as simple as granting access for organization leaders to talk with the staff or granting professional leave for teachers participating in organizational events.

2. Educational leaders should provide a variety of engagement activities. This could include hosting a panel discussion with public officials or hosting a run/bike/walk event to raise awareness over a particular issue. If teachers are expected to voice their opinions, they must be provided with effective avenues for doing so. As educational leaders, we can help address this need by openly discussing the role that teachers play in the process and encouraging their participation.

3. School systems and higher educational institutions should offer at least one course in educational policy. In doing so, teachers' political efficacy and engagement is likely to increase. This course could be in the form of a college credit or a professional learning session offered by the school system.

4. Policy makers must collaborate with educators to develop a more effective means of communication. Teachers in this study report active participation yet also report

low levels of external efficacy and feelings that their voices do not matter. Teachers need to feel that their voices are being heard.

Further Research

Since this study used Simon's satisficing model of problem solving, not all potential barriers were examined. Future researchers should examine additional barriers to determine their affect on both teacher political efficacy and engagement. Studies similar to this one should also examine the perspectives of policy actors such as students, parents, administrators, and policy makers. The findings of this study suggest the need for further research in the six areas listed below.

1. Although there was not a significant correlation between social trust and engagement in general, this topic warrants further study since there was a pattern in the types of reported engagement activities between public and private support. Voting, talking to others, signing an email petition, using social networking sites, and supporting education-related organizations can be done privately. Activities such as displaying campaign propaganda, protesting, contacting print and broadcast media, and boycotting are more public displays of support. One pilot participant wrote, "Most of us feel we are restricted from becoming too involved because we're afraid we'll get in trouble with our local school board." Further research may reveal a difference in the types of participation.

2. Further research is also needed to determine whether certain generations participate in different engagement activities. Although this was beyond the scope of this study, this information could be important as Georgia's teachers age and the profession embraces new generations with different political habits. Further studies need to be conducted to determine whether there is a correlation between a person's generation and

specific types of engagement. For example, are baby boomers more likely to contact public officials and Millennials more likely to use a social network to express opinions? While this study found no significant differences in overall engagement, it did not examine individual indicators by generation.

3. As a group, Georgia's teachers reported levels of engagement lower than those of the general public for several indicators such as running/walking/biking to raise awareness. It is possible that we, as educational leaders, have not provided opportunities for teachers to participate in such activities. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies on the topic ask teachers whether they would engage in the activity if given the chance.

4. Based on comments from the pilot participants, future studies should examine reasons teachers do or do not participate.

5. Social cognitive theorists believe that perceived efficacy should be studied in two parts: individual and collective. While this study focused on individual, it may prove valuable to examine teachers as a collective group. As a group, do they see themselves as capable of participating and making a difference?

6. For future studies on this topic, it is suggested that only the adapted P-PSE-R scales be used to assess teacher political efficacy. Additionally, it is important to add a construct to measure teachers' actual educational policy knowledge. For example, teachers who reported being "better informed about educational policy than most people" were not asked any additional questions to demonstrate their actual knowledge. A follow-up question could have been "Who is the Georgia's state superintendent of education?" The additional construct assessing the person's actual knowledge of politics is commonly used by political scientists when assessing efficacy and engagement.

Concluding Thoughts

When I began researching this topic, I was surprised to find so few instruments designed to measure teacher political efficacy. Although not the purpose of this study, I am pleased to have adapted an instrument designed to measure teacher political efficacy and educational policy engagement. With such a large sample size in the pilot and full study, the analysis of the instrument itself can be useful in shaping future studies on this topic. With improvements such as those suggested in earlier sections of this paper, I believe this instrument could become a staple in the field of educational policy studies.

Based on all research prior to this study, I expected to find low levels of teacher engagement. Therefore, I was surprised to find that teachers reported such high levels of engagement. It was encouraging to see that teachers are taking active roles in policy setting. The question for me has become why do teachers feel that their voices are not being heard? What can I do as an educational leader to help bridge the gap between teachers and educational policy makers? In talking with both sides, I hear a resounding desire to make that connection. Through this research, I have learned that leaders should provide more opportunities for educators to communicate with policy makers. I have also learned that one of the most effective ways to increase active engagement is offering a college class or school system professional learning course in policy. Once teachers have been exposed to such a course, they report greater willingness to engage. As an educational leader, I plan to use this information to impact practices in my own community.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The purpose of this study is to learn more about teacher participation in educational policy setting. Data gathered from this study will be used to help educational leaders learn more about Georgia's education policy system. In this way, all teachers who participate will benefit indirectly. There is no financial compensation for your voluntary participation. The questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. All efforts have been made to ensure privacy and to protect the anonymity of responses. There is no request for personal identification information. The risks associated with completing this survey are no greater than risks associated with daily life experiences. Submission of the completed questionnaire constitutes your consent to participate.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the GSU Institutional Review Board under tracking number H12346. If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher or faculty advisor listed below. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-478-0843.

Title of Project: Examining the Association between Teacher Political Efficacy and Educational Policy Engagement

Principal Investigator: Malinda B. Cobb, mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu

Faculty Advisor: Jason LaFrance, jlafrance@georgiasouthern.edu

---

Are you employed as a PK-12 certified teacher (defined as a fully certified classroom teacher or fully certified support personnel such as a media specialist and guidance counselor)?
          YES   NO

External Political Efficacy Scale
(Campbell, et al., 1954; Niemi, et al., 1991)

Select the response that most closely reflects your perspective.
                    Disagree strongly
                    Disagree somewhat
                    Neither agree nor disagree
                    Agree somewhat
                    Agree strongly

1. I don't think public officials care much what teaches like me think.
2. Teachers like me don't have any say about what the government does.

Situation-Specific Internal Political Efficacy Scale
(Niemi, et al., 1991; Morrell, 2005)

Select the response that most closely reflects your perspective.
> Disagree strongly
> Disagree somewhat
> Neither agree nor disagree
> Agree somewhat
> Agree strongly

3. I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in the education policy process.
4. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important educational policy issues facing our country.
5. I feel I could do as good a job in the educational policy process as most other people.
6. I think that I am better informed about educational policy than most people.

Political Internal Self-Efficacy Scale
(Caprara, G.V., Vecchione, M., Capanna, C., & Mebane, M, 2009; Hammon, 2010)

For each of the items, please rate how capable you feel you are in carrying out the action or behavior as it relates to education:
> Not at all capable
> A little capable
> Somewhat capable
> Mostly capable
> Completely capable

7. Maintain relationships with representatives of state government authorities for education related purposes.
8. Play a decisive role in the choice of leaders of the political movement you support for education-related reasons.
9. Carry out an effective information campaign for the political movement or party with which you concur regarding education-related beliefs and programs.
10. Use the means you have as a citizen to critically monitor the educational policy related actions of your political representatives.

Educational Policy Engagement
(Adapted from Keeter et al., 2002 and Levine, 2007)

YES　　　　　NO

11(a). Within the past 12 months, did you vote in a local or state election?
11(b). Were your reasons for voting at least partly related to education?
12(a). Within the past 12 months, did you talk to anyone to persuade them why they should vote one way or another?
12(b). Were your reasons for persuading someone at least partly related to education?
13(a). Within the past 12 months, did you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house?
13(b). Were your reasons for campaigning at least partly related to education?
14(a). Within the past 12 months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?
14(b). Were your reasons for contributing at least partly related to education?
15(a). Within the past 12 months, did you volunteer for a political organization or candidates running for office?
15(b). Were your reasons for volunteering at least partly related to education?

For each of the actions listed below, indicate whether or not you have carried out the listed activity within the last 12 months.

YES　　　　　NO

16. Contacted or visited a public official – local or state – to ask for assistance or express your opinion about an issue related to education
17. Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue related to education
18. Called in to a radio show or television talk show to express your opinion on an issue related to education, even if you did not get on the air
19. Signed an e-mail petition about an issue related to education
20. Signed a written petition about an issue related to education
21. Used a website, blog, or social network to express your opinion on an issue related to education
22. Taken part in a protest, march or demonstration related to an education issue
23. NOT bought something because of an education-related concern associated with that company
24. BOUGHT a product or service because you like the education-related values of the company that produces it
25. Gone door to door for an issue related to education
26. Worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the school where you work
27. Volunteered for an education-related organization
28. Joined or actively participated in an education-related group or association

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29. Personally walked/ran/biked for a cause related to education
30. Raised money for a cause related to education

Please take a moment to answer a few exit questions about yourself.

Indicate your sex: Male   Female

Indicate your generation by selecting the option that best describes the events most closely associated with your childhood and young adult life.

Millennial: 9/11, Columbine, Internet
Generation X: *Challenger* disaster, Persian Gulf War, MTV
Baby Boomer: Kennedy's assassination, Vietnam, Woodstock

I have taken a professional learning class or post-secondary course work in the area of policy.

Yes   No

I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on education problems or issues at my school.

Never or very rarely
Sometimes
Often

I feel encouraged to voice my opinion on local school system-level education problems or issues.

Never or very rarely
Sometimes
Often

APPENDIX B

PILOT PARTICIPANT LETTER

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a dissertation research project developed by a doctoral candidate for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Georgia Southern University. The researcher's ultimate interest is learning more about how the teacher's voice may be elevated and made more meaningful and helpful in education public policymaking at the local and state level. For the purpose of this study, the term "education policy" refers to government laws, rules, regulations, actions, and funding priorities related to an education problem or matter of concern. Your school system was selected as one of few systems in the region to participate and represent the voice of teachers.

No personal identification information is needed or requested to achieve the objectives of this study. Electronic access to the survey instrument is through an independent web link. It is estimated that completion of the total survey will take approximately 5 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. No financial compensation will be given. Submission of a completed survey constitutes your consent to participate.

If you are willing to participate, please complete the questionnaire by clicking on the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/R8RCJ3Y.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Malinda B. Cobb

Malinda Boland Cobb
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University
mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu
706-495-5716

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

Dear Superintendent:

I am writing to you today to obtain permission to conduct a research study in your school system. I am a doctoral candidate in the educational leadership department at Georgia Southern University. The topic of my dissertation is teacher participation in educational policy setting. As a part of my study, I would like to send a brief (5-10 minute) electronic questionnaire to your teachers to assess their willingness to participate in policy setting activities. With your permission, I will give the electronic questionnaire link to an identified staff member of your choice so that it can be emailed to the teachers in your school system. Participation in the study will be completely voluntary and collected data will not contain any identifiable information. Responses will remain confidential in a secured location for three years. The risks associated with completing this questionnaire are no greater than risks associated with daily life experiences. Data gathered will be used to help educational leaders remove potential barriers and develop engagement opportunities for teachers. In this way, participants will benefit indirectly from completing the questionnaire. If you wish, I will provide you with the summary of results at the end of the data analysis.

If you are willing to allow this study to be conducted in your school system, I will contact your designated representative to ensure all requirements from your system are met.

I sincerely thank you for your support in this process. I am hopeful that the study will yield results to help leaders in the X County School System encourage teachers to actively participate in the educational policy process.

Sincerely,

Malinda B. Cobb

Malinda Boland Cobb
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University
mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu
706-495-5716

APPENDIX D

PRE-NOTIFICATION LETTER

You are invited to participate in a dissertation research project developed by a doctoral candidate for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Georgia Southern University. The researcher's ultimate interest is learning more about how the teacher's voice may be elevated and made more meaningful and helpful in education public policymaking at the local, state, and federal level.

No personal identification information is needed or requested to achieve the objectives of this study. Electronic access to the survey instrument is through an independent web link. It is estimated that completion of the total survey will take about 5 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Submission of a completed survey constitutes your consent to participate.

If you have questions about the study or the survey procedure, you may contact the researcher.

Sincerely,

Malinda B. Cobb

Malinda Boland Cobb
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University
mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu
706-495-5716

APPENDIX E

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a dissertation project developed by a doctoral candidate for the Ed.D.in Educational Leadership at Georgia Southern University. The researcher's ultimate interest is learning more about how the teacher's voice may be elevated and made more meaningful in education public policymaking at the local and state level. For the purpose of this study, the term "education policy" refers to government laws, rules, regulations, actions, and funding priorities related to an education problem or matter of concern. Your school system was selected as one of the few systems in the region to participate and represent the voice of teachers.

No personal identification is needed or requested to achieve the objectives of this study. Electronic access to the survey instrument is through an independent web link. It is estimated that completion of the total survey will take approximately 5 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. No financial compensation will be given. Submission of a completed survey constitutes your consent to participate.

If you are willing to participate, please complete the questionnaire by clicking on the following link: (LINK).

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Malinda B. Cobb

Malinda Boland Cobb
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University
mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu
706-495-5716

APPENDIX F

POST-NOTIFICATION LETTER

Dear Participant:

A few weeks ago an invitation to participate in an electronic questionnaire was emailed to you seeking your views on teachers and their role in educational policy setting. Your school system was selected as one of few systems in the state to participate and represent the voice of teachers in Georgia. If you have already completed the questionnaire, please accept my sincere thanks. If you have not yet had the opportunity to participate, please let your voice be heard by participating in the final week of the study. The questionnaire can be accessed at the following web address: (Link).

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Malinda B. Cobb

Malinda Boland Cobb
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University
mc02446@georgiasouthern.edu
706-495-5716

APPENDIX G

PILOT OPEN-ENDED, OPTIONAL RESPONSES

Instead of teachers like me don't have any say about what the government does---
Teachers feel that their input is not considered or listened to. We send input to our
congressmen and representatives but it always appears to fall on deaf ears.

Easy to understand but leading towards "teachers need more political clout". This may
be true but we have had lots of political clout for years but it has been so leftist that it has
ruined public education. Hopefully, teachers getting involved in the policy-making
process means a return to policies that actually worked until teachers became tools for
leftists.

None were difficult or confusing to me.   However, if the researcher is evaluating
political aptitude, they may misunderstand my responses. Available time, rather than
political aptitude, is the main factor affecting several of my answers for question 3 and 4.

No, but I think there should some clarification as to what public officials mean. What
level of government are you referring to?

Define "capable." I am capable, but my responsibilities to my students and school limit
the amount of time I have to devote to these types of activities. My other family and
community commitments come first.

Maintaining relationships (or getting in touch with) with reps isn't the problem...response
and action from them is...

I think a couple of these questions should be switched to have you ever and not just in the
last 12 months. I have been to a protest but not in the last 12 months.

Teachers who are busy doing their jobs do not have time for this sort of thing.

"Raised money for a cause related to education" - paid a large amount of taxes to pay for
post-"stimulus" superfluous positions

Most of us feel we are restricted from becoming too involved because we're afraid we'll
get in trouble with our local school board. They don't want any negative actions by
faculty. You should ask why we don't do some of the activities listed.

APPENDIX H

ADAPTED 20 CORE INDICATORS OF ENGAGEMENT

Keeter et al. (2002) Indicator	Levine (2007)	Adapted Indicator
(No stem given)	For each of the actions listed below, indicate whether you have carried out the listed activity. Yes or No	For each of the actions listed below, indicate whether you have carried out the listed activity within the last 12 months: Yes or No
Can you tell me how often you vote in local and national elections? Always, sometimes, rarely, or never?	Regular voter	Vote in a local or state election? Were your reasons for voting at least partly related to education?
When there is an election taking place do you generally talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates, or not?	Tried to persuade others in an election	Talk to anyone to persuade them why they should vote one way or another? Were your reasons for persuading someone at least partly related to education?
Do you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house, or aren't these things you do?	Displayed a campaign button or sign	Wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house? Were your reasons for campaigning at least partly related to education?
In the past 12 months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?	Donated money to a candidate or party (last 12 months)	Contribute money to a candidate, political party, or any organization that supported candidates? Were your reasons for contributing at least partly related to education?
Did you volunteer for a political organization or candidates running for office?	Regular volunteer for political candidates or groups	Volunteer for a political organization or candidate running for office? Were your reasons for volunteering at least partly related to education?

Have you done this in the last 12 months, or not? Contacted or visited a public official – at any level of government – to ask for assistance or to express your opinion?	Contacted an official (last 12 months)	Contacted or visited a public official – local or state – to ask for assistance or express your opinion about an issue related to education
Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue?	Contacted the print media (last 12 months)	Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue related to education
Called in to a radio or television talk show to express your opinion on a political issue, even if you did not get on the air?	Contacted the broadcast media (last 12 months)	Called in to a radio show or television show to express your opinion on an issue related to education, even if you did not get on the air
Signed an e-mail petition?	Signed an email petition (last 12 months)	Signed an email petition about an issue related to education
Signed a written petition about a political or social issue?	Signed a paper petition (last 12 months)	Signed a written petition about an issue related to education
		Used a website, blog, or social network to express your opinion on an issue related to education
Taken part in a protest, march or demonstration?	Protested (last 12 months)	Taken part in a protest, march or demonstration related to an education issue
NOT bought something because of conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it?	Boycotted (last 12 months)	NOT bought something because of an education-related concern associated with that company
Bought a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it.	Buycotted (last 12 months)	BOUGHT a product or service because you like the education-related values of the company that produces it
Have you ever worked as a canvasser – having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate?	Canvassed (last 12 months)	Gone door to door for an issue related to education

Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live? IF YES, Was this in the last 12 months or not?	Community problem solving (last 12 months)	Worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the school where you work
Have you ever spent time participating in any community service or volunteering	Volunteered in the last 12 months (any type)	Volunteered for an education-related organization
Do you belong to or donate money to any groups or associations, either locally or nationally? Are you an active member of this group/any of these groups, a member but not active, or have you given money only?	Active member of at least 1 group	Joined or actively participated in an education-related group or association
Have you done these things in the past twelve months: personally walked, ran or bicycled for a charitable cause – this is separate from sponsoring or giving money to this type of event?	Ran/walked/biked for charity (last 12 months)	Personally walked/ran/biked for a cause related to education
Have you ever done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?	Raised money for charity (last 12 months)	Raised money for a cause related to education

.

APPENDIX I

ELECTORAL INDICATORS WITH FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

PI1a	Within the past 12 months, did you vote in a local or state election?
PI1b	Were your reasons for voting at least partly related to education?
PI2a	Within the past 12 months, did you talk to anyone to persuade them why they should vote one way or another?
PI2b	Were your reasons for persuading someone at least partly related to education?
PI3a	Within the past 12 months, did you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house?
PI3b	Were your reasons for campaigning at least partly related to education?
PI4a	Within the past 12 months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?
PI4b	Were your reasons for contributing at least partly related to education?
PI5a	Within the past 12 months, did you volunteer for a political organization or candidates running for office?
PI5b	Were your reasons for volunteering at least partly related to education?

APPENDIX J

INSTRUMENT ITEM ANALYSIS

Item	Research	Research Question
1. Public officials don't care	Niemi et al., 1991; Campbell et al., 1954	1
2. Teachers have no say	Niemi et al., 1991; Campbell et al., 1954	1
3. Well-qualified to participate	Morrell, 2005; Niemi et al., 1991	1
4. Good understanding of issues	Morrell, 2005; Niemi et al., 1991	1
5. Could do as good a job as most	Morrell, 2005; Niemi et al., 1991	1
6. Better informed than most	Morrell, 2005; Niemi et al., 1991	1
7. Maintain relationships	Hammon, 2010; Caprara et al., 2009	1
8. Play decisive role	Hammon, 2010; Caprara et al., 2009	1
9. Information campaign	Hammon, 2010; Caprara et al., 2009	1
10. Critically monitor	Hammon, 2010; Caprara et al., 2009	1
11. Voted	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
12. Persuade someone to vote	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
13. Campaign button, sticker or sign	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
14. Contribute money for candidates	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
15. Volunteer for political organization or candidates	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
16. Contacted public official	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
17. Contacted newspaper or magazine	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
18. Called in to a radio or TV talk show	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
19. Signed an email petition	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
20. Signed a written petition	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
21. Website, blog or social network	Levine, 2007	2
22. Protest, march or demonstration	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
23. Boycotted for education	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
24. Buycotted for education	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
25. Door to door canvassing	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
26. Worked to solve a problem	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
27. Volunteered for education organization	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
28. Joined education organization	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
29. Walked/ran/biked	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
30. Raised money for education	Levine, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002	2
31. Sex	Conway et al., 2005; Paxton & Kunovich, 2003	3, 4
32. Generation	Howe & Nadler, 2009; Keeter et al., 2002	5

33. Professional Learning	Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2004	6
34. Trust at school level	Levine, 2007; Putnam, 2000	7
35. Trust at system level	Levine, 2007; Putnam, 2000	7

APPENDIX K

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-478-0843		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719	IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

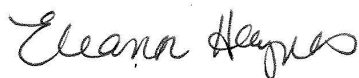| **To:**	Malinda Cobb
	Dr. Jason LaFrance
CC:	Charles E. Patterson
	Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College
From:	Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
	Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
	(IACUC/IBC/IRB)
Initial Approval Date:	03/05/12; Amended date 3/9/12
Expiration Date:	05/30/12
Subject:	Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered **H12346** titled **"Examining the Association Between Teacher Political Efficacy and Educational Policy Engagement,"** it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable. You are authorized to enroll up to a maximum of **5369** subjects.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research to be conducted in the following school districts: Lexington County, Burke County, Richmond County, Saluda County, Jefferson County, and Emanuel County. (Provide a letter of cooperation from the appropriate county official to amend additional districts onto this study).

If at the end of this approval period there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period. Total project approval on this application may not exceed 36 months. If additional time is required, a new application may be submitted for continuing work. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior** to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

APPENDIX L

IRB AMMENDMENT LETTER

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**	
Phone: 912-478-5465	Veazy Hall 2021 P. O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719 IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460-8005

To: Malinda Cobb
                 Dr. Jason LaFrance

Cc: Charles E. Patterson
                 Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
                 Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
                 (IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: 04/10/12

Initial
Approval
Date: 03/05/12

Expiration
Date: 05/30/12

Subject: Status of Research Study Modification Request – Exempt

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After a review of your Research Study Modification Request on research project numbered **H12346** and titled **"Examining the Association Between Teacher Political Efficacy and Educational Policy Engagement,"** it appears that your research modification does not change the conditions of your previous exemption. The research involves activities that do not require approval by the Institutional Review Board according to federal guidelines.

Modification Description: Added Columbia County School System as data collection site.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that your research is exempt from IRB approval. You may proceed with the proposed research.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

APPENDIX M

IRB RENEWAL EXTENSION APPROVAL

Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-478-0843		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719	IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Malinda Cobb
Dr. Jason LaFrance

cc: Charles E. Patterson
Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: 04/26/12

**Initial Approval
Date:** 03/05/12

**Expiration
Date:** 04/30/13

Subject: Status of Renewal Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in
Research

After a review of you extension request for research project numbered **H12346** and titled **"Examining the Association Between Teacher Political Efficacy and Educational Policy Engagement,"** it appears that your research involves activities …

…remain unchanged and approval will be extended for an additional 12 month approval period.

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt under the following exemption category(s):

B2   Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (I) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (II) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that your research is exempt from IRB approval. **You may proceed with the proposed research.**

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

PILOT AND STUDY RESPONSES FOR POLITICAL EFFICACY ITEMS

External Political Efficacy	Disagree Strongly		Disagree Somewhat		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree Somewhat		Agree Strongly	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
I don't think public officials care much what teachers like me think	3	4	16	13	9	6	**44**	**48**	23	29
Teachers like me don't have any say about what the government does	9	3	28	15	8	7	**44**	**41**	11	34

Internal Political Efficacy	Disagree Strongly		Disagree Somewhat		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree Somewhat		Agree Strongly	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in the educational policy process	3	1	5	2	9	7	38	33	**45**	**55**
I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important educational policy issues facing our country	2	1	4.5	2.5	4.5	2.5	44	**48**	**45**	44
I feel I could do as good a job in the educational policy process as most other people	4	1	9	3	12	12	35	**45**	**40**	39
I think I am better informed about educational policy than most people	3	1	13	5	15	25	**36**	**43**	33	26

Note: P = pilot study (*n* = 309), S = dissertation study (*n* = 701); all scores are reported in percentages; highest percentages for each item are printed in bold-faced type to highlight patterns in participant responses

Perceived Political Self-Efficacy	Not at all Capable		A little Capable		Somewhat Capable		Mostly Capable		Completely Capable	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Maintain relationships with representatives of state government authorities for education related purposes	4	5	18	14	**28**	29	24	**31**	26	21
Play a decisive role in the choice of leaders of the political movement or party with which you concur regarding education-related beliefs and programs	3	4	13	10	21	26	**31.5**	**34**	**31.5**	26
Carry out an effective information campaign for the political movement or party with which you concur regarding education-related beliefs and programs	10	8	18	14	**27.5**	**31**	**27.5**	**31**	17	16
Use the means you have as a citizen to critically monitor the educational policy related actions of your political representatives	4	4	10	11	21	27	**34**	**34**	31	24

Note: P = pilot study (*n* = 309), S = dissertation study (*n* = 701); all scores are reported in percentages; highest percentages for each item are printed in bold-faced type to highlight patterns in participant responses