Methodology Example -- Interviews

The most effective way for this point to be proven is to speak directly to teachers to ask them about their overall efficacy and their thoughts on how important they think Internet technology is. This will have to be done on a small scale because there is not enough time to conduct a more in depth research design, so what will work well is interviews. An interview will provide the answers to these questions and even though a study like this is on a much smaller scale, it is a start. Before discussing the interviews and the process itself, this thesis will discuss the district and the High School from which the sample respondents were chosen from.

A school district located in a more poverty stricken area will probably not have access to technology, as easily as districts in more affluent areas. In order for this to work the interviews must be conducted in an area that has access to the internet and various types of technologies. The Hacienda La Puente Unified School District covers a wide area, and there are quite a few schools in this school district. The majority of the schools in this district are pretty well off, while there are a few that are in areas with much lower income. For the 2014-2015 school year they had 19,642 students enrolled in the district with 27 being American Indian, 2,422 being Asian, 195 being Black or African American, 349 being Filipino, 15,752 being Hispanic or Latino, 66 being Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2 none reported, 118 with two or more races, and 711 being White (ed-data.org). The district has a fairly high attendance rate with an Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of 19,260 (ed-data.org). There are 14,982 students eligible for the free/reduced price meals, and there are 3,905 students that were classified as English learners (ed-data.org). The district has pretty low ethnic diversity with a score of 22 on the Ethnic

Diversity Index (ed-data.org). The average class size is about 27, and the majority of the schools in the district are elementary schools which is 23, there are 4 middle schools, 4 high schools, 2 special education schools, and 1 continuation school (ed-data.org).

The most middle ground school in this district will probably have to be Los Altos High School, which is located in Hacienda Heights. There were 2,061 students enrolled in the 2014-2015 school year, with 1,710 being Hispanic or Latino, 165 being Asian, 26 being Black or African American, 14 being Filipino, 8 Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 1 None reported, 4 with two or more races, and 131 White (ed-data.org). There were 1,318 students eligible for free/reduced price meals (ed-data.org). There were 98 students classified as English learners, and 45 were redesignated as Fluent English Proficient (ed-data.org). This school was lower on the Ethnic Diversity Index with a score of 19 (ed-data.org). The average class size was 27 during the 2011-2012 school year (ed-data.org). This covers the demographics of the school but the demographics of the city is necessary as well.

Hacienda Heights had a population of 54,038 according to the 2010 Census (city-data.com). The male population is 25,906 which is 47.9%, while the female population is 28,132 which is 52.1% (city-data.com) The median resident age is 41.0 years while the California median age is 35.7 (city-data.com). The zip codes in this city are 91745, and 91748 with an average household income of $74,942 which is up from $59,485 in 2000 also the average in California was $60,190 (city-data.com). The estimated median house or condo value in 2013 was $485,800 which is up from $221,800 in 2000), while the California median was $373,100 (city-data.com). Lastly the median gross rent in 2013 was $1,588 (city-data.com). This area diverse and it sits in the above average area for

California so, the schools should be sort of well off. Another reason for choosing this school is because I attended this high school, and I have personal knowledge on how well off that school is. As well as being able to make the interview setup process easier since most of the teachers should still remember me. Next, I will talk about my interview respondents.

As for the people that will be interviewed it will be split down the middle between three males and three females. This is a matter of fairness, and if the majority of the interviews are males then the results can be skewed in one direction, and vice versa. This is the safest route to take and the six interviews will be split once again by age this time. The first pair will be one male and one female, both of which will hopefully be relatively new to their career as a teacher. The second pair will also be one male and female, and this group will consist of two teachers that have around 10-15 years of experience. The last pair will again be a male and female, and this group will hopefully be on the verge of retiring or at least 25+ years of experience.

The reason for each of these groups is to have a wide range of teachers to work with, especially since it is such a small group. The first pair since they have little to no experience in the field of being a teacher will hopefully be the most technologically savvy. Since they should be close to age of 21-25 they will hopefully be the most knowledgeable on technology, and they will hopefully be the group that embraces it. This is not a guarantee though, and if they do not know how to use technology to its full capabilities this is not a bad finding either.

The second group of teachers will hopefully be a little less knowledgeable with Internet and technology but they will hopefully be aware of its benefits. The interviews

will hopefully yield results that show that teachers who are into their careers are still aware of ongoing tools which will assist their teaching and the overall learning process of the students. This group of teachers will hopefully use the Internet and technology but very sparsely. This again is not a guarantee and this group can prove that they are very technologically savvy, and this will be good because it can potentially show that whatever was done to these teachers need to be done to newer teachers.

The last pair of teachers will hopefully be out of touch with technology, and they will hopefully not use it at all. They will actually kind of despise technology and purposefully avoid using it. Either out of spite of ongoing changes, or because they are too stubborn to learn how to use this valuable tool. What this will show is that older generations will also need to be taught how to use technology as well since there really is no avoiding it. Again this could be completely turned around and the older generation will be the most technologically savvy. This will be beneficial because it can show that if people that are older are willing to use and learn something as valuable as the internet and various technologies, other age groups should as well.

Each interview is around 10-20 minutes and there will is fifteen questions that will be asked. These questions were tested beforehand in order to account for problems. After they are revised a formal interview will be conducted with each of the teachers, one on one. In order for the interviews to have taken place there was a lot of work that needed to happen beforehand. Since these were formal interviews I needed to contact administration first before anything else could happen. I went to the school January 7th, and I talked to the Vice Principal to see if I could set up interviews with some of the staff. We discussed my project and he provided me with a list of potential interviewees and

their email addresses. I then emailed all of the potential interviewees via the school website since, it had all their emails available online. I waited a week and I did not receive any response which is to be expected since the school year had just started. After that week I emailed them all again, and on January the 14th I got a response back and the first interview was scheduled for January 19th. On the 19th I was able to catch one of the teachers and set up another interview for the next day which is the 20th. At that point it had been two weeks with no response from any of the other teachers so I emailed them a third time on the 21st, but I knew that would not be enough. I then printed out all of the emails that I had sent out, and made them into formal letters which I sealed in envelopes and dropped all the letters off individually in each teacher's box at the school. The response rate was much quicker this time around, and I was able to set up two interviews for the 25th of January and the last two on the 28th of January. In the end there were still a handful of teachers who did not respond to either my letter or emails, and I contacted 14 teachers and only got responses from about 8 of them. I did have to decline two of the teachers since I had already reached my maximum amount of interviews.

This is the most effective research design for this project only because of the lack of resources and time. The problem with interviews is that the results can be all over the place. Which is something that could be avoided if a more formal survey would be conducted. Another problem with this research design is that it is only focused on a small area, and the overall goal of this essay is to prove that federal legislation needs to be passed to make Internet and technology part of the curriculum. This research design will hopefully have high internal validity, and will hopefully yield the results that we are looking for.