An Investigative Look at Plans for Implementation of Canadian Teacher Codes of Conduct & Ethics

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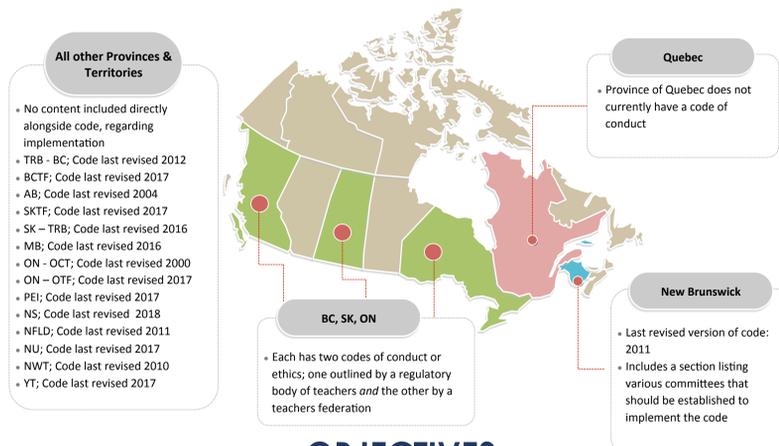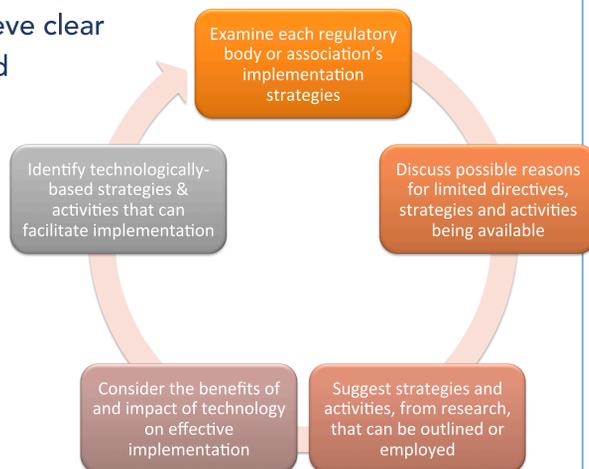
INTRODUCTION

In each Canadian province or territory, a regulatory body or teachers' association is responsible for certifying, governing or disciplining educators who work within a publicly-funded school system. One key aspect of governance for teachers and educators includes the application of codes of conduct or ethics ("codes") that outline the behavioural or ethical standards and expectations for the teaching profession. In tandem with the codes, plans for how to effectively implement them is the next and most important aspect to consider. While teacher codes can be found online at a regulatory body's website, only one of the ten provinces and three territories considered, provided content concerning implementation of the codes directly alongside their code of ethics. This research investigates what implementation directives, strategies and/or activities ("strategies") are prepared and publicly available for school administrators and teachers to use to ensure thorough understanding and proper application of the codes in everyday settings.

All other Provinces & Territories

- No content included directly alongside code, regarding implementation
- TRB - BC; Code last revised 2012
- BCTF; Code last revised 2017
- AB; Code last revised 2004
- SKTF; Code last revised 2017
- SK – TRB; Code last revised 2016
- MB; Code last revised 2016
- ON - OCT; Code last revised 2000
- ON – OTF; Code last revised 2017
- PEI; Code last revised 2017
- NS; Code last revised 2018
- NFLD; Code last revised 2011
- NU; Code last revised 2017
- NWT; Code last revised 2010
- YT; Code last revised 2017

Quebec

- Province of Quebec does not currently have a code of conduct

BC, SK, ON

- Each has two codes of conduct or ethics; one outlined by a regulatory body of teachers *and* the other by a teachers federation

New Brunswick

- Last revised version of code: 2011
- Includes a section listing various committees that should be established to implement the code
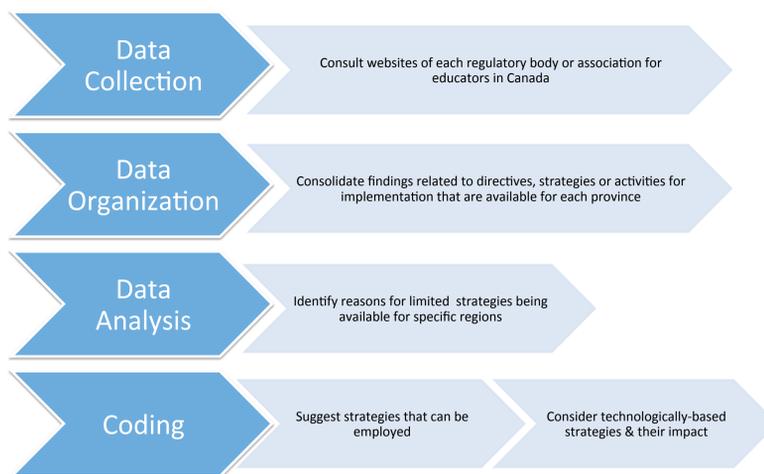
OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is to investigate exactly what each regulatory body or association for educators provides or outlines concerning implementation; to examine possible reasons behind limited directives, strategies or activities that could promote effective implementation of the codes; to suggest, from research, strategies and activities that have been developed and that could be employed to achieve clear understanding and appropriate application of the codes; and to highlight technologically-based strategies that can also be used to facilitate effective implementation.

- Examine each regulatory body or association's implementation strategies
- Discuss possible reasons for limited directives, strategies and activities being available
- Suggest strategies and activities, from research, that can be outlined or employed
- Consider the benefits of and impact of technology on effective implementation
- Identify technologically-based strategies & activities that can facilitate implementation

METHODOLOGY

By conducting this research, we identified what is in place to achieve effective implementation of the current codes, and we substantiated the need for plans, directives, strategies, and activities; as a means of effective implementation of codes. To create a theory based on the parameters mentioned, taking a Grounded Theory approach is logical and likely to be most effective.

Data Collection	Consult websites of each regulatory body or association for educators in Canada
Data Organization	Consolidate findings related to directives, strategies or activities for implementation that are available for each province
Data Analysis	Identify reasons for limited strategies being available for specific regions
Coding	Suggest strategies that can be employed — Consider technologically-based strategies & their impact

By using a Grounded Theory approach, the initial judgments, ideas and conclusions found through this research, followed by some future work of personal interviews, will culminate in a theory or concept upon which the provision of directives, strategies or activities for effective implementation, can be based.

FINDINGS

- Several regulatory bodies or associations for teachers lack specific strategies and/or activities
- Ontario, through the Ontario College of Teachers currently leads in providing directives, strategies and activities that are publicly available to teachers and which relate to the effective implementation of codes
- PEI and NWT provide their codes and any content regarding implementation through a membership portal that requires credentials which are inaccessible to the general public
- Technologically-based options that facilitate effective implementation include:
  - Online webinars
  - Online Modules
  - Instructional Videos
  - Narrative-based personal interview videos
  - Virtual Scenario Games with adjustable outcomes
  - Online articles
- Limitations of the research

- Implementation content located elsewhere from codes
- Implementation strategies not always or only demonstrated via online (refer to individual boards/schools)
- Implementation content inaccessible to general public

Limitations of this Research

FINDINGS CONTINUED

Table 1. Search results of strategies and activities that are available and can facilitate effective implementation of codes for twelve* Canadian provinces and territories. Check marks indicate that the specific strategy or activity was found/ available to teachers.

12 Canadian Regions* >>	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	NB	NS	NFLD	PEI	NU	NWT	YT
*Directive** alongside code*					✓							
Detailed Handbook/ Booklet (+3 pages)		i/a	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Interactive Material	✓				✓							
Non-prescriptive tone					✓							
Consultative development												
*Up to date***				✓	✓		✓		✓			
Searchability		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					Code = i/a
"Examples in Practice"	✓				✓							
Monitoring / Accountability / Regulation / Discipline Procedure	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Accessibility				✓	✓							
Stylized writing												
Demographic-specific / Culturally Relevant												
Community distribution												
Workshops / AQ Courses / Training					✓				✓			
Case Studies	✓				✓							
Teacher-developed ie. Feedback/ solutions/ content	✓				✓				✓			
PLC / Dialogue	✓											

*Quebec does not have a code of conduct available
** Directive - Official instruction intended to guide, govern, or influence
*** Revised within the last two years

CONCLUSIONS

◆ Noteworthy implementation strategies from various provinces:

- Professional Advisories produced to target specific topics and issues that impact — **Ontario College of Teachers**
- Surveys and Town Hall Forums held to receive feedback concerning codes — **Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board**
- Interactive page questions and case studies — **British Columbia Teacher Regulation Branch**
- Implementation directives included alongside code of ethics — **New Brunswick Teachers' Association**

◆ Conducting this research will lead to theory development that substantiates the need for implementation plans, directives, strategies and activities to ensure that teacher codes of conduct or ethics are understood and applied

◆ Most Canadian teachers have access to various strategies or activities that can help them to understand and apply codes of conduct more effectively

◆ Use and provision of all uncheck-marked strategies and activities (in 'Findings') should be discussed in personal interviews (as part of future research) to obtain a more reliable and first-hand indication of what is being done, that may not be possible to demonstrate online

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Interviews of school administrators, pre- and in-service teachers and other education-related personnel, about their understanding of, application of and experience with codes of conduct and their opinions about implementation of said codes

- Analyze data to develop a theory that supports the general idea of providing strategies and the establishment of specific strategies that will facilitate effective implementation of teacher codes of conduct or ethics.