DECIDING TO IMPLEMENT THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME: A CASE STUDY

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

Signed: _____

Sanjay Lalwani

Date: **11 November 2019**

STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION

The completion of this thesis has taken a few years. As I near the end, I have the opportunity to acknowledge the generosity of a number of people who have helped, supported and encouraged me.

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KEYWORDS

International Baccalaureate
Primary Years Programme
Decision-making
Problem-solving
Educational Leadership
Problem-based Methodology
Case Study

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACRCR	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
ACU	Australian Catholic University
DP	Diploma Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
IB	International Baccalaureate
ISC	International Schools Consultancy
MPEG	Motion picture experts group format
MYP	Middle Years Programme
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NSECHR	National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBM	Problem-based methodology
PDF	Portable document format
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PYP	Primary Years Programme
SATS	Standardised Assessment Tasks (National Curriculum Assessment)
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
USB	Universal Serial Bus
UK	United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Globally, decision makers in an increasing number of schools from the governmental, non-governmental, and international sectors are making the decision to change their curriculum and pedagogical frameworks to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes (Booth, 2015; Doherty, 2009; Gough, Sharpley, Vander Pal & Griffiths, 2014; IB, 2019a; Marshall, 2014). The IB is an international education foundation which provides a continuum of four education programmes for primary, middle and secondary years of schooling. While the IB Diploma Programme (for the 16 to 19 age group) is the oldest, most established and widely recognised of the IB programmes, it is the Primary Years Programme, catering for the 3 to 12 age group, which has shown the greatest growth, at approximately 8%, in the past ten years (IB, 2019a).

With the aim of providing a better understanding of why and how school decision makers are deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme than is currently available, the phenomenon was investigated through the following research question:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

The investigation was a qualitative, single-site case study, which allowed for an analysis of the context in which the site was located, and employed problem-based methodology (Robinson, 1993) as a framework through which the decision makers' actions, their personal and contextual constraints, and the consequences of those actions, could be viewed, and a theory of action be produced. By relying on interview and document data, and employing constant comparative analysis, categories and themes were generated which then allowed for the development of a theory of action for the decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

The findings of the study indicate that although the reasons for implementing the Primary Years Programme at this site aligned with the reasons reported in the existing literature, the circumstances of the school played a far larger part in the decision than has been previously reported. It was also found that the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme was far more complex and intricate than reported in existing literature. The

process involved a number of actions on the part of the decision makers which were designed to prepare the Elementary School to make the decision to implement the programme. These findings suggest that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme can only be understood in the context in which it is made. It is envisaged that the findings of this study can be drawn upon by school decision makers who are currently considering the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, as well as the IB consultants who assist interested schools through the Primary Years Programme authorisation process.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

For the past twenty years I have been a classroom teacher in international schools and have gained a familiarity with a variety of national and international curricula. My last teaching role was as a primary classroom teacher at a three-programme International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. That experience granted me an insight into the IB and its programmes. More recently, I embarked on postgraduate studies in the leadership of teaching and learning and became interested in educational research. Throughout my postgraduate studies I had kept track of the developments within IB Education and observed that a number of schools, in a wide variety of contexts, were deciding to implement the IB Primary Years Programme. My curiosity was sparked. I wanted to understand more about why this decision was being made. My curiosity about this decision to implement the Primary Years Programme provided the foundation on which this Master of Philosophy study was built.

A review of recent statistics demonstrated that there has been a significant global upsurge in the number of schools from the governmental, non-governmental and international sectors that have decided to implement one or more of the IB programmes (Booth, 2015; Doherty, 2009; Gough, Sharpley, Vander Pal & Griffiths, 2014; IB, 2019a; Marshall, 2014). While the IB Diploma Programme is the most widely recognised and implemented, it is the IB Primary Years Programme curriculum framework which has shown the greatest uptake (at approximately 8% annual growth) in the past decade (IB, 2019a).

Research has shown that that existing contemporary literature does not fully explain why and how school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme. The majority of the corpus of the research literature has focused on the leadership of, and challenges experienced during the implementation process itself, rather than the reasons and processes behind making the decision to implement the programme. The limited number of studies which do investigate the decision to implement an IB programme (other than the Diploma Programme) have either focused on the IB Middle Years Programme alone or have presented

the reasons to offer the Middle Years Programme or the Primary Years Programme as simple lists of programme features, without providing a depth of investigation or substantive elaboration. Even less literature has been found which addresses, in any substantive way, the process of making this decision. Moreover, all these studies, the majority of which are IB funded, are quickly becoming dated. Given the potential impact, risks and consequences associated with deciding to enact this significant curriculum change, it is of concern that there is only limited independent empirical inquiry that seeks to explain why and how a growing number of school decision makers are making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

This study, therefore, is situated at the intersection of a number of complex notions including school curriculum, the world of IB Education, and school leadership and decision-making. In the next section the literature concerning the school curriculum and its importance is discussed. This is followed by the presentation of information concerning the IB and its provision of international education programmes. Both of these areas contribute elements that underpin this study, and their inclusion here aims to assist the reader in positioning themselves with the relevant background knowledge and understanding from which to approach the reading of this thesis. A description of the research problem and purpose, and the research question which has been adopted to guide this study then follows. This chapter concludes with a chapter-by-chapter outline of the thesis.

THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Understanding of school curriculum has contributed to the conceptualisation of this study and, consequently, there is a need to clarify how these understandings have provided the background for this study. The definition of school curriculum has been the focus of great debate for well over a century and continues to be vigorously argued (Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead & Boschee, 2018; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017). Breault and Marshall (2010) suggest that the definition of curriculum does not just come from scholars, theorists or practitioners, but that ‘every pedagogue, parent, pundit, policy maker and politician’ (p. 179) has a definition. Given this situation, there is little wonder that confusion continues. From early on, curriculum and its importance in the school context has been recognised and generally agreed upon. It has been acknowledged as the ‘life and programme of the school’ (Rugg, 1947, p. 14), at ‘the very core’ (Eisner, 1984, p. 209), and more recently, as ‘the heart’ (Null, 2016, p. 1) of

education. It was observed almost seventy years ago that this centrality of school curriculum is in accordance with its status as it is a reflection of society's beliefs, values, attitudes and actions (Smith, Stanley & Shores, 1950). Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995) more recently expanded on this observation by stating that the school curriculum is:

> … intensely historical, political, racial, gendered, phenomenological, autobiographical, aesthetic, theological and international … [it is] the site on which the generations struggle to define themselves and the world … [it] is what the older generation chooses to tell the younger (pp. 847-848).

To bring currency and clarity to the discussion, Ornstein and Hunkins (2017) offer four basic notions for curriculum:

- Curriculum as a plan for attaining the goals of education;
- Curriculum as the complete experiences of the learner;
- Curriculum as a field of study; and,
- Curriculum as subject matter (pp. 8-9).

Important for this study is an understanding of school curriculum as it is the curriculum framework of the IB Primary Years Programme that is at the foundation of this study. The definition of school curriculum advanced by Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014) forms the basis of the Australian Curriculum and brings clarity for Australian practitioners in the field of education. Curriculum is described as:

> Official documents that detail what is to be taught and how it should be assessed; approaches to teaching, learning and assessment; additional co-curricular activities; the hidden curriculum; the way staff and students interact and relate to each other; school values and overall environment; and, how the school relates to the wider community (p. 13).

By placing their definition of the school curriculum at the beginning of their *Review of the Australian Curriculum*, Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014) clearly intend it to be easily accessible and commonly understood by all. This may directly relate to the heightened regulation and accountability experienced by education systems internationally (Priestley & Philippou, 2019). It is probable that without a curriculum framework, such as defined by Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014) above, any school would face a crisis, being unable to define itself, its educational foundations, purpose, mission, goals, function and place. Therefore, changing the curriculum, a core element of any school, is not easy (Dunn, 2015). It is claimed that the 28th President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, on discovering the difficulties associated with school curriculum change, said, 'It is easier to change the location of a cemetery, than to change the

school curriculum' (quoted by Miles, 2016, p. 178). Moreover, when school decision-makers decide to change the curriculum, they must do so with extreme caution, as changing this foundational element has a huge potential to impact the very fabric of a school (Dunn, 2015).

Such is the importance of the school curriculum, therefore, its status as a core element of any school is justified. It is with this level of importance in mind that the discussion now turns to the International Baccalaureate and its history of delivering internationally oriented curriculum frameworks.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

To enable the reader to place this research in context, a description of the International Baccalaureate (IB), its history, aims and programmes are outlined in this section. The growth in the number of schools implementing IB programmes is also explored, accompanied by a description of the international schools' sector, which has recently become synonymous with the IB programmes. Finally, ongoing criticism levelled towards the IB regarding its global perspectives and costs are explored. First, the following points regarding the availability and independence of relevant contemporary literature are raised.

A search of library databases and IB published bibliographies shows a growing body of literature regarding the IB and its programmes (see Dabrowski, 2016, 2017; 2018; Engle, Banks, Patterson & Stehle, 2015; IB, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2013b; Popușoi and Holman, 2019). A great deal of the literature found has been conducted as part of postgraduate degree requirements by researchers with some connection to the IB, either as school leaders or teachers (Hara, 2018). A large number of studies explore the perceptions, benefits, effectiveness, challenges and the learning outcomes of the IB programmes, and have a tendency to focus on the Diploma Programme. This particular concentration on the Diploma Programme is demonstrated in Dabrowski's (2016, 2017, 2018) and Popușoi and Holman's (2019) annotated bibliographies of literature concerning the IB and published between 2015 and 2018. They show that over those four years there were one hundred and sixty-nine studies concerning the Diploma Programme compared to fifty-seven concerning the Primary Years Programme, thirty-eight concerning the Middle Years Programme and six concerning the Career-related Programme. Law, McDowell and Feder (2012) observe that the focus on the Diploma Programme is not a surprise, given that it is the oldest, most widely recognised and

implemented of the IB's four programmes. A year by year breakdown of the number of studies concerning the IB between 2015 and 2018 is shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1.

Number of research studies concerning the IB (2015-2018).

	Year				
Programme	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**Total**
Primary Years Programme	14	22	10	11	**57**
Middle Years Programme	15	2	12	9	**38**
Diploma Programme	51	43	46	29	**169**
Career-related Programme	0	2	3	1	**6**

Developed from Dabrowski (2016, 2017, 2018) and Popușoi and Holman (2019).

Many researchers have bemoaned the lack of investigation into the Primary Years Programme, the Middle Years Programme and the Career-related Programme (Lester & Lochmiller, 2014; Sperandio, 2010; Stillisano, Waxman, Hostrup & Braziel-Rollins, 2011; Wright, Lee, Tang & Tsui, 2016), with comments such as the 'paucity of enquiry' and the 'dearth of research' (Law et al., 2012, p. 295). The studies which have focused mainly on the Diploma Programme have been discounted from this study, as the importance of the school leaving qualification itself (*The IB Diploma*) tends to dominate this literature. As a result, these studies are considered inappropriate as this study focuses on the Primary Years Programme, which does not have a school leaving qualification.

While it is evident that a considerable number of studies have been conducted, a large number of these have been sponsored by the IB itself via its Global Research Department (IB, 2019c). The IB regularly commissions academics and other experts to conduct research studies covering areas directly related to the IB itself, including its curriculum, outcomes, quality assurance and assessment. Beyond this commissioned work, another source of literature concerning the IB is the *Journal of Research in International Education*, which regularly publishes articles about the IB and international education. Although the IB explicitly states that the Journal 'is not affiliated with the IB' (IB, 2019d, "Journal of Research in International Education [outside resource]", para. 1), it is worthy of note that the Journal's editorial board contains academics and personnel from institutions which have an affiliation with the IB (Sage, 2019). Given these apparent links, questions are raised in the researcher's mind about the independence and objectivity of much of the research published in this Journal. Consequently,

for this literature review, IB sponsored studies have been flagged where they have been included, along with papers published in the *Journal of Research in International Education*.

With this in mind, the information provided in the rest of this section outlines the IB's history, structure, mission and programmes, and sources predominantly grey literature from the IB's own reports, marketing materials and website, as this is best sourced from the IB itself.

History and organisational structure

The IB was established in 1968, by teachers from the International School of Geneva, Switzerland (Fox, 1985, 2004), as a charitable educational foundation to develop, administer and then maintain the Diploma Programme. The original objective was to facilitate the 'international mobility of students' (Whitehead, 2005, p. 3) by providing an internationally recognised pre-university qualification (Jenkins, 2004). The first Diploma Programme examinations were administered in 1970 and were sat by students in a small number of European schools. As of February 2019, the IB's total membership stands at 5284 schools in over 150 countries and territories (IB, 2019e).

Along with its Foundation Office in Geneva, Switzerland, the IB also now has offices in Cardiff, Wales (Assessment Centre), The Hague, The Netherlands (Curriculum Centre) and in Bethesda, Maryland, The United States (Global Research Centre). Alongside these offices, three global centres which provide direct support to schools are located in The Hague, The Netherlands (for schools in Africa, Europe and the Middle East); Bethesda, Maryland, The United States (for schools in the Americas); and, Singapore (for schools located in the Asia Pacific region) (IB, 2019g).

The IB is governed by a Board of Governors which includes two ex-officio, and between eleven and twenty-one elected members (IB, 2017a). The two ex-officio positions are held by the Chair of the Heads Council, which consists of twelve elected Heads of IB World Schools; and the Chair of the Examining Board, which is made up of the Diploma Programme's Chief Examiners (IB, 2019f). The Board of Governors has established five operational committees spanning the areas of 'audit, education, finance, human resources and governance' (IB, 2019f, "Role of the board of governors", para. 2). The Board of Governors is also responsible for electing the Director General, who, as the IB's 'public figurehead' (IB, 2019f, "Role of the

Director General", para. 1), establishes its strategic development and manages the Senior Leadership Team.

The IB's main income, as reported in its latest published financial report for 2017-2018 (IB, 2019b), is generated through donations, and fees and charges, including, amongst others, charges for annual membership, authorisation visits, conferences, assessment, professional development and publishing. Its reported 2017-2018 revenue was approximately $233 million USD and its net assets, approximately $190 million USD.

The IB also works with both governmental and non-governmental organisations. It has partnership agreements with national governments in Ecuador, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Macedonia, Spain and the United Arab Emirates. Partnerships also exist with provincial and state governments in both Canada and the United States (IB, 2019h).

Mission and aims

The IB Mission Statement, presented as three paragraphs, is:

> The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.
>
> To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.
>
> These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that people, with their differences, can also be right (IB, 2019i, "Mission", para. 4-6).

This mission is summarized in the IB's goal, which is to 'create a better world through education' (IB, 2015b, p. 1). In addition, the IB has high expectations of its programmes, stating that they share the common aim of developing 'internationally minded people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world' (Barnes, 2018, p. 17).

The IB documentation also states that its mission and aims are placed at the core of every IB programme (Bryant, Walker & Lee, 2018). They present these as a 'set of learning outcomes for the 21st century' (IB, 2009b, p. 1), known as the *IB Learner Profile* (IB, 2013c), or the

'mission in action' (IB, 2015a, p. 1). The IB states that the Learner Profile represents a 'clear and concise statement of the aims and values of the IB, and an embodiment of what the IB means by "international-mindedness"' (IB, 2009b, p. 1). The IB Learner Profile details ten attributes (Bryant et al., 2018) which the IB believes helps learners 'become responsible members of local, national and global communities' (IB, 2013c) or, as the IB terms it, 'internationally-minded' (IB, 2015a, p. 1). The ten attributes of the IB Learner Profile suggest that learners 'strive to be: *Inquirers*; *Knowledgeable*; *Thinkers*; *Communicators*; *Principled*; *Open-minded*; *Caring*; *Risk-takers*; *Balanced*; and, *Reflective*' (IB, 2013c).

The IB keeps its mission and aims central to its activities as evidenced by the observation that these statements permeate all IB publications (for example, Barnes, 2018; IB, 2009a, 2013c, 2015b, 2016a). The IB does recognise and acknowledge that the mission and aims of both the organisation and the individual programmes are aspirational and unashamedly 'value-laden' (IB, 2009a, p. 3).

The IB Programmes

Since its founding, the IB has developed a continuum of four educational programmes – the Primary Years Programme, the Middle Years Programme, the Diploma Programme and the Career-related Programme - spanning the 3 to 19 years age range. These programmes have developed a reputation for offering progressive pedagogical approaches (Wright et al., 2016), academic rigour (Lee, Leung, Yue, Wright, Gan, Lei & Li, 2014), and high standards (Monreal, 2016). The IB states that it aims to develop 'challenging programmes' with 'rigorous assessment' in collaboration with educational organisations around the world (IB, 2019i, "Mission", para. 5). As this position is also incorporated within the mission statement, it is apparent that the teaching and learning programmes, assessment and collaboration are prioritised by the IB. Moreover, the IB argues that the programmes contain four common characteristics, in that they are all learner-centred; employ effective approaches to teaching and learning; operate within global contexts; and explore compelling content (IB, 2015a). Together these characteristics describe an 'IB Education' (IB, 2015a, p. 1).

Although the four programmes serve on a continuum from preschool to grade twelve, they can also stand alone, allowing schools to implement any one programme on its own, or in combination with other IB or non-IB programmes (Lee, Hallinger & Walker, 2012). Each IB

programme, however, offers very different curricular, instruction and assessment approaches (Lee et al., 2012). This situation provides educational leaders in multi-IB programme schools an added challenge of having to ensure coherence and consistency across the IB programmes (Lee et al., 2012). It could be argued that similar challenges could manifest in single or dual programme IB schools which, by choice or by mandate, also follow a non-IB curriculum framework.

This study's research site had already implemented the IB Diploma Programme and Middle Years Programme at the time the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was made. It is, therefore, for the benefit of the reader that brief descriptions of these two programmes are provided before a more detailed description of the Primary Years Programme, so that the reader is able to situate each programme within the IB Continuum and understand it individually, and as a whole. The fourth programme in the IB's continuum, the Careers-related Programme, which is a vocational programme for students aged 16 to 19 years, is not described as it was not implemented by the research site and, therefore, a description of it does not add further value for the reader of this thesis. The descriptions of the Diploma Programme, the Middle Years Programme and the Primary Years Programme provided below show that a student-centred approach, an inquiry-based pedagogy, significant and relevant content, and a requirement for action (or service), are some of the common themes which permeate these programmes.

The Diploma Programme

The oldest of the IB's suite of programmes, the Diploma Programme, provides a two-year academic course catering for students in the 16 to 19 years age range, and results in an internationally recognised and accepted school leaving qualification, *The IB Diploma*. Over a decade ago, the Diploma Programme was described in the news media as a 'rigorous, off the shelf curriculum' (Wallis, Steptoe & Miranda, 2006, "What it means to be a global student", para. 4) and has continued to maintain this positive reputation (Lee et al., 2012). As at February 2019, 3371 schools were authorised by the IB to deliver this programme (IB, 2019e). The process of IB authorisation is described in the section which follows these descriptions of the programmes.

The Diploma Programme consists of two parts. The first part, *the DP Core*, consists of three components - a course in the Theory of Knowledge; an Extended Essay; and involvement in Creativity, Activity and Service. The second part comprises of studies in six subject groups, including language and literature; language acquisition; individuals and societies; science; mathematics; and, the arts. Students are able to study a variety of courses within each subject group, and each course can be studied at either *standard* or *higher* levels (IB, 2012b, 2019j).

The Middle Years Programme

First offered in 1994, and extensively revised in 2014, the Middle Years Programme, which provides a curriculum framework for students in the 11 to 16 years age range, builds upon the transdisciplinary, inquiry-based foundations of the Primary Years Programme (Harrison, 2015). As at February 2019, 1549 schools were authorised by the IB to deliver this programme. (IB, 2019e).

The Middle Years Programme's concept-based curriculum framework requires the exploration of six global themes (identities and relationships; personal and cultural identity; orientations in space and time; scientific and technical innovation; fairness and development; and, globalization and sustainability) through eight subject groups (language acquisition; language and literature; individuals and societies; sciences; mathematics; arts; physical and health education; and, design). All this culminates in an extended student-planned project (The Personal Project) which is designed to allow students to apply the skills they have developed throughout the programme. In addition to this, Middle Years Programme students are required to complete an action and service project (The Community Project) (IB, 2015c, 2019k).

Wright et al. (2016) observed that despite offering a similar educational philosophy as the Diploma Programme and Primary Years Programme, recent statistics show that the Middle Years Programme, given its recency, remains the least popular of the IB programmes. The reasons for this are unclear, as this phenomenon has not been empirically studied at depth.

The Primary Years Programme

The Primary Years Programme is the IB's curriculum framework for students in the primary, or elementary, years of schooling (3 to 12-years old). It was introduced in 1997 with the aim

of offering a 'common curriculum … that would suit all the learning communities' and, as with all IB programmes, of developing 'international mindedness' (IB, 2009c, p. 1). In commenting on the Primary Years Programme's international focus, Kauffman (2005), a former IB consultant, states that the framework contains a foundational set of elements that students and parents 'would find appealing regardless of cultural background' (p. 243). As at February 2019, 1781 schools were authorised by the IB to deliver this programme (IB, 2019e).

The Primary Years Programme is built on a constructivist foundation and emphasises student involvement and inquiry pedagogy (Mills, 2013). It offers a concept-driven curriculum framework (IB, 2009a) with content centred around six trans-disciplinary themes (Mills, 2013) which are explored through six subject groups (IB, 2014b). The Primary Years Programme is designed to address 'students' academic, social and emotional well-being' (IB, 2014b, p. 1) and encourages the development of independence and self-responsibility for learning (IB, 2009a). The framework is built upon five 'essential elements' (IB, 2009a, p. 10) – (a) concepts, (b) approaches to learning, (c) knowledge, (d) attitudes, and (e) action (IB, 2009a, 2019l). In a similar fashion to the Middle Years Programme's Personal Project (as described above), students are expected to 'demonstrate their engagement with the five essential elements' (IB, 2009a, p. 53), and the development of the attributes of the IB Learner Profile, in 'The Exhibition' (IB, 2009a, p. 53) which takes place at the culmination of the programme. The IB's Primary Years Programme conceptual model (Figure 1.1), as taken from the IB website (IB, 2019p), displays all the elements of the programme together.

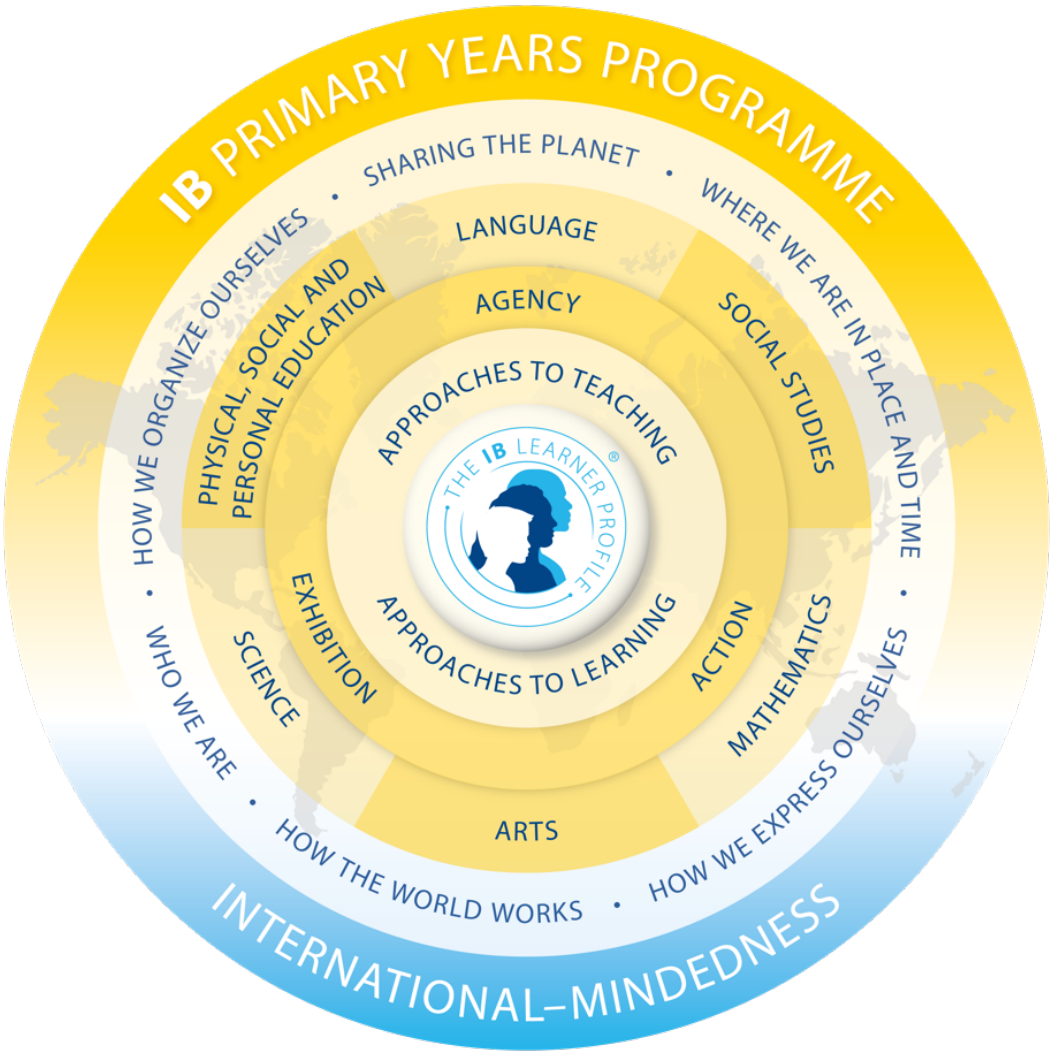

Figure 1.1. The IB Primary Years Programme conceptual model incorporating the 2018 enhancements (with permission).

The Enhanced Primary Years Programme

The IB has recently undertaken an 'extensive review' of the Primary Years Programme (IB, 2014a, p. 2). The review has been completed and the rollout of the *Enhanced Primary Years Programme* commenced in October 2018 (IB, 2017b, 2017c). Material published by the IB indicates that there have been no changes to the programme structure, but that three key elements - *voice* (student agency); *choice* (in teaching and learning); and, the learning community (*ownership*) (IB, 2017b, 2017c) - have been incorporated and strengthened. The 2018 programme enhancements, as shown in Figure 1.2 (IB, 2019p) are intended to complement, support and be used alongside the existing programme structure.

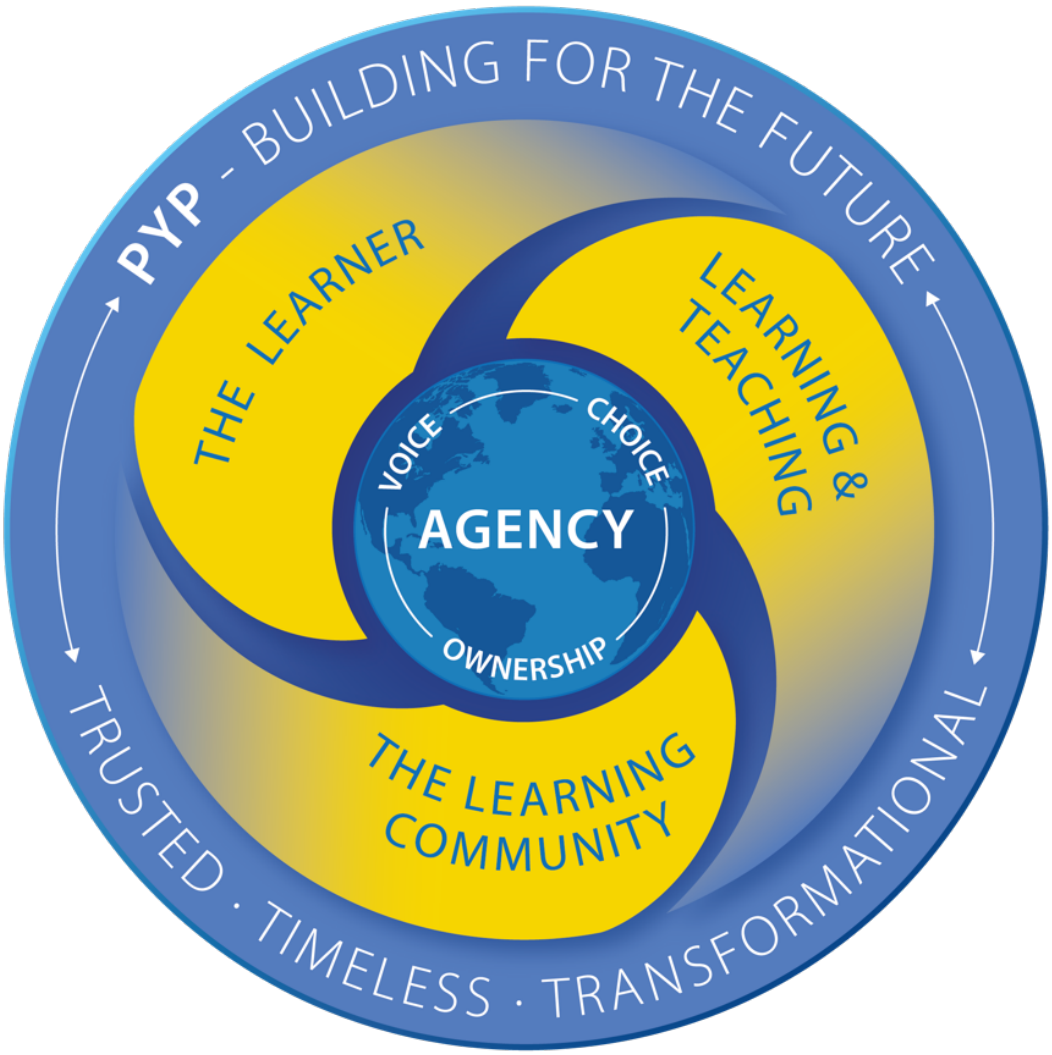

Figure 1.2. The Enhanced Primary Years Programme conceptual model (with permission).

In the next section, the growth of the IB in general, and the Primary Years Programme in particular, is presented. This section commences with a description of the IB authorisation conditions and process, which is then followed by a discussion regarding the rapid growth of the IB despite these authorisation conditions. There is a focus on the Australian context, where the number of schools implementing the IB programmes has grown steadily in recent years.

IB authorisation process and conditions

The IB requires that schools implementing their programmes meet a set of associated conditions, standards and practices (IB, 2016a, 2016b, 2019m), including proving that there is an understanding of, and a commitment to, the IB's values and its mission and goals (Storz & Hoffman, 2018). As an example, one condition of implementing an IB programme is that the school must develop and adopt a mission statement which closely reflects the IB values, aims

and mission (IB, 2016b). Any school wishing to implement an IB programme is subjected to a rigorous six-step process designed to assess the school's preparedness to successfully implement the programme (IB, 2016b; Storz & Hoffman, 2018). The authorisation process requires the school to complete detailed documentation, undergo comprehensive self-studies, provide extensive staff development and host consultation and verification visits for each programme the school wishes to implement (IB, 2016b; Storz & Hoffman, 2018). This process can take up to three years to complete (IB, 2019m). Once authorised, and able to use the *IB World School* label, the school must agree to be evaluated every five years via a process that includes a self-study and an authorisation visit (IB, 2019o). Information about authorisation is provided in various IB publications (see IB, 2016b, 2019m, 2019o), and has been collated in Figure 1.3. Worthy of note is the required rigor in each phase of the process.

PHASE	STEP SCHOOLS MUST TAKE INCLUDE:
Consideration Phase	- Complete and submit the School information form. - Ensure alignment of the school's and the IB's philosophy and mission. - Participation in IB category 1 workshops. - Appoint a programme co-ordinator. - Conduct a feasibility study including analysis of (a) the structure of the programme; (b) the programme standards and practices; (c) the sustainability of the programme; (d) the provision of human, material and financial resources; (e) the time required to align with IB expectations; and, (f) the benefits of the programme to the school and community.
Request for Candidacy (the start of the authorisation process)	- Complete and submit the Application for candidacy. - Develop an action plan reflecting the changes needed to become an IB World School. - Demonstrate understanding of the implications of implementing the programme. - Demonstrate a commitment to teacher professional development. - Demonstrate support from the community for programme implementation.
If criteria are successfully fulfilled and the request for candidacy is approved, the School is recognised as an *IB Candidate School.*	
Candidate Phase	- Trial implementation of the programme (minimum one year). - Address the requirements for authorisation. - Undertake teacher professional development. - Host a mandatory consultation visit.
Request for Authorisation	- Complete and submit the Application for authorisation. - Enact recommendations from the consultation visit report. - Demonstrate understanding of the programme and (a) its requirements; (b) its implementation; and, (c) its philosophy. - Show completion of the major objectives of the action plan. - Demonstrate that IB requirements have been met.
Verification Visit	- Host a verification visit. - Enact recommendations from the verification visit report.
Decision on Authorisation	- Decision on authorisation made by the IB Director-General. - Authorisation may be granted or denied.
If all criteria are successfully fulfilled and the request for authorisation is approved, the School is recognised as an *IB World School.*	
Re-authorisation (every 5 years)	- Conduct a self-study to analyse strengths and weaknesses. - Develop an action plan to address weaknesses. - Host a re-authorisation visit.

Figure 1.3. Overview of the IB authorisation process.

RECENT GROWTH OF THE IB

Despite schools having to adhere to the strict conditions and requirements for authorisation, as outlined in the previous section, recent IB reports indicate an increasing number of schools worldwide deciding to implement one or more of the IB programmes. In a research paper presented to the *Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference 2005*, Whitehead (2005) describes the introduction of IB programmes, particularly in South Australian schools, as a 'significant change in the curriculum landscape' that was occurring at a 'frenetic pace' (p. 2). In newspaper reportage, Marshall (2014) uses terms such as 'surging' to describe the interest in the IB, and comments that schools are 'flocking' to the IB as a way of broadening and reframing their curriculum. It has been proposed that positive marketing is the main contributing factor for the rapid growth in the number of schools offering IB programmes (Doherty, 2009). An analysis of recent statistical data compiled from the IB website (IB, 2019e), demonstrates that the uptake of the IB programmes has not abated.

One of the IB's published goals is to educate two and a half million students through one of its programmes by 2020 (Bunnell, 2012). A quick scan of available statistics indicates that they are likely to achieve this goal. Stillisano et al. (2011) observe that between 1998 and 2011, worldwide IB student growth has been 'between 10% and 20% each year' (p. 172). Reflecting similar growth statistics, Lee et al. (2014) suggest that between 1999 and 2014, there has been a 400% growth in the number of IB programmes offered. The IB's own statistics show that as of February 2019, a total of 5284 schools in over 150 countries were offering one or more of the IB programmes (IB, 2019e). The statistics reported by the IB list only schools which have already been authorised as IB World Schools. They do not include those schools that have expressed an interest in the IB programmes, nor schools in the consideration or candidate phase of authorisation. For reasons unknown, the IB does not widely publicise these figures, and their absence makes it difficult to develop a current and complete picture of the global interest in the IB programmes.

IB statistics also show that as of February 2019, 1781 schools globally offer the Primary Years Programme, of which there are 140 schools located in Australia alone (IB, 2019e). Gough et al.'s (2014) IB sponsored study of the benefits and challenges of implementing the Primary Years Programme in thirteen Victorian government schools, reports 92 Australian IB Primary Years Programme World Schools at that time. These figures show an increase of 48 Australian

IB Primary Years Programme World Schools in the four years between Gough et al.'s (2014) study and the most recent IB reported statistic (IB, 2019e). This represents an increase of approximately 52% since 2014. Arguably, these figures justify Marshall's (2014) description of the surging interest in the IB. Again, the lack of information regarding interested and candidate Primary Years Programme schools leads to an incomplete picture of the actual interest in this programme. Nonetheless, statistics gleaned from the IB website (IB, 2019e) show that during the two-and-a-half-year period between 2016 and mid-2018, 337 schools worldwide were authorised to deliver the Primary Years Programme. Two key observations are made when viewing these statistics: (1) The three countries with the largest number of Primary Years Programme authorisations during that time period were the United States, Australia and China (respectively); and, (2) five out of the ten countries with the largest number of Primary Years Programme authorisations during that time period are located in the IB's Asia Pacific region (i.e., Australia, China, India, Pakistan, and Japan (in numerical order)).

The international schools sector

Among the research on the IB, there exists a general perception that the IB programmes are implemented predominantly in those schools which can be categorised as *international* (Dolby & Rahman, 2008; Yamato & Bray, 2006). But what are *international schools*? It has been noted that international schools are very difficult to define as they encompass such a wide variety of attributes (Hayden, 2006; Hayden & Thompson, 1995, 1998, 2008), and, according to Dolby and Rahman (2008), this lack of a definition is the cause of great angst. Blandford and Shaw (2001) state that 'international schools defy definition' (p. 2), but this does not mean that attempts to define them have not been made.

Kauffman (2005) suggests that international schools are 'independent schools serving students who are not nationals of the country in which they are located' (p.247). This definition has been challenged as too narrow and inadequate, as it fails to encompass the full spectrum of international schools. To demonstrate this definition's inadequacy, in recent times, in countries where government legislation and regulations allow, international schools have seen an increasing number of local students (those who are nationals of the country in which the school is located) being enrolled (Harper, 2014). Chesworth and Dawe (2000), in newspaper reportage, put forward the notion that an international school follows a national or international curriculum different to that of the country in which it is located (the host

country). It is argued that this definition is better than Kauffman's (2005), as it is based on the product that is offered (the curriculum), rather than the nationality of the consumer (the student/parent).

An alternative understanding of an international school is provided by the International Schools Consultancy (ISC, 2019a), which is a respected British research firm providing intelligence and data on international schools (Cavanagh, 2017). This organisation considers an international school to be one which,

> … delivers a curriculum to any combination of pre-school, primary or secondary students, wholly or partly in English outside an English-speaking country, or, if located in a country where English is one of the official languages, it offers an English-medium curriculum other than the country's own national curriculum (ISC, 2019b, "What does ISC consider to be an international school", para. 1).

The International Schools Consultancy acknowledges that even their definition is deficient and a contains a 'number of grey areas' (Brummitt, 2009, p. 13). Pointing out a flawed aspect of this definition, Bunnell, Fertig and James (2016) raise the example of English-medium schools located in Pakistan and India (where English is an official language) that do not associate themselves with the international school label, even though they satisfy the International Schools Consultancy's definition. Bunnell et al. (2016) also criticise the 'Anglo-centric nature' (p. 411) of the International Schools Consultancy's definition. Consider, as an example, the global network of French-medium schools administered by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Agency for French Education Abroad, 2016). Under the International Schools Consultancy's definition, these schools, which are, for all intents and purposes, international in nature, cannot be classed as such, solely on the English language criterion. The examples cited above only serve to demonstrate the 'lack of clarity in the current situation' (Hayden, 2006, p. 11).

In an effort to address these inconsistencies in definition, Hayden and Thompson, who are both widely cited in the field of international education as they have studied it for over two decades, initially defined international schools as those which offer an 'international education' (Hayden & Thompson, 1995, p. 332). However, recently recognising the need for more clarity, they developed a classification system for international schools (Figure 1.4). Their typology of international schools (Hayden & Thompson, 2013) is based on the 'grounds upon which they were established' (Hayden & McIntosh, 2018, p. 1).

Type	Definition	Example/location
Type A – Traditional International Schools	Traditional International Schools were established to serve the demand from globally mobile families for an education option where the local system is inappropriate (Bunnell et al., 2016; Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Hill, 2014). They offer the national curricula of a *home* country (for example, the British National Curriculum or the Australian Curriculum); or an international curriculum (for example, the IB or the International Primary Curriculum); or a combination of curricula (Bunnell et al., 2016). These schools have a multicultural student population (Mayer, 1968), and are often fee paying, privately funded, not-for-profit institutions, that are characterized by a high turnover of students and large parental involvement. English is usually the medium of instruction and communication (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013).	- Yokohama International School (2019)/ Japan. - British School Manila (2019)/ The Philippines. - Lycée Condorcet (2019)/ Australia. - German-Swiss International School (2019)/ Hong Kong.
Type B – Ideological International Schools	Ideological International Schools, or ' pioneer schools' (Bunnell, 2013, p. 170), were established with a commitment to promote global peace and understanding (Bunnell, 2013; Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Veevers & Pete, 2011). At the core of this type of school is the ' notion of international mindedness' (Bunnell et al., 2016, p. 410), and, more often than not, they offer one or more of the IB programmes (Hill, 2014).	- United World Colleges (International) (2019)/ various. - L'école Internationale de Genève (2019)/ Switzerland.
Type C – Non-traditional International Schools	Non-traditional International Schools are a relatively new addition to the sector (Hayden & Thompson, 2013) and they cater primarily for nationals of the host country (subject to government regulations). These fee-paying, often for-profit schools target the socially and economically mobile middle class who perceive that these schools offer a higher quality of education than that which is available in the local system (Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Shah, 2013). These schools tend to offer an international curriculum and are seen as a ' springboard to university entrance' (Hayden & Thompson, 2013, p. 7) in westernised countries. This category includes schools established by the large English private schools under franchise agreements, and by *Education Transnational Corporations* (Kim, 2016) (private companies that own and operate for-profit schools in multiple countries), both of whom have responded to the largely Asian demand for a more modern and liberal education (Ang & Kwok, 2012).	- Yew Chung Education Foundation (2019)/ various. - Harrow School (2019)/ Thailand. - Cognita Schools (2019)/ various. - ESOL Education (2019)/ various.

Figure 1.4. Typology of international schools according to Hayden and Thompson.

Hayden and Thompson's (2013) typology of international schools can be seen as being broadly encompassing, as a large majority of international schools would fall into one of these three categories. However, given the expanding and changing landscape of the sector (Bunnell et al., 2016), with forecasts suggesting sixteen thousand international schools worldwide by

2026 (Morrison, 2016), it would seem likely that this typology will need continual revisiting and revising in the years to come.

Hallinger and Lee (2012) also imply that the IB has become synonymous with the international schools' sector, due to the large number that have implemented the programmes. In contrast, however, Wright et al. (2016) point out that the largest number of IB World Schools are located in the United States and comprise both public and private schools. The IB's own statistics show that, as at February 2019, 1947 schools offer one or more of the IB programmes in the United States alone, representing a sizeable percentage (approximately 37%) of the 5284 IB World Schools worldwide (IB, 2019e). Wright et al. (2016) also observe that over the past decade the Asia Pacific region has seen the greatest growth of IB schools, although they do not comment on, nor offer reasons why this phenomenon has occurred. Without any formal investigation, it is only speculation that the rapid expansion of *Type C Non-traditional international schools* (Hayden & Thompson, 2013) may well be the underlying cause behind the IB's growth, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. Wright et al.'s (2016) two observations regarding the growth of the IB in (a) the United States, and (b) the Asia Pacific region, focused around IB World Schools in general. This trend continues as the same observations have been made using the 2016 to mid-2018 IB authorisation data available from the IB website (IB, 2019e), as demonstrated in the previous section.

Although the growing number of schools implementing IB programmes could indicate their global popularity and acceptance, there have been a number of criticisms of both the IB programmes and the IB itself. The next section explores two enduring criticisms levelled at the IB in recent times.

CRITICISMS OF THE IB

Despite the growing interest in, and uptake of its programmes, the IB has received some criticism regarding various aspects of its philosophy, programmes and operations. Perhaps the two biggest revolve around (a) the perceived focus on internationalism at the expense of national interests (McGroarty, 2011; Paris, 2003), and (b) the significant initial and ongoing financial commitment schools must bear to offer IB programmes (McGroarty, 2011; Pushpanadham, 2012). These two criticisms are ongoing (Greene, 2018).

The tension between locally-oriented, national education systems, and globally-oriented international education (such as the IB) is explored by Paris (2003). From his study of the globalisation of education and the reasons students in Adelaide, Australia, choose the Diploma Programme, Paris (2003) suggests that any school that decides to implement an IB programme 'potentially relinquishes its values and practices of education' (p. 235). In addition, he raises concerns that the programmes globalise by forcing the values and ideals of a dominant culture upon a more recessive one. In response to Paris' (2003) concerns, Hill (2006), a former IB Deputy Director General, contests the assertion that the IB programmes seek to globalise, instead, he promotes the notion that the IB's programmes seek to internationalise. He draws on the work of Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997) and Vidovich (2004) to define internationalisation, stating that it refers 'to multi-lateral relationships between nations and states' (Hill, 2006, p. 104).

Reinforcing Paris' (2003) views, and commenting from a United States perspective, McGroarty (2011), the former Executive Director (Education) of the American Principles Project, in an *U.S. News & World Report* opinion editorial piece, raises concerns that the IB curriculum undermines the founding principles of the *United States Declaration of Independence*. He suggests that government funded IB World Schools in the United States lose control and independence by having to commit to a curriculum, teacher professional development, assessment and examinations which are controlled by a non-American entity. In addition, he objects to the Eurocentric, 'non-American, non-Judeo-Christian outlook' (McGroarty, 2011, para. 1) of the IB curriculum frameworks. At the conclusion of his piece, McGroarty (2011) calls for withdrawal of funding to support IB programmes in public schools in the United States (para. 2).

Deutsch (2011), a former Director of the IB, in the same publication immediately contests McGroarty's (2011) assertions about the IB. He reminds the audience that the IB curriculum frameworks were not only created to develop 'lifelong learning skills' in young people, but also to teach them about 'other cultures, religions, and societies' in an effort to avert potential future world wars (Deutsch, 2011, para. 2). He also provides evidence that the success of the IB, particularly in the United States, stems primarily from the quality of education provided and the effectiveness of the programmes. He concludes by pointing out that the world is increasingly global and encourages McGroaty's (2011) audience to recognise that a 'high-

quality, inquiry-based, international education' (Deutsch, 2011, para. 6) for all students ensures that the United States can remain competitive in the globalised world.

Although McGroarty's (2011) concerns originate from an American perspective, as already discussed, it is still the country with the largest population of IB World Schools. It is worth further study to explore the reasons that the IB programmes seem to be so widely implemented in a climate where there are calls for the rejection of, as McGroarty (2011) terms it, 'non-American, non-Judeo-Christian' influences (para. 1). Earlier, Hill (2006) emphasises that the IB does not seek to 'over-ride national systems' (p. 105) as it regards education as a 'national sovereignty' (p. 104). The IB continues to respond to these types of criticism by reinforcing its mission to 'work *with* schools, governments and international organisations' (emphasis added) (IB, 2019i, "Mission", para. 5).

The second aspect which has come under criticism in recent times is the high financial costs schools must bear to apply for, implement and offer the IB's programmes. The IB's charges and fees are listed on their website (IB, 2019n) and include, amongst others, application fees, consultant fees, evaluation fees and annual fees. A quick calculation shows that a school wishing to implement just one IB programme is potentially liable for fees and charges in excess of $30,000 USD for authorisation alone. When costs for providing IB professional development and training are added in, costs are much higher. While Pushpanadham (2012) mentions only that the burden of fees and charges can prevent schools from even considering the programmes, McGroarty (2011) again takes exception, and criticises the IB for charging excessive fees. He states that the costs for membership, resourcing, professional development and support could be prohibitive, especially for government-funded schools on limited budgets. The same criticism has been reflected in the United Kingdom (Stewart, 2011) and in Australia (Whitehead, 2005), where questions of affordability have reinforced the perception that the IB programmes are the 'preserve of the elite' (Stewart, 2011, p. 6), rather than of the general population. Bunnell (2015), in his paper outlining the history of the IB (particularly the Diploma Programme) in the United Kingdom, reflects Stewart's (2011) view, and identifies costs as being solely to blame for the IB's decline in that country.

To draw this discussion together, two observations are made in relation to this cost argument. First, in the United States, the IB programmes are found predominantly in government funded

schools (Lee et al., 2012), thus bringing into question McGroarty's (2011) assertions that they are unaffordable to these types of schools. Second, it is, perhaps, affordability that has seen the IB flourish in the international schools' sector. As Hallinger and Lee (2012) point out, usually international schools are well-resourced, and this allows them to bear the financial burden of the IB programmes more easily.

In summary, up to this point grey literature has been used to provide an outline of the IB's organisation and its philosophy and programmes. The school authorisation process, the growth in the number of schools implementing the IB programmes, and two major criticisms of the IB have also been laid out. With this background information in mind, it is curious that such a rapid global growth of the IB programmes, especially the Primary Years Programme, is being witnessed, and it is unclear why and how school decision makers around the world are making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

RESEARCH PROBLEM, PURPOSE, AND QUESTION FOR THE STUDY

Research problem

Given the increasing number of school decision makers deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, and the potential impact, risks and consequences associated with that decision, it is of concern that there is only limited independent empirical inquiry that provides an understanding of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

Research purpose

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. It is hoped that by examining the reasons why it was decided to implement the Primary Years Programme, and the processes by which that decision was made, educational leaders can be provided with a body of empirical work which can be drawn upon as they embark on their own decision-making process.

Research question

In an effort to seek understanding of this phenomenon, the following question is asked:

How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?

This question has been designed to aid the research study by focusing attention on the following areas:

1) The action (i.e., the decision);
2) The subject of the decision, or what is being decided on (i.e., the implementation of the Primary Years Programme);
3) The actors involved in making the decision (i.e., the decision makers); and,
4) The location of the decision makers (i.e., school based).

OUTLINE OF THESIS

To present an orderly and systematic account of this research, this thesis is organised in the following manner:

The next chapter, Chapter 2, draws on research literature to provide an overview of the notion of decisions, and the process of decision-making. This is followed by an outline of decision-making in educational leadership with attention given to the leadership of IB programme implementation. An analysis of the available literature which was selected to assist in understanding the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme then follows. At the conclusion of this chapter, the research question has been clarified and two research sub-questions have been developed to provide additional focus to this study.

In Chapter 3 the reader is provided with a description of the theoretical perspectives which guided this research, along with the research design, and data management and analysis procedures. From a constructionist epistemological foundation, this research employed Stake's (1995) approach to single site case study methodology and gathered individual interview and document data. This research employed Robinson's (1993) problem-based methodology as an analytical framework through which the decision-makers' perspectives and actions could be viewed. Constant comparative method was used to analyse the data. Through the process of coding, categories and themes were generated which then allowed the location of the phenomenon and development of an understanding of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

Subsequent to gaining the appropriate ethics clearance (see Appendix A), permission to conduct research was sought from the Heads of School of potential sites (see Appendix B). Once permission to conduct research was gained, potential research participants were

provided with the relevant participant information, including the appropriate consent forms and interview questions, and invited to participate in this study (see Appendices C – E).

The research site, which was a faith-based, international school located in Asia, provided an example of the unique contexts in which the Primary Years Programme is offered. The School was an existing IB Diploma Programme and IB Middle Years Programme school (authorised in 2011), however, the School decision makers had only recently decided to implement the Primary Years Programme and gained authorisation in 2018. The participants in this study were members of the School's senior leadership team who were closely involved in the Primary Years Programme decision-making process, and, therefore, were able to provide a first-person perspective of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. At this point, the reader should note that throughout this thesis, the researcher has referred to the research site as the 'School' so that the reader is able to distinguish between references to the research site itself, and references to other schools or schools in general.

The results and findings of the study are provided in Chapter 4. In line with the problem-based methodology framework, the identification of the challenges faced by the decision makers; the perceived and actual constraints on the solutions to those challenges; the actions that were taken; and, the intended and unintended consequences of those actions, allowed a *theory of action* (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Robinson, 1993) to be developed. The results showed that the School faced a number of challenges which included curriculum inconsistency and incoherence within the Elementary School, and across the whole School; the perceived decline of general and academic standards; and, the lack of a school identity. These challenges presented against a background of staffing instability and a changing community demographic. The School's decision makers believed that these challenges acted as a barrier which prevented them from considering the implementation of the Primary Years Programme and, therefore, had to be addressed prior to any decision regarding the implementation of it. In addressing these challenges, the School decision makers' problem-solving and decision-making abilities were constrained by the need to: (a) provide a high-quality secular curriculum, (b) maintain the strong Jewish studies curriculum, (c) keep the centrality of the School's place in the community; and, (d) align with the School's vision. Given the challenges faced by the Elementary School, and the set of constraints on their decision-making, the School's decision makers embarked on a series of actions which sought to address those challenges. By acting

to address the curriculum inconsistencies and incoherence; the perceived decline in general and academic standards; the lack of identity; and, the unstable staffing, the School's decision makers believed the way had been cleared for them to consider implementation of the Primary Years Programme.

In Chapter 5 the findings of the study are reviewed and the research question and sub-questions, which were posed at the commencement of the study, are discussed in relation to the relevant contemporary literature. Following this discussion, the researcher advances a theoretical proposition, which is then supported by the refinement of a model to support the proposition. It is envisaged that the findings of the study and the theoretical proposition advanced will be used to inform future investigations in to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. In concluding this study, recommendations for the IB and schools considering the implementation of the Primary Years Programme are made, as well as research recommendations for those interested in exploring decision making in IB Education further.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, discusses the research literature that addresses the research problem under study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the available contemporary literature to inform and assist with the conceptualisation of this study following the identification of the research question in Chapter 1 being:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

To provide this analysis of literature, this chapter is organised in two parts. The first part includes a discussion of the notions of decisions and decision-making in educational leadership, and the IB's view of school leadership. The next part of this chapter contains an analysis of the contemporary research literature focusing on the rationale for, and the process of, making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. In concluding this chapter, this study's research problem, purpose and question are reviewed, and two research sub-questions, which have been developed subsequent to the review of literature, are presented.

DECISIONS, DECISION-MAKING AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

As this study concerns decision making in an educational context, this part of the literature review looks at notions of what a decision is, and then outlines the different types of decisions that can be made. An overview of the understandings of the process of decision-making is then provided, followed by the link between decision-making and problem-solving. This section concludes with a discussion of decision-making in educational leadership practice. The approach adopted in this section does not attempt to locate definitions for these notions, but rather attempts to disentangle the complex layers of each notion, particularly in regard to this study.

The nature of decisions

The term *decision* is regularly used and brings an assumed agreement of its definition, as evidenced by the many works which address the notion of decisions with minimal discussion of its meaning (O'Sullivan, 2011). It is this 'definitional vagueness' (Carpentier, 2016, p. 88) that has resulted in the watering down of the complex nature of decisions and decision making. A summary of definitions of what a decision is, developed from the research literature, is provided in Figure 2.1.

DECISIONS …
… are human actions resulting from 'intendedly rational choices' (March, 1991, p. 97).
… are 'a commitment to action … implying a distinct, identifiable choice' (Langely, Mintzberg, Pitcher, Posada & Saint-Macary, 1995, p. 261).
… are 'a choice made by some entity of an action from some set of alternative actions' (Doyle & Thomason, 1999, p. 56).
… 'imply the end of deliberation and the beginning of action' (Buchanan & O'Connell, 2006, p. 33).
… 'are responses to situations and may include three aspects. First, there may be more than one possible course of action under consideration. Second, decision makers can form expectations concerning future events that are often described in terms of probabilities or degrees of confidence. Finally, consequences associated with possible outcomes can be assessed in terms of reflecting personal values and current goals' (Oliveira, 2007, p. 12).
… are 'a conscious choice made between two or more competing alternatives' (Johnson & Kruse, 2009, p. 13).
… are 'often described and understood as conscious deliberate choices made by an individual at the end of a process, assumed to be of a rational nature' (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 2).
… 'occur when a solution to a problem is selected for implementation' (Al-Tarawneh, 2012, p. 3).
… are 'a position, opinion or judgement reached after consideration. It is a cognitive phenomenon and the outcome of a complex process of deliberation, which includes an assessment of potential consequences and uncertainties. Decision involves thinking, judgement and deliberate action' (Haidar, 2016, p. 25).

Figure 2.1. Summary of definitions of what a decision is, as drawn from the literature.

The common themes which emerge from this range of definitions, and seem to form the foundation of our understanding of what a decision is, are that decisions are (a) a solution to a problem; (b) a conscious choice to act; (c) the result of a process of deliberation; and, (d) the result of a rational process. While these underlying notions seem to pervade the literature, O'Sullivan (2011) argues that a decision is difficult to identify as decision makers often 'do not necessarily recognise that they are making a decision [as] they may be utilizing intuitive … processes that are implicit, tacit, or non-conscious' (p. 2).

Types of decisions

A number of attempts have been made to categorise different types of decisions, 'from routine decisions … to exceptional decisions' (East, 1997, p. 39). Blenko, Mankins and Rogers (2010) suggest that senior corporate managers, when conducting a 'decision audit' (p. 56) of their organisations, simply consider two types - 'big, one-off decisions' and 'small, routine decisions' (p. 58).

Perhaps the most widely used typologies of decisions, however, come from early work by Simon (1960) and Drucker (1967), where they characterise decisions by their complexity and impact on an organisation. In general, simpler decisions are those which are routine and repetitive, and tend to have established protocols. They have minimal impact on the organisation and the decision makers. As a decision becomes more complex, fewer precedents or protocols exist, and the impact on the organisation and the decision makers themselves becomes greater. Figure 2.2 assists in classifying the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, which is at the centre of this study. According to Dunn (2015), the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is a complex one, with the potential to have a large impact on a school. It is, therefore, evident that this decision, according to the arguments presented in the literature, falls within the definition of an 'exceptional' (Drucker, 1967, p. 124), 'non-programmed' (Simon, 1960, p. 5), or, more simply, a 'big, one-off' (Blenko et al., 2010, p. 58) type of decision.

	Type of decision		Defined as …
	Simon (1960)	**Drucker (1967)**	
Increasing complexity and impact ↓	Programmed Decisions	Generic Decisions	'High volume, low impact decisions' (East, 1997, p. 39). These are operational decisions required on a day-to-day basis. Examples of these types of decisions in educational settings include procurement or course scheduling.
	--	New Generic Decisions	'Repetitive circumstances that require unique solutions' (East, 1997, p. 40). These are repetitive decisions required in situations which need a unique decision in each circumstance. Often a set of procedures already exist but need interpreting. Examples of such decisions in an educational setting include student admissions to a selective school, or staff promotions, where the established criteria require interpretation in each case.
	Non-programmed Decisions	Exceptional Decisions	'Decisions representing significant paradigm shifts' (East, 1997, p. 40). Precedents for these types of decisions rarely exist in organizations. There are significant risks for both the decision maker and the organisation associated with this type of decision. Examples of these types of decisions in educational settings include philosophical, pedagogical or curricular decisions.

Figure 2.2. A comparison of typologies of decisions: Simon and Drucker.

Process of decision-making

The importance of understanding how people make decisions is an area which has received interest recently (Bruch & Feinberg, 2017). Decision-making is generally understood as the process of identifying, evaluating, ranking and selecting possible actions from a list of alternatives (Al-Tarawneh, 2012; Malakooti, 2012). Although decision-making can appear as very logical and sequential, the literature generally suggests that it is not. Decision-making is often described as a 'complex and, … confusing process' (East, 1997, p. 39), which 'is non-rational and non-linear' (Robinson, Sinclair, Tobias & Choi, 2017, p. 1). It has been described as 'iterative and complex, punctuated by digressions, and warped by biases and misconceptions' (Mintzberg, Raisinghani and Theoret, 1976, pp. 6-7). Perhaps it is because, as Malakooti (2012) claims, the decision-making process is influenced by past experiences, intuition, emotion, personality characteristics and temperaments, values, heuristics, and many other external factors, that it has come to be understood as 'the most complex human behaviour' (p. 733).

Early studies of decision-making promoted a rational approach to the process and offered sequential, step-by-step models to assist in making effective decisions. These rational models are based on the assumption that the decision maker is in possession of all relevant

information and is able to generate, calculate and analyse all possible alternatives and their associated consequences before reaching an outcome (Hoy, Miskel & Tarter, 2013; Simon, 1955). Historically, this rational view of decision-making has been prevalent in the literature, however, it is becoming more widely accepted that 'the decision-making process is more tangled' (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 3). It is claimed that decision-making involves the irrational and includes 'intuition; emotions; values and heuristics' (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 3). Hence, more recent literature has discounted the rational view of decision-making, claiming that the assumptions on which it is based are unrealistic and inappropriate (Evers, 2015; Hoy et al., 2013; Robinson & Donald, 2015). A more naturalistic, or descriptive approach has been adopted instead. Researchers in the naturalistic decision-making tradition (for example, Klein, 2008, 2015; Klein, Orasanu, Calderwood & Zsambok, 1993; Lipshitz, Klein, Orasanu & Salas, 2001), have found that when faced with a situation requiring a decision, decision makers are not rational, nor do they follow logical processes. They do not generate and consider every option, calculate every probability, and then compare every option to a set of criteria. Instead, the literature describes how decision makers go through a process of 'pattern-matching' when making 'on-the-job decisions' especially in time sensitive situations (Robinson & Donald, 2015, p. 95).

Very closely related to decision-making in time sensitive situations is the area of problem-solving. In fact, it is claimed that a discussion about decision-making cannot occur without considering problem-solving, and the relationship between the two actions (Malakooti, 2012). Both the phrases *decision-making* and *problem-solving* are often used interchangeably, but they are not synonymous (Kanzer-Lewis, 2015). Problem-solving is generally recognised as incorporating how a situation is understood to be problematic (Robinson & Donald, 2015). It is the process that involves the definition of a problem, the generation of alternative solutions, the evaluation and selection of one of the solutions, and the implementation of that solution (Beecroft, Duffy & Moran, 2003). Decision-making is seen as a sub-set of this process which focuses on how the decision to act is made (Beecroft et al., 2003; Robinson & Donald, 2015). Therefore, an understanding of why and how certain decisions are made can only be developed via an understanding of the cognitive and perceptual processes that determine how the decision-maker perceives a problematic situation (Lipshitz et al., 2001). Evers (2015) demonstrates the close relationship between decision-making and problem-solving by proposing that when a demand to solve a problem exists, a demand for a decision naturally

follows. Without a demand to solve a problem, there is no need to make a decision. This discussion becomes important when considering educational leadership.

Education leadership and decision-making

The notion of leadership in education is one filled with ambiguity as it contains two large fields of thought – leadership and education. Educational leadership is the process of establishing the best conditions for student learning via relationship building with, and exerting influence over, all stakeholders (Wilhot, Pittenger & Rickbaugh, 2016). To enable educational leaders to establish these conditions for learning, they must be able to make decisions. Many scholars claim that decision-making is considered a foundational function (Al-Tarawneh, 2012; Crum, 2014; Johnson & Kruse, 2009), or 'a *sine qua non*' (Hoy et al., 2013, p. 317) of educational leadership. It is considered with such importance because it is role-modelled and carried out in full 'view of children, teenagers and young adults' (Cunningham, 2014, p. 11). Researchers have, therefore, expressed surprise that decision-making and, indeed, problem-solving are under-researched areas within the educational leadership literature (O'Sullivan, 2011).

There is also a lack of empirical study of leadership and decision-making in IB World Schools. When Lee et al. (2012) published their study exploring the challenges faced by school leaders implementing IB programmes in schools in the East Asian region, they expressed surprise that only a limited number of empirical studies which addressed leadership in IB schools could be found. Six years later, this situation has not changed and 'the gaps in leadership knowledge remain pronounced' (Gardner-McTaggart, 2018, p. 68). Considering this meagre amount of literature concerning leadership in IB schools, it is no surprise that literature which specifically addresses decision-making around the Primary Years Programme is virtually non-existent. The literature that was found consisted of a few studies where decision-making was a minor focus. Other sources included anecdotal accounts on internet blogs run by some staff members at IB World Schools. Generally, these personal accounts concerned the period after the decision to implement an IB programme had been made, and focused on the programme implementation process, rather than the decision-making process. These accounts, while useful in gaining an overview of the process, have been discounted for this literature review as they only provide a limited and subjective view of the process.

When the literature that focuses on leadership in IB World Schools was over-lapped with the literature on decision making around the IB Programmes, it was found that, more often than not, it only addresses the leadership of IB Programme implementation, i.e., the period of time after the decision to implement an IB Programme is made, rather than the decision to implement the programmes. By commissioning a number of studies, the IB has acknowledged that the process of implementing an IB programme can be a challenge for educational leaders. Five issues that provide such challenges have been identified by Lee et al. (2012) as follows - (a) the coherence and consistency within and across programmes; (b) the complexity of school organisation; (c) the recruitment and selection of suitably experienced staff; (d) the provision of ongoing professional development; and, (e) parental expectations. However, it has been argued that the greatest challenge to IB programme implementation comes in the form of teachers being forced to reassess their own teaching and learning practice and habits due to the necessary pedagogical shift required by the programmes (Visser, 2010).

To overcome programme implementation challenges, Gilliam's (1997) study of the Coordinator's role in the successful implementation of the Diploma Programme, and Hall, Elder, Thompson & Pollack's (2009) study found that 'strong' leadership was a requirement, although their definition of 'strong' was not formally established. Both studies suggest that the leaders' ability to make decisions in challenging circumstances could be used to measure the strength of their leadership. Other studies indicate that successful Primary Years Programme implementation is based on the school leaders' ability to develop high levels of trust between teachers and themselves (Hartman, 2008). The building of such cultures of trust is placed alongside building cultures of cooperation, discussion and collaboration as essential conditions needed to overcome most programme implementation challenges (Visser, 2010). The findings from all these studies imply that the quality of IB programme implementation is related to the school leaders' personal characteristics and leadership practices (Day, Townsend, Knight & Richardson, 2016). However, it has been suggested that further empirical inquiry is needed to determine best practice to address the IB programme implementation challenges (Lee et al., 2012).

It appears that once the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme has been made, it brings a plethora of problems for school leaders, and an expectation that certain leadership characteristics, practices and structures will be developed to overcome the challenges those

problems present. It also appears that changes in organisational culture are also an expectation. It is assumed that when making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, school decision makers are aware of these problems, challenges and expectations, and have adequately considered the impact of these on their schools.

UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO IMPLEMENT THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

To understand school decision makers' decision to change their curriculum framework and implement the Primary Years Programme, an investigation of the reasons for making this decision, and the processes employed to make this decision, must be carried out. This part of the literature review includes an analysis of the available contemporary literature which seeks to understand the reasons behind this decision, and the processes by which it is made. First, an overview of some general reasons why school decision makers would decide on curriculum change is presented. This is followed by an analysis of the literature which specifically focuses on the reasons for deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme and the Middle Years Programme. The third, and final, section in this part is used to analyse the literature which addresses the process which is employed to make the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

General reasons for school curriculum change

Recent research studies have shown that there are numerous reasons why school decision makers would choose to change their school's curriculum framework. These include, amongst others, responding to (a) changing community demographics (Hall et al., 2009); (b) parental expectations and demands (Ledger, Vidovich & O'Donoghue, 2014); and, (c) the forces of globalisation (particularly in the form of technological advances) (Doerksen, 2012). However, the most commonly reported reason for changing a school's curriculum framework has been the desire to improve students' learning outcomes (for example, Cheung & Wong, 2012; Gough et al., 2014; Hara, 2018; Perry, Ledger & Dickson, 2018; Thomas & Watson, 2011; Sperandio, 2010; Wright et al., 2016).

Beyond these reasons, other reasons which appear most prominently come from the political sphere. In some extreme examples, national educational, school or curriculum reform has been forced as a result of politically destabilising events such as civil unrest or upheaval, and radical governmental change (Janík, Janko, Pešková, Knecht & Spurná, 2018; Ledger et al.,

2014). However, school curriculum reform is more likely a result of the political demand for accountability and quality. As an example, Thomas and Watson (2011) suggest that the reason Australian education policy moved to a national approach (with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum) is due to this very reason. Cranston, Kimber, Mulford, Reid and Keating (2010) propose that this shift is a result of the growing interest in the nation's performance in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The political interest in PISA is not only an Australian phenomenon, as many countries use their PISA indicators to enact school and curriculum reform (Cranston et al., 2010). To improve PISA performance, it has been argued that governments are pushing an agenda which focuses on quality assurance, transparency and accountability, through measures such as national standardised testing (for example, the Australian *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN); and the United Kingdom's *Standardised Assessment Tasks* (SATs)); the issuing of standards and practices for school leaders and teachers (for example, the *Australian professional standard for principals and the leadership profiles* (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011); and, the English Department for Education's *Teachers' standards: Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies* (Department for Education, 2011)), and the marketisation of education through expansion of school choice (Thomas & Watson, 2011). While these reasons for school curriculum change may sit in the background, they do not explain why school decision makers would make the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

In the following section the results of the searches for, and analysis and synthesis of relevant research literature which addresses the reasons school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme is presented.

The reasons for deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme

The reasons why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme is an under researched area. This is evidenced by the limited literature found after searches through library resources (for example, doctoral dissertations) and education databases (for example, *A+ Education*; *ERIC*; *ProQuest*). This situation necessitated a turn to alternative sources, which included the IB website (IB, 2019c); the annotated bibliographies of IB research (see Dabrowski, 2016, 2017; 2018; Engle, Banks, Patterson & Stehle, 2015; IB, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2013b; Popușoi and Holman, 2019); Google; and, Google Scholar. Again, a very limited

number of items of literature were found. For example, the searches for relevant literature addressing this area yielded only five items published between 2009 and 2019. It was observed that even amongst this limited research, an explanation of the reasons why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme, although embedded within, was not the main focus of any of these studies. Rather, the process of programme implementation was, and the reasons for deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme was treated as an aside to this main focus. The authors, publication dates, and titles, as well as a brief description of the research focus, design and funding source for the five studies found are presented in Figure 2.3. Worthy of note in Figure 2.3 is that no relevant literature published since 2014 was found, despite the increasing number of schools implementing the Primary Years Programme as discussed in Chapter 1.

Author(s) (Date) 'Title'	Research focus/ design/ funding
Hall, Elder, Thompson & Pollack (2009) *'IBNA[1] - The Primary Years Programme Field Study'*	The PYP[2] authorisation & implementation process in schools in Georgia (USA). Survey: 16 schools/ Case study: 3 schools. Funding: IB.
Stillisano, Waxman, Hostrup & Braziel-Rollins (2011) *'Case studies of eight Texas schools implementing the International Baccalaureate programs'*	The efficacy of PYP & MYP[3] implementation in Texas (USA) schools. Case study: 8 schools Funding: IB.
Doerksen (2012) *'A phenomenological study of schoolteachers adopting the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme'*	Teachers perceptions, beliefs & assumptions relating to PYP implementation in Canada. Phenomenological study: 17 participants. Funding: Independent (EdD Study).
Gough, Sharpley, Vander Pal & Griffiths (2014) *'The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) in Victorian Government primary schools, Australia'*	The benefits and challenges of PYP implementation in Victorian government schools. Case Study: 5 schools. Funding: IB.
Ledger, Vidovich & O'Donoghue (2014) *'Global to local curriculum policy processes: The enactment of the International Baccalaureate in remote international schools'*	Curriculum policy in remote Indonesian international schools (Enactment of the PYP). Case study: 3 schools. Funding: unknown.

Figure 2.3. Literature addressing the reasons school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme.

The research presented above only includes the literature which, in some way, addressed the question of why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme. Due to the limited number of studies found, and the brevity with which this question was addressed in these studies, the search for literature was expanded to include studies which

[1] The acronym 'IBNA' refers to International Baccalaureate North America.
[2] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.
[3] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.

addressed the same question but focused on the Middle Years Programme. This was believed to be an appropriate strategy, as both the Primary Years Programme and Middle Years Programme structures are closely aligned, and they share many common philosophical and pedagogical approaches (Lee et al., 2012; Sperandio, 2010). The findings from the Middle Years Programme studies, could therefore potentially shed a light on the reasons for deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme. The results of the second search, which yielded an additional six items published between 2010 and 2019, are listed in Figure 2.4. These six additional items brought the total number of relevant items of literature found to eleven. Note that the papers detailed in Figure 2.4 bring the literature on this topic up to 2018.

Author(s) (Date) 'Title'	Research focus/ design/ funding
Sperandio (2010) *'School program selection: Why schools worldwide choose the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program'*	Self-reported factors influencing schools' choice to offer the MYP[4]. Survey: 336 schools. Funding: IB.
Visser (2010) *'International education in a national context: Introducing the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme in Dutch public schools'*	Conditions for the successful implementation of international education in Dutch public schools. Comparative study: Interviews/ questionnaires with School managers & MYP Coordinators. Funding: IB (published in the JRIE[5]).
Monreal (2016) *'Is there 'space' for International Baccalaureate? A case study exploring space and the adoption of the IB Middle Years Programme'*	The notion of space in the adoption of the MYP in South Carolina, United States, schools. Single site case study. Funding: Independent (PhD Study).
Wright, Lee, Tang & Tsui (2016) *'Why offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme? A comparison between schools in Asia-Pacific and other regions'*	The reasons schools in Asia Pacific choose to offer the MYP. Survey: 228 MYP co-ordinators Funding: unknown (published in the JRIE).
Ateşkan, Dulun & Faber-Lane (2016) *'MYP implementation in Turkey'*	Investigation of outcomes of MYP implementation in 3 Turkish schools. Case study: 3 schools Funding: IB.
Perry, Ledger & Dickson (2018) *'What are the benefits of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme for teaching and learning? Perspectives from stakeholders in Australia'*	Examination of the perspectives of key stakeholders on the benefits of the MYP in Australia. Comparative case study: 5 schools Funding: IB.

Figure 2.4. Literature addressing the reasons school decision makers decide to implement the Middle Years Programme.

Complementing the eleven items of literature found is Hara's (2018) recently published literature review of the reasons that schools adopt IB programmes. His review does not include any literature concerning the Primary Years Programme, but only focuses on items of

[4] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.
[5] The acronym 'JRIE' refers to the *Journal of Research in International Education.*

literature concerning the adoption of the Diploma Programme in four western countries (the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia). Hara (2018) also includes Visser's (2010) study of the Middle Years Programme in The Netherlands, which has already been considered in this review. While Hara's (2018) literature review does not add a great deal to this discussion, his concluding comments, in which he suggests that there are 'significant variations among IB schools in terms of the reasons for adoption' (p. 235), are of note. He goes on to suggest that the desire to 'foster greater internationalism', and to make 'schools more attractive and accountable' (p. 235) are the two most common reasons behind the decision to adopt IB programmes. These two reasons repeatedly appear in the Primary Years Programme and Middle Years Programme literature listed in Figures 2.3 and 2.4 as well.

To assist with a deeper analysis and synthesis of the literature, Sperandio's (2010) nine categories of reasons for implementing the Middle Years Programme were used to guide the literature analysis and organise the findings from each study. Although Sperandio's (2010) categories were specific to the Middle Years Programme, it was believed that there was sufficient overlap that these categories could be used to analyse and categorise the findings from Primary Years Programme specific studies. Sperandio's (2010) nine categories are: (A) Innovative features; (B) Administrative efficiency; (C) Philosophy; (D) Global perspectives; (E) Reputation/marketing opportunities; (F) Professional development; (G) International networking; (H) External validation; and, (I) Pedagogy. It was, however, observed that Sperandio's (2010) categories focused on the IB programme elements, and did not consider any other factors which may influence the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme or the Middle Years Programme. Therefore, four categories that were not linked to the programmes themselves were added to the list, as they were found to reoccur in the literature that was reviewed. These four additional categories are: (J) Improving student achievement; (K) Political influences; (L) Community demographics and demands; and, (M) Globalisation forces. Brief descriptions of each of the categories of reasons are presented in Figure 2.5.

Category	Reasons for implementing or Primary Years Programme or the Middle Years Programme include:
A – Innovative features.	The significant, relevant, challenging, rigorous, authentic curriculum; the conceptually based curriculum; the values of the programmes (IB Learner Profile); the interdisciplinary teaching; the holistic approach; the high quality & standards; the high expectations of students; the focus on action/ service/creativity.
B - Administrative efficiency.	The close links with other IB programmes ('seamless' curriculum); the communication with one programme developer/partner.
C - Philosophy.	The programme's mission, values & aims fitting with the school's mission, values & aims; the opportunity for a school to align their aims with the IB and the programmes.
D - Global perspectives.	The development of multinational, multicultural & international awareness amongst students & school community.
E – Reputation/ marketing opportunities.	The development of an international image for the school; increasing the ability to attract high achieving students; international recognition of the school; a point of difference to distinguish itself from other schools; the development of a positive reputation for the school.
F - Professional development.	The IB partnership & support offered; the ability to access quality teacher training; the clear guidelines and standards.
G - International networking.	The links to other local, regional, national and international schools; the membership of an international organisation.
H - External validation.	The internationally recognised MYP[6] & DP[7] qualifications; the regular assessment of school & programme standards.
I – Pedagogy.	The ability to customise content to school needs; the choices of content & assessment methods; the inquiry-based pedagogy; the focus on learning how to learn; the expectation of self-regulated and independent learning; the contemporary teaching & learning approaches.
J - Improving student achievement.	The desire to improve student learning and outcomes.
K - Political influences.	Changes in government education policies; the demand for accountability & quality; the response to local or national political stability or instability; intra-school politics.
L - Community demographics/ demands.	Changing migration patterns; changing parental and stakeholder expectations.
M - Globalisation forces.	The response to opportunities presented by technological advances; the influence of media/social media; the access to information.

Figure 2.5. Categories of reasons for Primary Years Programme or Middle Years Programme implementation.

After all the relevant literature was analysed and synthesized, the reasons for deciding to implement either the Primary Years Programme or the Middle Years Programmes were collated and are presented in Figure 2.6. This figure has been organised into two parts delineated by a bold line. The first part (above the line) features the Primary Years Programme

[6] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.
[7] The acronym 'DP' refers to the IB's Diploma Programme.

specific literature in chronological order (most recent first). The second part (below the line) features the Middle Years Programme literature, again, in chronological order (most recent first). The dots indicate categories of reasons which appeared in the findings of each of the studies reviewed. The shaded sections show which studies the categories of reasons did not appear.

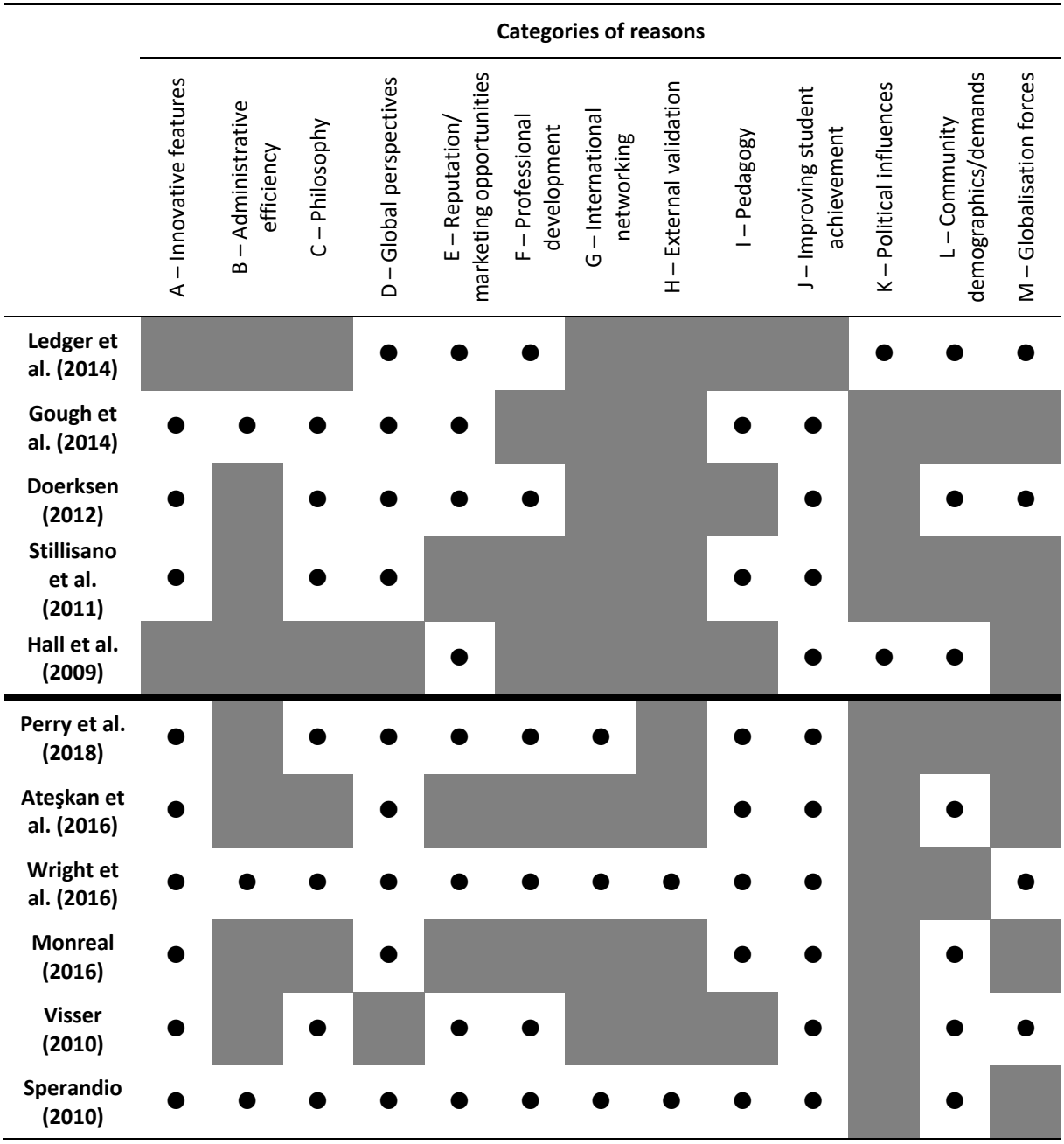

Figure 2.6. Reasons for implementing the Primary Years Programme or the Middle Years Programme: Synthesis of literature.

Once the relevant findings from these studies were collated, some general observations were made. First, the fact that there is a divide based on the programme (Primary Years Programme or Middle Years Programme) must be kept in mind. In addition, the fact that eight out of the

eleven items of literature are either IB funded or appear in the *Journal of Research in International Education* must also be kept in mind. That said, this body of literature, unsurprisingly, reflects much of the general literature regarding school curriculum change, in that the desire to improve student achievement is the reason most commonly reported for why school decision makers make the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme or the Middle Years Programme as this reason is reported in ten out of the eleven items.

Another theme which emerged from this literature was that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme or Middle Years Programme seemed to be based primarily on the positive perceptions of the IB programmes held by school administrators, leaders, teachers and parents (for example, Doerksen, 2012; Gough et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2009; Monreal, 2016; Perry et al., 2018; Stillisano et al., 2011). It is unclear from the literature where these positive perceptions originate, but it is assumed that positive media reportage, IB World Schools' marketing materials, and anecdotal feedback from school administrators, leaders, teachers, and parents who have experience of the IB programmes, may all contribute positively to the development of such perceptions.

It was also observed that the Middle Years Programme literature was more recent when compared to that available for the Primary Years Programme. It is suspected that the recency of this literature is a result of the IB's research investment following the review and relaunch of the Middle Years Programme in 2014 as four out of the six items listed in Figure 2.4 are IB funded and were published after the review and relaunch.

As can be observed in Figure 2.6, amongst the Middle Years Programme literature there appears to be more focused investigation regarding the reasons why school decision makers would decide to implement the Middle Years Programme. Indeed, in two out of the six items reviewed this was one of the study's main questions (see Sperandio, 2010; Wright et al., 2016). In comparison, none of the Primary Years Programme specific literature addressed the reasons for programme implementation to the depth that the Middle Years Programme literature does. The demonstrated large gaps in the Primary Years Programme specific literature and, therefore, in the knowledge and understanding of the reasons school decision makers make the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, is worthy of note. It is unknown if the gaps in the literature are an indication that those reasons for programme

implementation are not relevant to the Primary Years Programme, or if the literature failed to investigate and report on those reasons.

It is acknowledged that the literature goes some way in explaining why school decision makers would decide to implement the IB programmes. It can be observed from the literature that the driving factor in deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme is the desire to improve student learning outcomes. However, a lot of the studies undertaken to date either do not provide enough detail or just focus on the Middle Years Programme. As demonstrated, there is a lack of literature specifically addressing the reasons why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme, and this situation continues to leave questions unanswered. Given the phenomenon of an increasing number of school decision makers deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, reporting on why this decision is made remains pressing.

The process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme

When considering how school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme, Gough et al.'s (2014) study is the only one found to date that commented, albeit very briefly, on the process. They reported that in all their five case study schools, the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme came from 'school leadership and staff' (p. 62). It is unclear if the school leadership referred to included only senior leaders (i.e., Principals or Vice-principals) or if it included middle leadership (for example, heads of year groups) as well. This distinction is important as it potentially can reflect the extent to which day-to-day curriculum decision makers were involved in the Primary Years Programme decision-making process. Gough et al. (2014) also reported that in two case study schools, the school principal 'took strong leadership' during the process (p. 62). The definition of this phrase is absent, and it is assumed that by using this particular phrase, Gough et al. (2014) meant that the principals took control, and that they were the primary drivers of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. A more collaborative decision process appears to have been adopted in the other three case study schools and involved staff in the decision-making process. Apart from describing the decision process as individually led or collaboratively undertaken, Gough et al. (2014) do not provide further details of how the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was reached by the school decision makers.

Another aspect of the decision process mentioned by Gough et al. (2014) was the role of parents and school management bodies in the decision process. They report, again only in general terms, that once the school leadership and staff decided to recommend Primary Years Programme implementation, the proposal was taken to the school's management body, who, given their fiduciary responsibilities, had to be supportive of, and endorse the recommendation. Gough et al. (2014) note that,

> Although most of the principals reported that it was the principal and staff who agreed to take the proposal to implement the PYP[8] to the school council, because of the statutory responsibilities of school councils in Victorian schools, the school council still needs to be supportive of the initiative at all stages of the authorisation and implementation process (p. 64).

Beyond making these statements, Gough et al. (2014) did not elaborate any further on how school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme. It is unknown if this was beyond the remit of their study, or they simply chose not to focus closely on the decision-making process because they found vastly different processes were being undertaken at each school.

As indicated, to date, Gough et al.'s (2014) study is the only one which makes any mention of the process of, and the role of school leadership in making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. This situation again forced the search for literature to be expanded to include literature which focused on the Middle Years Programme. The only two items which were generated from this expanded search were Ateşkan, Dulun and Faber-Lane's (2016), and Sperandio's (2010) studies. Ateşkan et al.'s (2016) findings are closely reflective of Gough et al.'s (2016), and therefore, shed very little further light on the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme. They simply state that,

> For the most part, it starts with the principals, deputy principals, and directors[9] of the school expressing interest. If they agree and want to pursue this, they meet with the board. The board accepts or rejects the proposal (Ateşkan et al., 2016, p. 33).

Sperandio (2010) offers slightly more insight. Her findings suggest that the decision to implement the Middle Years Programme was made only after school decision makers have

[8] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.

[9] Ateşkan et al. (2016) refer to any other senior members of the Schools' leadership teams as directors. These personnel are employees of the School rather than members of the Board of Directors, or similar governing or management body (who are usually volunteers).

engaged in a 'thorough and inclusive process, driven by a clear understanding of need in the current school context and a projected future' (p. 145). Given that the decision to change a school's curriculum framework has a potentially wide-ranging impact on the school, its culture and on student outcomes (Dunn, 2015), it is not surprising that Sperandio's (2010) study suggests that a careful and complete process should be undertaken to make the decision to implement an IB programme. Sperandio's (2010) findings also suggest that prior to engaging in the process of deciding to implement an IB programme, school decision makers have a clear vision for their school's future. This suggestion reflects much of the literature surrounding change management, which encourages leaders to have 'a clear vision of where the organisation should end up' (Schein, 2010, p. 293).

The few items resulting from the search for literature demonstrates that inquiry into, and reporting of how school decision makers decide to implement IB programmes is very limited. Given the phenomenon of an increasing number of school decision makers deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, reporting on the process by which this decision is made is clearly underdeveloped and an area which urgently requires further investigation.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Up to this point the rapid uptake of IB programmes, particularly the Primary Years Programme, by schools around the world in recent years has been demonstrated, and, according to IB statistics, this phenomenon is continuing. This implies that a growing number of school decision makers around the world are making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in their schools. Given this situation, it is of interest that very limited independent empirical literature exists which investigates this phenomenon. An in-depth exploration, which seeks to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is desperately needed to enable a deeper understanding of this 'big, one-off' (Blenko et al., 2010, p. 58) decision and the phenomenon of the increasing number of primary schools turning to the IB for their curriculum framework.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to seek an understanding of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The overarching research question that has been designed to guide this study is:

How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?

Subsequent to the review of the literature, it was believed that by investigating the why and how considerations, a holistic and complete explanation of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be achieved. To this end, the following two research sub-questions have been adopted to assist in this inquiry:

1) *Why do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?*
2) *How do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

In an attempt to aid the reader, and to add further clarification regarding the scope of the study, Figure 2.7 provides a diagrammatic representation of the period of time during the process of decision making in which this study concentrates. A deeper understanding of why and how the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is made can be achieved through investigation from the *trigger point* (i.e., the point at which the implementation of the Primary Years Programme was first considered), and the *decision point* (i.e., the point at which the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was made) as evident in Figure 2.7 below.

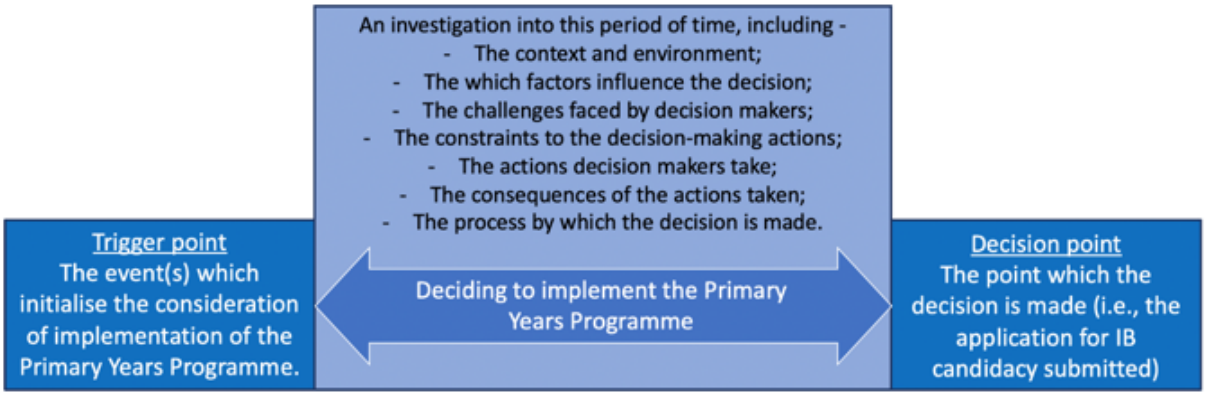

Figure 2.7. Diagrammatic representation of the time period in which this study concentrates.

It is essential that independent empirical inquiry is undertaken with the intention of clearly and unambiguously addressing the research question by exploring the why and how considerations of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The clarification of the research problem and purpose, as well as the research question in Chapter 1, and the research sub-questions in this chapter, guide the research design for this study as presented in the next chapter, Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, using the following research question which was developed to guide the inquiry:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the research design that is in response to this research question. The review and analysis of the literature provided previously, has shown that there are an increasing number of school decision makers around the world who are making the decision to change their schools' curriculum framework and implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme. It has been demonstrated that there are only a limited number of scholarly items which attempt to explain this decision, and it continues to be superficially understood. With these circumstances in mind, this chapter provides the reader with the design in the conduct of this research. It commences with an explanation of the research foundation, and describes the philosophical stance taken, along with the associated epistemological and methodological beliefs which underpin this study. In subsequent sections, the method is presented and discussed. These elements are essential to lay out at the beginning of a research study as they provide the structures necessary 'to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the … question as unambiguously as possible' (De Vaus, 2001, p. 9).

RESEARCH PARADIGM

At the very outset of any research, it is vital that the researcher's philosophical position be made clear. These assumptions, often unspoken, underlie the research and assist in developing a more sophisticated understanding of the approach taken (Lyon, 2017). Very simply, a research paradigm is a framework which is oriented by the researcher's view of the world (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018), and as a result guides the associated assumptions

regarding the approach covering all aspects of the study such as 'ethics, reality, knowledge and systematic inquiry' (Mertens, 2012, p. 256).

While many differing paradigms are outlined in the literature (O'Donoghue, 2019), this study adopts the interpretivist paradigm, as it sits well with this student researcher's philosophical position and moreover, has been widely adopted in educational research and practice (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Interpretivism is characterised by inquiry at the level of the individual and aims to understand their subjective world view (Cohen et al., 2018). It holds that individuals view events, situations and contexts through their own world view (Gerring, 2007, p. 214), which leads them to construct their own interpretations of, and in turn, responses to those events. Since the focus is on individual meaning making, it is recognised that there are multiple views and interpretations of each event, situation or context. Interpretivist researchers, with a direct lineage to the epistemological position of constructionism, seek to understand the individual's behaviours, attitudes and interactions from that individual's point of view (Cohen et al., 2018). The interpretivist stance is, perhaps, best summed up by Becker (1970), who states that,

> to understand an individual's behaviour, we must know how he perceives the situation, the obstacles he believed he had to face, the alternatives he saw opening up to him. We cannot understand the effects of the range of possibilities, delinquent subcultures, social norms, and other explanations of behaviour which are commonly invoked, unless we consider them from the actor's point of view (p. 64).

It is with this understanding that interpretivist studies focus on the individual in their natural settings, and recognise that the results of the research are highly context-specific (Broido & Manning, 2002). Placing this study within the interpretivist paradigm guides understanding and assists with explaining the realities of the Primary Years Programme decision makers, as its strength lies in being able to explore their perceptions, resulting behaviours and actions *in situ* (Punch, 2009).

One of the 'central tenets' of interpretivism (Mustafa, 2011, p. 25) is the belief that an individual's views and interpretations can be drawn out and comprehended through a deep, ongoing, interactive and interdependent relationship between the researcher and the participant (Broido & Manning, 2002). Given this close relationship, there is recognition that the knowledge and understanding generated is not value free, as all involved in the research

(i.e., the researcher, the participants, and the research site) bring their own subjectivities (Scotland, 2012) which affects all aspects of the research (Broido & Manning, 2002). Interpretivist researchers explore verbal data, and therefore, lean towards inductive approaches and qualitative methods (Thanh & Thanh, 2015), to gain an understanding of both the participants' perspectives, and the role that the context plays in the formation of those views, perceptions, attitudes and actions (Scotland, 2012).

Case study methodology

Consistent with an interpretivist paradigm, case study has been selected as the methodological approach. There are many conceptualisations of case study (Cohen et al., 2018). It has been described as a 'study of an instance in action' (Adelman, Kemmis & Jenkins, 1976, p. 141), 'a study of the singular, the particular, the unique' (Simmons, 2009, p. 3), and 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context' (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Stake (1995), a researcher who is highly regarded as a leading qualitative case study methodologist, defines case study as an examination into the 'particularity and complexity' (p. xi) of a phenomenon. Merriam (2009), like other qualitative case study methodologists, places the choices made regarding the phenomenon being investigated (the case) as the central characteristic of her definition of case study. She defines a case as a single 'bounded system' (p. 40) and insists that as long as the phenomenon under study and its boundaries can be specified, case study methodology can be employed.

In relation to this particular research, the case under study is school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, and it is bounded by the location and time period in which that decision was made. To add further clarity, the temporal boundaries of this case are defined by the trigger and decision points (see Figure 2.7).

Two distinct approaches to the design of a case study are widely reported in the literature. Yin (2009), who is also regarded as a seminal case study methodologist, takes a positivist approach, and saw advantage in the quantification of qualitative data. He, therefore, advocates that case studies adopt this type of approach. Stake (1995), at the other end of the spectrum, promotes an interpretivist approach founded on a constructivist epistemology (Yazan, 2015) with an inductive design that incorporates qualitative data collection and analysis that relies in the identification of patterns and the development of themes. As this

study's research foundations closely align with Stake's (1995) interpretivist approach to case study methodology, it was, therefore, deemed the most suitable approach.

Stake (1995) describes three types of case studies:

- Intrinsic – where the case itself is of interest;
- Instrumental – where an issue within the case is the focus; and,
- Collective – where more than one case is explored (pp. 3-5).

This study is consistent with Stake's (1995) definition of an instrumental case study. An instrumental case study was adopted because it allows an investigation of the phenomenon (school's decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme) within the specific context of the implementation of the Primary Years Programme. In other words, the implementation process was not the focus of this study. It, however, played a supportive role, and was seen as the vehicle, or tool, through which understanding of school's decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be facilitated and achieved. It is for these reasons that case study is ideal when investigation and explanation of complex social phenomena is required (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995), as it pays 'attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case' (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 379). It provides a holistic view of real-life events in context, and allows an intensive, in-depth and detailed analysis (Flyvberg, 2006) of the phenomena and the contextual conditions. Case study assists in exploring how and why events occur and is particularly useful in exploring 'the process and dynamics of change' (Simmons, 2009, p. 23). When compared to other research methodologies, case study's flexible approach allows researchers to encompass a variety of data sources to yield 'rich, "thick" description of the phenomenon under study' (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). This allows the reported observations, as well as the uniqueness of the situation and the individuals involved to be experienced vicariously by the audience through the case study report (Donmoyer, 2009). Case study can advance existing human understanding (Stake, 1995) as it can shed new insight into phenomena (Searle, 1999), and thus provides a good foundation to stimulate further study (Flyvberg, 2006).

While the strengths of employing case study research have been explored, it is essential to also acknowledge its limitations. The various limitations are described in the literature, with the two most common being the inability to generalise, and researcher subjectivity and bias. Due to case study's highly specific, context bound nature, neither the study itself, nor the

findings of the study can be replicated (Searle, 1999; Stake, 1995). The results, therefore, cannot be applied to other contexts, which leaves the reader to make their own judgements about the relevance and significance of the results in their own contexts (Simmons, 2009). The researcher's own subjectivities (Flyvberg, 2006; Searle, 1999) also appear as a major limitation of case study. The researcher's personal involvement, and the inevitable interactive role taken (Simmons, 2009), produces concerns about the level of bias in the results of case study (Garger, 2013). Being aware of this is essential, and making known the researcher's bias is part of this. As a student researcher, my positioning as researcher was outlined in Chapter 1, Introduction, of this thesis where it is stated that I was previously a classroom teacher in an IB World School and, having worked with the Primary Years Programme, I have an interest in the rapid uptake of the programme in schools around the world.

While Stake's (1995) approach has been adopted for this study, this researcher is well aware that there are other researchers who criticise it. Appreciating Stake's (1995) position where he declares that case study is not generalisable, and Bassey's (1999) concern for outcomes that seem to rely on the need to generalise, it is important to state from the outset that it was clearly understood that the findings from this study could only be used to understand school's decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in a particular context and, therefore, only contribute a small part to the larger process of seeking to understand this phenomenon. It is in this way that the findings are left to the reader to generalise to their own context, and therefore this research makes no effort to generalise the findings to all or any context other than that of the context of the study.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses problem-based methodology (Robinson, 1993; Robinson & Lai, 2006) as an analytical framework to assist in making sense of the decision-making actions of the school decision makers involved in the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. Problem-based methodology has been described as 'a fit for purpose model of problem-solving and decision-making' (Robinson & Donald, 2015, p. 96), and provides a framework to 'understand educational problems in terms of the theories of action of the relevant agents and the factors that sustain those theories' (Haig, 2014, p. 353). Problem-based methodology is a 'theory of inquiry' (Haig, 2014, p. 354) which can be used to recognise participants' real and perceived contextual and personal constraints to explain their decision-making actions

and the 'intended and unintended consequences' of those actions (Robinson & Donald, 2015, p. 98).

Problem-based methodology was selected as the analytical framework for this study as it allows for the identification of the reasons behind the decisions that were made, and for the ability to expose the process of making those decisions. It is built on three foundational components:

(a) Naturalistic decision-making approach to descriptive decision theory –
Descriptive decision theory takes a pragmatic perspective and focuses on describing and explaining how people actually make decisions rather than how people should make decisions (Hansson, 2005). The naturalistic decision-making approach extends descriptive decision theory by focusing on how people actually function and make decisions in everyday, real-life situations (Klein, 2015), as opposed to laboratory settings.

(b) Constraint inclusion approach to problem-solving –
The constraint inclusion approach to problem-solving was developed by the philosopher Thomas Nickles (1981), who states that a problem is 'a demand that a goal be achieved, plus the constraints on the manner in which it is achieved' (p. 111), and without a demand for a solution, a problem does not exist. Therefore, in any problem-solving situation, the constraints on the solution to the problem must be made explicit.

(c) Theory of action –
Argyris and Schön (1974) propose that by attributing a *theory of action* to a person, group or organization, behaviours can be predicted and explained. Under the problem-based methodology framework the constraints on a problem, the actions taken to solve the problem, and the intended and unintended consequences of those actions together constitute the theory of action. By explicitly identifying all these components, an explanation of particular behaviours can be developed (Robinson, 1993).

It must be noted that problem-based methodology's view of a theory of action differs to that which is used elsewhere in the literature. Whereas in problem-based methodology, a theory of action can analyse past individual or group decision-making and problem-solving behaviours and actions (Robinson, 1993), a theory of action, as it generally appears in the literature, is comparatively more futurist, and refers to a clearly articulated, sequential plan, strategy or list of actions needed in order to solve a problem or achieve a goal at an organisational level (Fullan, 2006). It includes the plan's design and set up (Coffey, 2019), and incorporates the actions to be taken, the reasons for those actions and the intended results of those actions (Katz, 2013). This futurist view of a theory of action is not the intended perspective for this study, rather Robinson's (1993) view, which investigates the constraints

on a problem, the actions taken, and the consequences of those actions, provides a more effective view from which to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

METHOD

In the following sections, the researcher describes the various procedures undertaken to identify and secure participants (including site and site participants), and to gather, manage and analyse data. Issues surrounding this study's trustworthiness, ethics, assumptions and limitations are also addressed.

Participants

Identification of research site

The purpose of this study is to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme and sought to investigate this in a *recently authorised* Primary Years Programme school. It is with this purpose in mind that schools authorised between 1 January 2016 and 30 April 2018 were categorised as recently authorised. When considering participants for this study there was a risk of diminished individual and institutional memory in schools which had been authorised prior to this time period. This specific time period was defined in an effort to mitigate the potential loss of relevant data from the participants' memories and from the research sites' archives. In addition, the time period defined, also assisted in the manageability of the study by limiting the potential number of sites. With these delimitations in mind, the following criteria were used to locate a suitable site for participation.

The target site for this study was a school which was in the process of completing, or had already completed the Primary Years Programme decision-making process. Such a school was either:

a) An IB Primary Years Programme Candidate School (one that was either preparing for, or was in the process of Primary Years Programme authorisation); or,
b) A recently authorised IB Primary Years Programme World School[10].

[10] For an overview of the different phases of the IB programme authorisation process, see Figure 1.3.

A school which satisfied any one of these two criteria was targeted as it potentially contained (a) personnel with recent and intimate experience of the school's Primary Years Programme decision process, and (b) records documenting the reasons behind, and the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, both of which would assist to address the research question. The approach for sampling that was adopted followed Bryman's (2016) suggestion that criteria be set to allow for purposive sampling and as a method of selecting an appropriate site that contains the necessary features in order to address the research questions. While IB Interested Schools (i.e., schools in the consideration phase of the authorisation process (see Figure 1.3)) could have also been considered as potential research sites, it was determined that these would be removed from consideration due to the lack of information publicly available to identify such schools. Potential research sites were identified using the following procedures:

IB Candidate Schools – It seems a usual practice that schools which have applied for Primary Years Programme candidacy inform their communities through their usual communication channels, including the school's website, online newsletters and/or other school publications. To identify these schools, Google searches were conducted. Examples of the search terms that were used included the following and/or a combination of the following:

'IB' or 'International Baccalaureate';
'PYP' or 'Primary Years Programme';
'IB Candidate School';
'IB pre-authorisation' or 'IB authorisation'.

It was acknowledged that this method of identifying IB Candidate Schools would not produce a complete list. The IB does not make a list of Candidate Schools publicly available, and not all Candidate Schools clearly indicate this status on their websites, or through other publicly accessible channels. As no formal investigation has taken place around the reasons why a school would or would not publicly advertise their IB pre-authorisation status, any attempt at explaining this would be speculation. Such speculation does not add any substantive value to this study.

IB World Schools – It seems a usual practice for schools which have been authorised as IB World Schools to indicate the fact on their websites (either in the 'About Us' section or by using the IB World School logo) and through their usual communication channels (i.e., school

website and/or newsletters). To identify these schools two online search tools were used - (a) Google, and (b) the IB's 'Find an IB School' search tool (IB, 2019e).

Google searches using similar search terms as those conducted for IB Candidate Schools (listed above) were used with the addition of the following terms:

'IB World School';
'2016', '2017', '2018';
'IB authorised'.

Details of IB Primary Years Programme World Schools and their authorisation dates are available using the 'Find an IB School' search tool available on the IB website (IB, 2019e). While search filters are available, including, for example, searches by region, country, programme, and language of instruction, the results produced are only listed alphabetically by the school's name. A manual data compilation and sorting process (with the assistance of Microsoft Excel) to extract and sort the details of Primary Years Programme schools authorised between 1 January 2016 and 30 April 2018 was undertaken to produce a list of schools which were eligible for this study. Both these search procedures produced the number of eligible sites as shown in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1.

Results of the search for eligible sites.

Type of School	Number identified
IB Candidate Schools	26
IB World Schools	337
Total number identified as eligible	**363**

With the large number of schools identified as potential sites (363 sites), and their diverse worldwide locations, an additional criterion addressing location was needed to make the recruitment of a site more manageable. Sites in the IB's Asia Pacific Region were considered most appropriate due to the location of the researcher. After further sorting, the three countries in the Asia Pacific region with the greatest number of recently authorised Primary Years Programme schools were Australia with twenty-six eligible schools, China with twenty-five eligible schools and India with twenty-one eligible schools.

These potential research sites were then contacted and invited to participate in the study. An introduction/permission to conduct research letter was sent by email to each school's Head of School (or similar role). A copy of the introduction/permission to conduct research letter is included as Appendix B. The Heads of Schools were asked to confirm by return email whether permission was granted for their school to participate in this study. As only one research site granted permission and confirmed interest in participation, this site was selected by default. Given this situation, the researcher made the decision that a single site case study would be suitable to establish the landscape, and commence the building of knowledge and understanding around the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. It is important to note that the researcher did not have any previous relationship with the selected school or the individual participants.

Description of research site

In this section, the salient features of the selected research site are outlined in detail as they assist the reader to fully understand the site and the context of the study. The information contained in this section has been derived from a number of sources including interviews with the participants - the School Principal and the Head of Elementary; the School's documents and website; the city government's reports and websites; and, various local news media reportage. These sources have been de-identified to avoid the potential ethical breach which formal citing would raise. Where appropriate, information from participant interviews has been attributed to the particular participant (identified by role), and information from documentary sources has been indicated as such. This section begins with an introduction to the School site and describes some general features, such as the School's physical location, its faith-based affiliation and its constitutional structure. This is followed by descriptions of the School under the six contextual features which bear an influence over leadership practice, as identified and elaborated by Hallinger (2018). These six features are (a) the institutional context; (b) the community context; (c) the national cultural context; (d) the economic context; (e) the political context; and, (f) the school improvement context. Although the six features are listed separately, there are some areas of significant overlap. As indicated in Chapter 1: Outline of thesis, the researcher has used the capitalised word 'School' to refer to the research site itself, so that the reader may be able to differentiate between references to it and other schools, or schools in general.

Physical location

The School is spread across three different campuses within the city, with the Early Learning Centre/Pre-school (students' ages one to four years), the Elementary School (grades one to five) and the High School (grades six to twelve), each occupying a different site (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The School has recently moved the grade four- and five-year groups to the High School site to promote integration and communication between the Elementary and High Schools (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

An international through-train school

The city's Education Authorities classify the School as an *international school* because it provides a *non-local curriculum* and uses English as a medium of instruction (Government website). The School can be categorised as a Type A: Traditional International School according to Hayden and Thompson's (2013) Typology of International Schools. It is one of six *through-train* (i.e., it caters for pre-school to grade twelve) international schools offering three IB programmes (Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme) operating in the city (IB, 2019e).

Faith based affiliation

The School is a Modern Orthodox independent Jewish Day School (School website).

Mission

The aims and values of the School are incorporated into its mission statement. The School is committed to academic excellence, as well as fostering each child's personal and spiritual growth and development. The School's mission statement and values, in general terms, reflect the mission statement of the IB. This aligns with one of the IB authorisation requirements as outlined in Chapter 1: IB authorisation process and conditions.

IB authorisation and WASC accreditation

The School is a three-programme IB World School (School Website). It was authorised to offer the Diploma Programme and Middle Years Programme in 2011, and the Primary Years Programme in 2018 (IB, 2019e). In addition to holding IB World School status, the School is also accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools - Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (School website), which is a US-based, non-governmental body that

provides accreditation and evaluation services to schools which have demonstrated a commitment to quality learning and improvement (WASC, 2019).

The practice of seeking external accreditation is not unusual for many international schools in the region. Other bodies from which such schools seek accreditation include the *Council of International Schools* (COIS, 2019) based in The Netherlands; *New England Association of Schools and Colleges (Commission on International Education)* (NEASC, 2019), based in the United States; and, the *Educational Collaborative for International Schools* (ECIS, 2019), based in the United Kingdom. Such accrediting bodies are usually membership based, non-governmental, and offer, in addition to accreditation services, professional development and recruitment services, as well as grants and awards.

Constitutional structure

The School is registered as an *international school* under the city's *Education Ordinance* and a *company limited by guarantee* under the city's *Companies Ordinance* (Government website). It is also registered as an *association* under the city's *Societies Ordinance*, and has been granted *charitable status*, therefore, enjoys tax exemption under the relevant city's *Inland Revenue Ordinance* (Government website). The School is governed under a *Constitution*, and *Memorandum and Articles of Association*. These documents are required to comply with the city's regulations and laws.

Institutional context

The city's education system is a complex mix of government, government-aided, government-subsidised, private, independent and international schools (Government website). All education providers, including those that provide *shadow education* (i.e. 'the system of private supplementary tutoring in academic subjects beyond the hours of mainstream formal schooling' (Bray, 2006, p. 515)), must be registered with the city's Education Authorities (Government website). There are sixty international schools in the city (Government website), with thirty-one of these being categorized as through-train international schools. Of these thirty-one through-train schools, six are IB World Schools. International schools, although private, must be properly constituted and registered with various government departments. They are subject to the city's corporate laws and regulations, and are, therefore, required to hold Annual General Meetings and submit audited accounts (Government website).

International Schools are subject to some directives issued by the city's education authorities, including directives concerning school closures (for example, for adverse weather conditions), maximum student enrolments and the demographic mix of students allowed to be admitted, and maximum tuition fee rates chargeable. International schools, however, are given a great deal of autonomy in many operational areas including student and teacher recruitment, curriculum development, professional development and fund-raising (Government website). The city's international school sector is growing as a result of the government recognising the need to develop and expand the international education sector (Government reports) following pressure from various business groups. It has enacted policies to make resources and facilities available for the sector to expand. The School, therefore, like other international schools in the city, operates with great autonomy within the education system. It must, however, regularly report to the city's Education Authorities and ensure that it fulfils all its obligations as an education provider, a business, an association, and a charity.

Community context

The School serves the Jewish community of approximately four thousand people, by providing both a Jewish and secular education for their children (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The Jewish community has had a long history in the city, with many Jewish merchants and entrepreneurs involved in the early establishment and continued development of the city as a business hub (School website). Many people in the Jewish community are permanent residents (with the associated *right of abode* status), which offers some stability in the school population (Community website). The Head of Elementary described this as a *'very niche market'* in an *'amazing context'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Parent body

There is an active, visible and supportive parent body (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018), which is represented by the School's Parent Teacher Association. As well as fundraising for the School, the Parent Teacher Association is involved in seeking parent volunteers for classrooms, and for co-ordinating social events and programs for the parent body (School website). The Parent Teacher Association holds two ex-officio positions on the Board of Directors (the Board). The School's management structure, which has been compiled from interview and document data, is outlined in Figure 3.1.

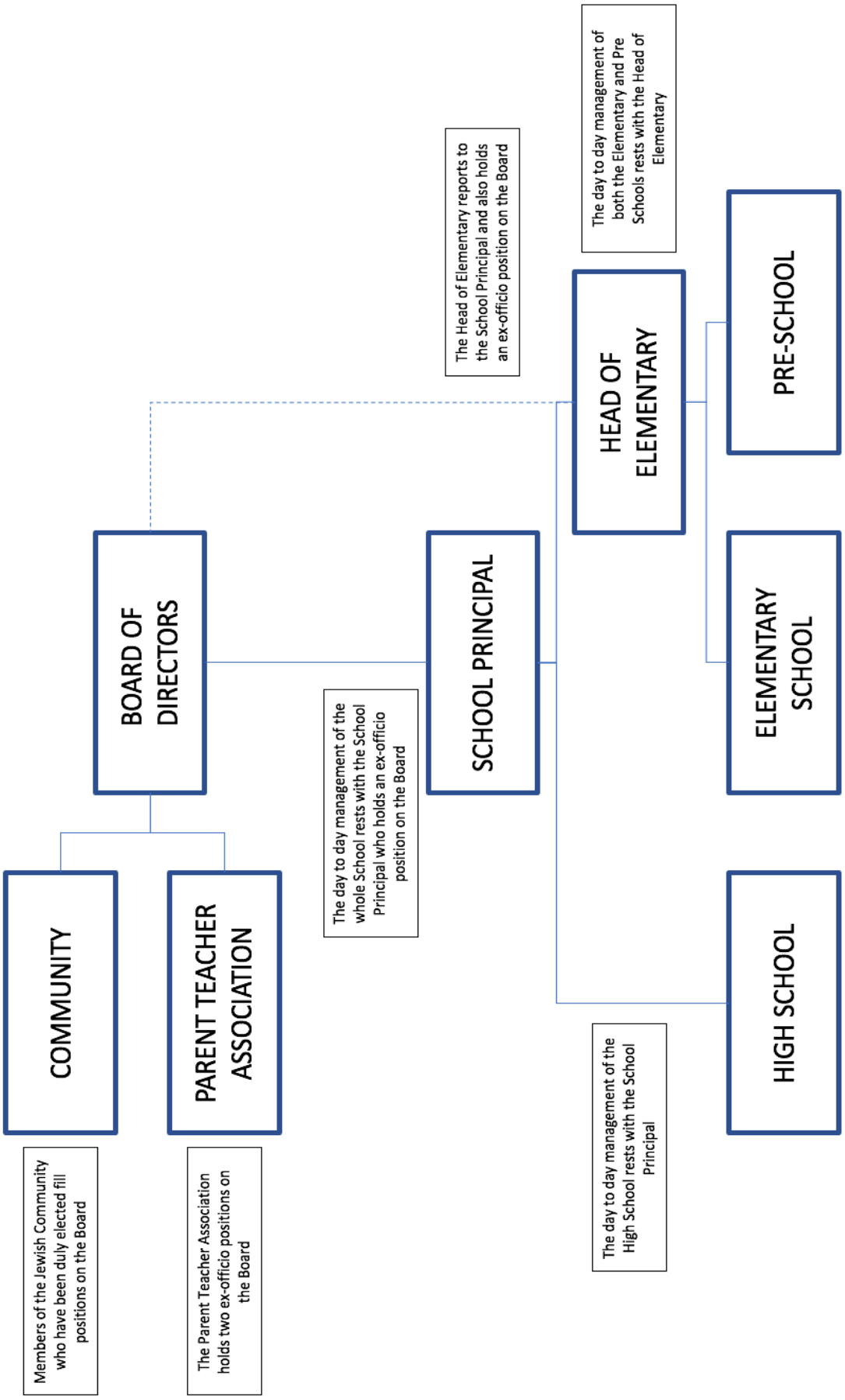

Figure 3.1. The School's management structure.

A large percentage of the parent body is comprised by an expatriate, middle-class demographic, with professional or business backgrounds. As parents pay school fees, there is an expectation that the School will provide a high-quality education for their children (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). There is also an expectation amongst the parent, staff and student communities, that on completion of grade twelve, students will move on to higher and further education institutions either locally or elsewhere in the world (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018; School website; 25th Anniversary video 2016). The expectation of high academic achievement and admission to tertiary education institutions is not unusual in the global international school sector.

Student body

There are approximately four hundred and twenty students enrolled at the School with eighteen different nationalities represented within the student body. This total includes approximately one hundred and twenty students in the High School and three hundred students in the Elementary School (including its Pre-School) (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The School Principal described the student body as *'very articulate children of very articulate parents'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The School has committed itself to a highly personalised admissions process (School website). It is *selective* (i.e., 'the admission of students is based on selection criteria … that sorts applicants by quality' (Brunello & Giannini, 2004, pp. 207-208)), with the following admission criteria:

a) An on-campus visit and interview (with either the School Principal or Head of Elementary);
b) The results of an entry exam; and,
c) Academic ability assessed on previous school reports and teacher recommendations. (School website).

As the School was founded to serve the Jewish Community of the city, an added criterion for potential students is that they must have Jewish parentage (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018; School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018), either '*matrilineal or patrilineal'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The School Principal indicated that the School considers admission applications from children without Jewish parentage for grades six to twelve only, but under certain, very specific,

conditions. Children of non-Jewish parents who fulfil the admissions criteria are admitted solely at the School Principal's discretion. The School Principal suggested that non-Jewish parents apply for admission to the School so that their children are able '*to benefit not just from the IB, but also from the Jewish philosophy which underpins that'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Teaching and support staff

As with many other international schools in the city, staff employed at the School reflect the diversity of the School's community, and can be categorized into three distinct categories: Category A – permanent residents with local nationality; category B – permanent residents with foreign nationality; and, category C – ordinary residents with foreign nationality (ordinary residents do not have the right of abode). Most administrative and support staff fall into categories A and B, while the majority of teaching staff fall into categories B and C. For staff employed from overseas (category C), the School is responsible for the appropriate employment visa applications and for the fulfilment of associated conditions.

There are approximately seventy teaching staff, with thirty-five in the Elementary School. Teaching staff are drawn from all over the world, with a large percentage coming from South Africa, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018). Teacher recruitment has previously been conducted through recruitment agencies, for example, Search Associates (2019). In more recent times, however, recruitment has been conducted through *'word of mouth'* and/or through recommendations from current or former staff members (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

School leadership

The School Principal and the Head of Elementary are the two most senior leadership roles in the School, with both holding ex-officio positions on the Board (see Figure 3.1). The School Principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of the whole School as well as the High School, while the Head of Elementary is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Pre-School and the Elementary School (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The Elementary School's leadership team includes the Head of Elementary, two Pre-School Co-ordinators, a Primary Years Programme Co-ordinator and a Mathematics and Literacy Co-ordinator (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Board of Directors (Management)

Under the School's *Constitution*, and *Memorandum and Articles of Association*, the School's governing body is the Board of Directors (the Board) which is made up of ex-officio and elected members (see Figure 3.1). Four ex-officio positions are occupied by 1) the School Principal, 2) the Head of Elementary and 3) two members of the Parent Teacher Association. Elected members are drawn from the city's Jewish Community (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018; Annual Report 2017-18).

The Board's primary duties include:

a) maintaining the founding spirit and ethos of the School;
b) managing the strategic vision and plan of the School;
c) ensuring that the School remains viable;
d) managing the business of the Association;
e) ensuring the School complies with local laws;
f) approving School policies; and,
g) appointing the School Principal.
(School website; Annual Report 2017-18).

The Board seeks diversity within its membership with an aim to reflect the population and community of the School. When positions become available, Board members actively seek individuals from the community, with business or professional expertise, who can contribute to the successful management of the School and invites them to apply. These applications are then subject to election at an Annual General Meeting (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

National cultural context

Although the School is located in a very modern city, the city's cultural heritage is based in strong Eastern values. In such societies, hierarchical roles are established and reinforced as a response to the need to 'maintain harmony' (Harris & Jones, 2018, p. 202) which results in large power distances in social relationships (Truong, Hallinger & Sanga, 2016). Educational leaders are, therefore, highly respected, to the point that staff typically defer to the senior leader in decision-making situations (Walker & Wang, 2011). In contrast, the School community's largely non-local, expatriate demographic brings Western socio-cultural behaviours, which can be characterised as more collaborative with smaller power distances

(Harris & Jones, 2018). The School's leaders, therefore, must constantly and carefully negotiate this culturally complex context by balancing values of the Eastern and Western approaches to leadership behaviours and practices in order to maintain the cultural stability and harmony of the School.

Economic context

The city's economy

The city boasts exceptionally competitive business, trade and financial environments, and the government's free and open market economic policy, coupled with a low rate of taxation, has developed the city into a modern, services-based economy which attracts global businesses (Government website). The city also boasts strong and resilient stock, currency and property markets, and a low unemployment rate of 2.8% (Government website). The government reports 2017 gross domestic product (GDP) at approximately $350 billion USD, with 2017 GDP growth reported at 3.8% (year-on-year) and inflation at 2.9% (Government website; World Bank, 2019). The government's 2017 expenditure on education approximates 3% of GDP (Government website).

School finances

The School's financial sustainability is a major responsibility of the Board. The School's annual revenue approximates $9 million USD (Annual Report 2017-18). This aspect is important to consider due to the relatively high costs associated with the implementation and ongoing delivery of IB programmes.

The School's income is derived from three streams: (a) tuition fees, (b) subvention, and, (c) donations. Tuition fees are the School's main source of income and approximates 85% of the School's annual revenue (Annual Report 2017-18). The fee rate charged by the School is at the lower end of the range when compared to the five other through-train IB World Schools in the city (School website; Other international schools' websites). Any fee rate increases must be justified to, and approved by, the city's Education Authorities (Government website). In addition, the School receives a subvention from the Community Charity which approximates 10% of the School's annual revenue (Annual Report 2017-18). These funds are used to subvent fees for students with a Jewish background. The subvention does not apply to any student from a non-Jewish background (School website). There is also a heavy reliance on donations

from parents, the community and alumni. The Annual Fund (a very common fundraising mechanism in international schools) is the School's major annual fundraising drive. Donations account for approximately 5% of the School's annual revenue (Annual Report 2017-18). Figure 3.2 outlines the tuition fee rates charged by the School. The monetary figures displayed are in US dollars, and have been sourced from the School's website.

Section	Tuition Fee (approximate USD per month)	Duration
Pre-school (nursery and pre-kindergarten)	$1,320.00	10 months
Elementary School (Kindergarten and grades 1 to 5)	$2,150.00	10 months
High School - with subvention (grades 6 to 12)	$2,150.00	10 months
High School - without subvention (grades 6 to 12)	$2,500.00	10 months

Figure 3.2. The tuition fee rates charged by the School.

As with many international schools, the School's greatest expense is for staff costs (approximately 75% of total expenditure). Staff remuneration and conditions are constantly compared to similar international schools in the city and the region and revised accordingly to ensure that high quality staff can be recruited and retained. The remaining 25% of expenditure is made on general costs, facilities, maintenance and supplies (Annual Report 2017-18).

Political context

The *2017 Government Policy Agenda* (Government website) stated that the goals of education were (a) to develop talent for the city's continued social and economic success; and, (b) to nurture quality, socially responsible citizens with a national identity and an international perspective (Government website; Government 2017 Policy Agenda). Many of the government's education policies do not affect the School directly, as it is regarded as independent, private and self-financing. However, as the School is registered with the city's Education Authorities, it is able, should it choose, to access various government resources and support, for example, the government's student health and dental services scheme.

School improvement context (history and improvement trajectory)

As with any established institution, there are many important events in the School's 27-year history. However, for the sake of brevity, only those historical events, and previous curriculum and leadership decisions which have relevance to this study have been outlined. The significant historical events and decisions described in this section assist in providing an

understanding of the School's historical context, as well as the context for the introduction of the IB programmes.

The School was established in 1991 by a small group of parents who wanted a Jewish education for their children and this group set the foundational requirements for the School (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018; School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018; School website). The initial Pre-school class consisted of twelve children and operated out of the city's Jewish Community Centre (School website; 25th Anniversary video 2016). At that time the student admission criteria were established on the requirement that students had Jewish parentage (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The founding families' largely-American origins influenced the School to model the curriculum on the American education system (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). Some of this influence can be seen today, such as in the naming of the different sections of the School (i.e., the Elementary School and the High School). As the initial cohort of students progressed through the elementary grades (grades one to five), the School grew, eventually offering middle school classes up to grade eight. The middle school grade levels followed the same American curriculum model that was in place in the Elementary School (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). In the mid-2000s, a growing demand from parents for the School to offer higher grade level classes (grades nine to twelve) emerged. The parent body wanted their children to continue in a Jewish based school environment.

In 2009, in response to this growing demand, the current School Principal was appointed as founding Head of High School *'in order to build from scratch a secondary school in the international context, serving the Jewish community of [the city]'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The responsibility for existing students in grades six, seven and eight was transferred to the founding Head of High School, who was tasked with the decision regarding which curriculum to follow for the existing grades six to eight, and future grades nine to twelve students. Considering various factors, including the changing demographics of the School and the curriculum offerings of the city's other international schools (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018), the Head of High School decided to implement the IB Middle Years Programmes for grades six to ten and, as the students moved through the School, the IB Diploma Programme for grades eleven and twelve (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The School received authorisation to offer the Diploma Programme in January 2011,

and authorisation to offer the Middle Years Programme in December 2011 (IB, 2019e). The School did not apply for Primary Years Programme authorisation at the same time, however, it was established as a decision to be taken some time in the future (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

The School Principal explained that when the time for this expansion into the higher grades came, there was a *'critical mass issue because all the people who said they would keep their children in School, didn't'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). At this point the student admissions criteria was adjusted to allow for children of non-Jewish parents to be admitted into the School, so enabling the School to expand and offer classes in grades nine to twelve. This changed admissions criteria is still in place today (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

In 2011 the current School Principal was promoted to this role, and the current Head of Elementary was appointed. The task of considering the suitability of implementing the Primary Years Programme fell to the Head of Elementary. The Head of Elementary determined that the Elementary School was *'not ready'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018) at that time, and challenges around the School's curriculum needed addressing in the first instance (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018; School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). These challenges are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. After these challenges were addressed, the School's decision makers considered, applied for, and were subsequently granted Primary Years Programme authorisation in April 2018, hence making it eligible for this study.

During interviews, both the School Principal and the Head of Elementary described the School's areas of strength and those needing development. Both referred to, and referenced, elements of the School's Strategic Plan priority areas (for example, the Head of Elementary stated, *'our strategic plan … did a very good job to identify areas of growth'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018)). These six priority areas, as listed in the School's *Annual Report 2017-18*, can be viewed as the School's improvement trajectory, and are: (a) Education; (b) Financial stability; (c) Facilities; (d) Information Technology; (e) Staff; and, (f) Communication and marketing.

Jewish education

The School has a very strong Jewish education curriculum which ensures students *'have a place to learn about all the Jewish holidays, festivals, observances and celebrations; and that they have the place to delve into what forms the sense of Jewish culture, Jewish identity, Jewish ethics and Jewish values'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). There are a number of ways that the Jewish education curriculum is visible in the day-to-day function of the School. For example, the publication date of the School newsletter is listed using both the Gregorian and Jewish calendars; both English and Hebrew are used in some School publications; and, the School calendar observes Jewish holidays and celebrations in addition to local ones. The Head of Elementary described that the Jewish education curriculum also incorporates the teaching of both Modern and Classical Hebrew – *'it is important that the children learn to read, write, and speak Modern Hebrew; learn to read, write and communicate using Classical Hebrew, in other words, the Hebrew of The Bible'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Jewish education has become the subject of scholarly inquiry and research (Pomson, 2009). Learning has always been a central part of the Jewish culture and, therefore, Jewish education continues to play a major part in the lives of the Jewish people (Zeldin, 2011). There are two distinct definitions of what *Jewish education* is, primarily dependent on the country from which it is seen (Chazan, 2011; Pomson, 2009). Jewish education, as seen from a North American point of view, has survivalist origins (Pomson, 2009) and suggests 'Hebrew', 'supplementary' or 'religious' (Chazan, 2011, p. 22) schooling for the 8 to 13 age group. These schools, often referred to as 'complementary' or 'congregation' schools (Wertheimer, 2009), were established by Jewish migrants to the United States in order to stem the influence of contemporary society on Judaism (Pomson, 2009). In contrast, Jewish education, seen from a Latin American, European, Antipodean or South African view point, has integrationist origins (Pomson, 2009), and implies all-day schooling where Jewish children are involved in both Jewish and secular education and studies (Chazan, 2011; Pomson, 2009). Jewish education in the integrationist tradition is not a new phenomenon (Miller, Grant & Pomson, 2011) as this approach has always been seen by the Jewish diaspora as 'a bridge to participation in civic and national life' (Pomson, 2009).

Chazan (2011) summed these two views of Jewish education in stating:

> … for some, "Jewish education" refers to an institution, a building, or an age group and for others it is a process, a vision, or an approach not limited by age, geography, or venue (p. 22).

This School adheres to the integrationist view of Jewish education, as the Jewish and the secular education components hold equally important status in the School's identity, mission, ethos and day-to-day function (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018; School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Site participants

Site participants were selected based on the criteria that they (a) had close proximity to the School's Primary Years Programme decision (i.e., they had a substantive involvement in the decision process), and (b) were current members of the School's community.

It was acknowledged that the number of participants in any school selected, who could meet these criteria was potentially very small. However, both Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2009) suggest that smaller studies allow a researcher to (a) gain a deep understanding, and, (b) present a rich description of the phenomenon, both of which were wanted for this study.

Participant sets

Three sets of participants were targeted for this study: the School's (1) Senior Leadership Team; (2) Teaching Staff; and, (3) Management Group (i.e., Board of Governors/Directors, School Council). For clarity, the three participant groups, along with examples of the potential participants' roles, are presented in Figure 3.3.

Participant Set	Example of Participant's Role
1 Senior Leadership Team	Head of School/College Primary School Principal Primary School Deputy - /Vice - /Assistant - Principal Director of Curriculum
2 Teaching Staff	Primary Years Programme Co-ordinator Classroom teachers
3 School Management	Chair of Board of Governors/Directors Member of Board of Governors/Directors

Figure 3.3. Sets of participants.

It was anticipated that participants from these three sets would present a wide range of perspectives regarding why and how the School engaged with the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, and that they would include potentially, supporting, dissenting and mixed-position voices.

Identification of potential participants

Two members from each of the three participant groups were invited to participate. However, due to availability and logistics, only two participants were available to participate. Both participants belonged to Participant Set 1 (Senior Leadership Team). The impact of this limited number of participants is discussed as a limitation of the study later in this chapter.

Following the granting of permission to conduct research from the School Principal, the two participants were directly contacted via email attaching the participant information letter (Appendix C), the consent forms (Appendix D), and the interview themes and key questions (Appendix E). The participant information letter outlined the aims and purpose of the study, the requirements for participation, the conditions of voluntary consent and the maintenance of confidentiality of participants' identifying details. Participants were asked to contact the researcher if they had any questions, and to confirm participation. All written communications with the site and participants was conducted using the researcher's University email address and were logged in a modified version of the communication log suggested by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014, pp. 124-128). A segment of the communication log is displayed as Figure 3.4.

20 Jun 2018/ 1345	Email	From HOE	confirmed interview time and method - via Whatsapp.
20 Jun 2018/ 1523	Whatsapp call	To HOE	INTERVIEW 1523 – approx. 46 min (disconnect); 1611 – approx. 8 m
20 Jun 2018/ 1822	Email	From HOE	attached signed consent form.
27 Jun 2018/ 1201	Email	To HOE	thanks for interview; confirm that transcript will be for
21 Jul 2018/ 1418	Email	To HOE	transcript attached for member checking; follow up int
14 Aug 2018/ 1626	Email	To HOE	resend transcript for member checking; follow up inter
23 Aug 2018/ 1307	Whatsapp message	To/from HOE	Researcher – Not sure if emails received. HOE – apologised: busy at start of year. Can set up mee Researcher – Leave HOE to suggest interview time next
24 Aug 2018/ 0957	Email	To SP	thanks for opportunity to use the school as research sit
24 Aug 2018/ 1403	Email	From SP	okay for interview. PA will confirm arrangements.
24 Aug 2018/ 1552	Email	From SP PA	suggest interview 6 Sept 2018 at 1300 (local)
24 Aug 2018/ 1600	Email	To SP PA	confirmed date/time. Method of contact?
24 Aug 2018/1607	Email	From SP PA	Skype preferred. Request ID
24 Aug 2018/ 1618	Email	To SP PA	Skype ID provided.
25 Aug 2018/ 1450	Email	To SP/ SP PA	calendar invite sent. Consent and interview themes att
27 Aug 2018/ 1135	Email	From SP	invitation accepted.
29 Aug 2018/ 1645	Email	From HOE	suggest interview on 31 August at 1530 local
29 Aug 2018/ 1649	Email	To HOE	confirmed – contact method? Will send key questions
29 Aug 2018/ 1740	Email	From HOE	Whatsapp call for interview on 3 Sept – confirmed
30 Aug 2018/ 0844	Email	To HOE	calendar invitation + key discussion questions sent
30 Aug 2018/ 1120	Email	From HOE	invitation accepted
31 Aug 2018/ 1449	Whatsapp call	To HOE	INTERVIEW 2 1449 – approx. 6 min (disconnect); 1455 – approx. 12 m
31 Aug 2018/ 1626	Email	To HOE	thanks for time for interview; attach copies of some JE
3 Sep 2018/ 0819	Email	From HOE	Thanks for texts.
3 Sep 2018/ 0926	Email	To HOE	Sent interview transcript.
6 Sep 2018/ 1300	Skype video call	To SP	INTERVIEW 1300 – approx. 40 min
6 Sept 2018/ 1411	Email	From SP	Consent forms attached
7 Sep 2018/ 0834	Email	To SP	Thanks for time for interview and for consent forms
7 Sep 2018/ 1328	Email	From SP	Thanks for opportunity to be involved
9 Sep 2018/1539	Email	To SP	Transcript sent.

Figure 3.4. Segment of communication log.

Description of participants

The roles, backgrounds and IB experiences of the two participants involved in this study are outlined in this section. As with the description of the research site, above, information has been de-identified to maintain confidentiality.

Participant 1 is the Head of Elementary at the School, and as such, belongs to Participant Set 1 – Senior Leadership Team. The Head of Elementary has held this leadership role for the past seven years. Having previously worked at the School as a teacher some years earlier, the Head of Elementary, on appointment to this role, already had some familiarity with both the School and the international education sector in the city. The Head of Elementary has worked in Jewish Day Schools for many years and prior to being appointed to this role at the School, held the leadership position of Director of Jewish Education at a Jewish Day School in Australia (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The School provided the Head of Elementary's first exposure to the IB and its programmes. The Head of Elementary indicated that their knowledge and understanding of the Primary Years Programme was developed through attending IB professional development sessions (for example, *'Making the PYP Happen'* Level 1 Workshop), in-house professional development sessions (conducted by Primary Years

Programme Workshop leaders and consultants), and through *'personal inquiry'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Participant 2 is the School Principal, and as such, belongs to Participant Set 1 – Senior Leadership Team. The School Principal was the founding Head of High School for two years before being promoted to the School Principal in 2011. Prior to this, the School Principal held a leadership role in a large Jewish School in the United Kingdom. The School Principal was familiar with the IB and its programmes prior to being appointed the Head of High School. This knowledge and understanding were developed at their previous school which was investigating the implementation of the IB programmes at that time.

Data Collection

It is well established that qualitative researchers must use a number of different data collection methods to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon being investigated (Thomas, Neilson & Silverman, 2015). Others suggest, more specifically, that qualitative research relies on interviews, observations and document reviews as the most common sources of data collection (Creswell, 2012). By drawing from multiple sources, researchers are able to corroborate their findings while looking for consistencies and discrepancies, which in turn leads to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Bogan & Biklen, 2006). This use of *triangulation* is commonly adopted by researchers to establish trustworthiness of their studies (Thomas et al., 2015).

Data sources

This research study used data source triangulation and relied on two different data sources: (a) interview data; and, (b) document data. In order to clarify how the data from these sources were reviewed in relation to the research question and sub-questions, Figure 3.5 demonstrates the links between each of the research sub-questions, the associated requirements for the research design, and the data sources. The reader can note that, although the same data sources are listed for both research sub-questions, each source addressed different aspects of each research sub-question.

Research question	Research Sub-questions	Requirements for research design	Data sources
How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?	1: Why do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?	Inquiry into factors that influenced the decision. Analysis of the factors which influenced the decision.	Source 1: Semi-structured interviews with key decision makers. Source 2: Examination of relevant school, IB, government and news report documents.
	2: How do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?	Inquiry into the decision-making process. Analysis of the factors which affected the decision-making process.	Source 1: Semi-structured interviews with key decision makers. Source 2: Examination of relevant school, IB, government and news report documents.

Figure 3.5. The links between the research question, sub-questions, design and data sources.

An overview of the two data sources employed for this study is outlined in the following sections.

Interviews

This study sourced data from interviews, and employed an in-depth, semi-structured interview format. It was anticipated that each participant would be involved in an initial interview which would focus on the discussion themes. Participants were advised that a follow up interview may be necessary should additional information or clarification be required. Interviewing is an essential tool when there is a desire to understand the meaning participants attribute to a phenomenon (Seidman, 2006), as it 'is one of the most powerful tools for gaining an understanding of human beings and exploring topics in depth' (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blyth & Neville, 2014, p. 545). The semi-structured interview format allows participants to freely share their experiences and perspectives. It allows for both the inclusion of probing questions or prompts when additional information or clarification is needed (Punch, 2009), and for unexpected issues (which can provide additional insight) to emerge (Dickerson, 2008). Accordingly, the interview themes and key discussion questions were open-ended in design to allow participants to take the discussion in the direction that reflected their perspectives and outline their thoughts, feelings and actions in relation to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The interview themes and key discussion questions established for this study are listed in Appendix E.

Participants were furnished with a copy of these themes and questions as a part of the participant information letter. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and openly throughout the interviews, with the researcher only stopping participants in order to build a shared understanding, seek clarification, or refocus on themes. Throughout the interview, participants were encouraged to add any comments or observations about the Primary Years Programme decision-making reasons and process they felt were important, but which had not arisen through the interview themes and prompts. Additionally, shortly before the initial interview, participants were supplied with a randomised list of reasons for deciding to implement an IB programme that had been drawn from the literature (see Appendix F). This list was supplied to participants to allow them to focus their thoughts and consider the reasons that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme at the School was made.

It was recognised that in order to collect quality data, the building and maintaining of a trusting relationship with participants was essential, so that their voices could be accurately represented, valued and respected (Karnieli-Miller, Strier & Pessach, 2009). Strategies employed for building trust included (a) the sharing of personal experiences in education, the Primary Years Programme, and teaching in international contexts; and (b) being open and transparent regarding the research study's aims, design and purpose.

All interviews were planned to (a) be semi-structured to allow for the free flow of ideas, thoughts and opinions, and (b) last approximately sixty minutes each (McMillan & Schumacher, 1996). It was also suggested that interviews be conducted face-to-face to build trust between researcher and participant. However, as participants were located overseas, the researcher and participants conducted interviews either via WhatsApp telephone call or Skype video call. All interviews were audio recorded, and then transcribed to assist with the data analysis process. Participants were informed of the audio recording of the interview prior to its commencement. Additionally, the researcher took notes during interviews to assist organisation of thoughts, ideas and information.

Two participants agreed and consented to participate in this study and be interviewed. For the purpose of transparency in the conduct of this research study, the details of the interviews that were conducted (i.e., the participant set, the number of interviews, the duration of each

interview, and the contact method) are provided in Figure 3.6. Worthy of note is that the interviews were conducted over a three-month period and took place on either side of the School's summer holiday break.

Participant	Participant Set	Date	Type	Duration	Method
Head of Elementary	Senior Leadership Team	20 June 2018	Initial	45 minutes	WhatsApp telephone call
		31 August 2018	Follow up	30 minutes	WhatsApp telephone call
School Principal	Senior Leadership Team	06 September 2018	Initial	45 minutes	Skype video call

Figure 3.6. Details of interviews conducted.

In order to maintain confidentiality and protect the identity of the site and participants, the data were de-identified as soon as possible after generation. Removal of site and participant identification data was undertaken at the transcription stage for interview data. The site was referred to as 'the School' and the location was referred to as 'the city'. All references to other schools were removed, and those schools were referred to as 'other school(s)'. Participants were identified by their role and gendered pronouns were also replaced by the participant's role (for example, 'School Principal'). All references to other members of staff were also removed, and those other members of staff were referred to by their role (for example, 'PYP Co-ordinator' or 'teacher'). No site or participant identifiers were re-introduced at any subsequent stage of the research. The procedures undertaken to remove identifiers were designed to reduce the risk of identification of the site and the participants.

Document analysis

It was anticipated that documents would assist to 'uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights' (Merriam, 2009, p. 163). Documents provide background, context and supplementary data and can be used to verify findings from other data sources (Bowen, 2008). Document analysis is useful particularly for case studies as these assist the researcher to produce the rich and thick descriptions of the context and the phenomenon (Stake, 1995).

This study drew on public domain documents which were freely available from the research site's website, the city government's website, and from local newspaper reportage on the

city's educational sector. All site or participant identifiers contained in documents were redacted, and only copies of the redacted documents were used in the data analysis process. The original documents (containing the identifiers) were shredded or deleted. The procedures undertaken to remove identifiers were designed to reduce the risk of identification of the site and the participants. The documents listed in Figure 3.7 are those which were gathered and provided valuable sources of data for the data analysis process. As an example, the School's *2018/2019 Calendar* provided evidence of the importance of the School's Jewish faith-base by including the dates for Jewish holidays and celebrations alongside the dates for national holidays and celebrations.

Organization	Documents	Websites/pages	Other
School:	Annual Report 2017-18. 2018/2019 Calendar. Admission Application Form. Elementary School newsletter.	About us. Mission. Accreditation. History. Board. Admissions. Tuition and fees. News and events. Policies.	25th Anniversary commemorative video 2016.
City government:	List of International Schools. Annual Enrolment Report 2017. Policy Agenda 2017. Societies Ordinance. Companies Ordinance. Education Ordinance. Economic Report 2017.	Private International Schools offering non-local curriculum. List of schools. List of registered societies. Economic outlook.	
Other International Schools:		About us. Tuition and fees.	
Local news media:		News articles reporting on international schools in the city.	
Other:	World Bank Report 2018.		

Figure 3.7. List of documents gathered and analysed.

Although the researcher requested a number of additional documents from the School, these documents could not be supplied as they contained confidential information. The documents requested included Minutes of Meetings (Staff; Senior Leadership; Board of Directors) and the School's IB application and pre-authorisation reports. The researcher believes that although these documents may have contributed additional information, their absence has had no

negative impact on the results of this study as the participants provided the necessary information during their interviews.

Data management

Management of interview data

Interviews commenced after the terms and conditions of participation were revisited, and verbal agreement given by each participant. Interview recordings were made using Quicktime Player (Version 10.4) and saved as MPEG-4 audio files. GarageBand (Version 10.3.1) was used to eliminate unwanted background noise picked up during the recordings. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the transcripts were saved as portable document format (PDF) files. All site and participant identifiers were removed from the data at this stage. Transcripts were sent to each participant as a part of member checking process. Transcripts were printed in preparation for the coding and analysis process.

Management of document data

Documents which were available on various websites and relevant webpages (see Figure 3.7) were downloaded and saved as portable document format (PDF) files. All site and participant identifiers were redacted from the data at this stage. Redacted documents were printed in preparation for the coding and analysis process.

In addition, the School's 25th Anniversary commemorative video (dated 2016), which was published on the School's website, was also accessed. The video's audio track was transcribed, and the transcript saved as a portable document format file. This file was printed in preparation for the coding and analysis process.

A record of all data gathered, and documents produced by the researcher during the course of the study were kept in a simple adaptation of Miles et al.'s (2014, pp. 122-124) data accounting log, a segment of which is shown as Figure 3.8.

DATA ACCOUNTING LOG

INTERVIEWS	Participant Set 1 – School Leadership	
	Participant 1 (HOE)	**Participant 2 (SP)**
Interview 1:	20 June 2018 (Whatsapp call)	6 September 2018 (Skype)
Consent Form	20 June 2018 (email)	6 September 2018 (email)
Transcript	13 July 2018 (complete)	8 September 2018 (complete)
Coding	13 July 2018 (ongoing)	8 September 2018 (ongoing)
Member checking	21 July 2018 (sent)	9 September 2018 (sent)
Returned to researcher	-	-
Amendments coded	-	-
Interview 2:	31 August 2018 (Whatsapp call)	
Transcript	1 September 2018 (complete)	
Coding	1 September 2018 (ongoing)	
Member checking	3 September 2018 (sent)	
Returned	-	
Amendments coded	-	

DOCUMENTS/WEBSITES	Access (Date/ Source)
International Schools; List of International Schools; Private Independent Schools	16 July 2018/ Government web
History; Board; Mission; Fees and Tuition; Calendar; About us; PTA; Admissions	17 July 2018/ School website
Annual Report 2017-2018	17 July 2018/ School report
School Enrolment Report	17 July 2018/ Government repo
Authorization	20 July 2018/ School website
WASC accreditation	20 July 2018/ WASC website
School 25th Anniversary video (transcript)	21 July 2018/ School website
Companies Ordinance; Societies Ordinance; Inland Revenue Ordinance; Economy	25 July 2018/ Government web
Policy Agenda 2017	25 July 2018/ Government repo
Fees and Tuition	25 July 2018/ various internatio
World Bank data	27 July 2018/ World Bank webs

LITERATURE	Last Accessed (Date)
Pomson (2009)	15 August 2018
Wertheimer (2009)	15 August 2018
Zeldin (2011)	15 August 2018

Figure 3.8. Segment of data accounting log.

Data retention and disposal provisions

All data generated and used for this study were subjected to the appropriate Australian Catholic University (ACU) policies and procedures for data retention and disposal. Accordingly, the data will be retained by ACU for five years and will then be destroyed. Data will not be banked or added to a repository.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the core step in the qualitative research process, as it is the 'classification and interpretation' (Flick, 2014, p. 5) of all data collected in order to (a) make sense of the data (Flick, 2014); (b) give data meaning (Corbin & Strauss, 2014); (c) identify patterns (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014); (d) determine common themes (Lichtman, 2006); and, (e) understand what has been generated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Qualitative analysis is the process of thorough examination, rearrangement and comparison of all materials (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Flick, 2014) with the objective of developing 'meaningful analytical statements' (Bassey 1999, p. 70). For this study, data analysis adopted qualitative inductive processes, and constant comparative techniques (Miles et al., 2014) to make sense of the interview and document data.

Constant comparative analysis, also referred to as constant comparative method (Bowen, 2008), provides the basis for an ongoing and systematic organisation, comparison and comprehension within and between different levels of data (Merriam, 2009). It has been called the 'micro-analysis' of data (O'Connor, Netting & Thomas, 2008, p. 31), and is an iterative and inductive process (Fram, 2013) described as the 'main intellectual tool' of analysis (Tesch, 1990, p. 96). Constant comparative analysis requires the researcher to go through cycles of data gathering, filtering, sorting, labelling and comparing to generate categories, themes and concepts. This process continues until the researcher is satisfied that their interpretations are credible (Bassey, 1999) and have reached saturation.

Constant comparative analysis was used to facilitate analysis of the data collected for this study, as it allowed for the 'creation of contextualized emergent understanding, rather than the creation of testable theoretical structures' and for the gain in 'perspectival knowledge based on the lived experiences of the participants' (O'Connor et al., 2008, p. 30). Miles et al., (2014) offer an interactive model of data analysis consisting of three fluid phases which are 'interwoven before, during, and after data collection in parallel form' (p. 14). This model assists the researcher to 'break down the original data, conceptualise it and re-arrange it in new ways' (Priest, Rogers & Woods, 2002, p. 33). The three phases are:

a) Phase 1: data condensation;
b) Phase 2: data display; and,
c) Phase 3: conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014, pp. 12-14).

The data analysis process for this study employed Miles et al.'s (2014) interactive data analysis model as follows:

Phase 1: Data condensation

Data condensation, or data reduction, involves 'selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus' (Miles et al., 2014, p. 12) so that the data can be made both manageable and intelligible (Berkowitz, 1997). To support this complex process, data coding, as described by Saldaña (2015), was used. Here he outlines that a code is a researcher-designed, 'summative, salient, essence-capturing' (Saldaña, 2015, p. 4) description, which is attached to a unit of the data (a sentence, paragraph or section). Codes are usually a word or brief phrase (Saldaña, 2015), which summarizes the crux of that data

unit (Theron, 2015), and can be either pre-defined or generated from the data. Coding, therefore, is the action of labelling the data so that the researcher can review, analyse, systematically compare, synthesise and reassemble units of data with already collected and analysed data (Bowen, 2008; O'Connor et al., 2008). Coding is described as a heuristic activity which allows the researcher to develop familiarity with the data in order to 'retrieve the most meaningful material, to assemble chunks of data that go together, and to further condense the bulk into readily analysable units' (Miles et al., 2014, p. 73). Pattern codes (Miles et al., 2014) are then used to draw similar codes together to develop categories (Freeman, 2005), which enables the researcher to search for themes. This process is continual and, generates 'richer meaning, categories, themes and concepts' (Saldaña, 2015, p. 8).

Initially, open codes were used to segment the data (Creswell, 2012). In order to give this process a structure, Gibbs (2007) proposes that twelve elements within the data are coded: (a) activities or behaviour; (b) events; (c) strategies or tactics; (d) present situations; (e) meanings; (f) participation; (g) relationships or interactions; (h) conditions or constraints; (i) consequences; (j) settings; and, (k) the researcher's own reflections. More recently, Theron (2015) offers support to beginning researchers by formulating Gibbs' (2007) list of codable elements as the following questions:

- What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish?
- Exactly how are they doing it? What strategies are they using?
- How do they talk about, characterise and understand what is going on?
- What assumptions are they making?
- What is going on here?
- What is learned from the data?
- What appears salient? (p. 4).

Initially, all transcripts and documents were read several times and then, by drawing upon Theron's (2015) guiding questions, coded, both to gain a familiarity with the content, and to initially label relevant chunks of data. After familiarity with the data was achieved, predetermined codes, which were drawn from (a) the research question and sub-questions (for example, *'Decision-Making: Why?'*; *'Decision-Making: How?'*); (b) the interview themes (for example, *'Participant details'*; *'Curriculum'*; *'PYP'*); and, (c) problem-based methodology (for example, *'Constraint'*; *'Action'*; *'Consequence'*), were applied to units of data. Units of data were given no code, one code or more than one code as appropriate.

In addition to employing Theron's (2015) guiding questions, another procedure that was employed for data analysis was Saldaña's (2015, p. 26) recommendation that coding for small-scale studies be conducted on hard copies of documents, as this gives a better view of the data (Theron, 2015). Following this recommendation, codes, recodes and categories were written on Post-it notes and physically attached in the margins of related sections of hard copies of each transcript or document. The use of Post-it notes facilitated the subsequent organisation and grouping of codes in the search for patterns in the data. As an example, an image of the data during coding is included in Appendix G-1, and a closer view of coded data segments are included as Appendix G-2 (interview data) and Appendix G-3 (document data).

Throughout the coding process, the definitions and characteristics of each of the codes used were recorded in a 'code book' (Saldaña, 2015, p. 21). For example, the code 'community' was attributed to data that referred to, or suggested involvement or action of any stakeholder group (students; parents; staff; Board of Directors; senior leadership; volunteers; and, founders), as well as community perceptions of the School. The researcher employed the same procedures for data familiarization, coding and condensation as new data were brought into the analysis process.

Phase 2: Data display

Data display is described as information which has been organised in such a way as to allow the researcher to see the patterns in the data and to draw conclusions from those patterns (Miles et al., 2014). Although Miles et al. (2014) noted that the most common form of data display is 'extended texts' (p. 13), they discounted these as ineffective due to their unwieldy nature. Instead, they suggested that 'matrices, graphs, charts, and networks' (Miles et al., 2014, p. 13) more effectively assist the researcher to draw conclusions from the data. For this study, Miles et al.'s (2014) suggestions for data display were adopted in the form of matrices. Data matrices assisted in grouping together and connecting similar open codes to formulate sub-categories, categories and, ultimately, themes (Pandit, 1996). In order to assist the process of formulating the themes, axial codes (Creswell, 2012) were used to group and connect the initial concepts which developed through the open coding process.

As an example, two of the resulting data matrices are included as Appendix H-1 (Data matrix: Category: IB/PYP) and Appendix H-2 (Data matrix: Category: PYP decision-making – Reasons

(PBM)). These data matrices show how initial codes were grouped to develop categories, and how each core theme was identified from those categories. In addition, the data matrices display how some of the researcher's interpretations were formed.

Phase 3: Conclusion drawing and verification

Throughout the data gathering and analysis process, the researcher constantly makes decisions regarding the meaning contained in the data and highlights the patterns, configurations, regularities and irregularities, causal relationships, explanations and propositions which begin to develop (Miles et al., 2014). As a result, the researcher may be able to form conclusions at any stage of the analysis process. Since this is an ongoing process, the researcher must be able to verify those meanings and interpretations which have been attached to the data for plausibility and validity (Miles et al., 2014). Verification may be as simple as a reflective thought or a check against field notes or may be as complex as a formal review (Miles et al., 2014). Miles et al. (2014) state that meanings attached to data 'have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their confirmability – that is, their validity. Otherwise, we are left with interesting stories about what happened but of unknown truth and utility' (p. 13-14).

The following procedures were undertaken to verify the conclusions drawn and interpretations made in this study. First, to ensure coherence within the data collected a three-step procedure adapted from Boeiji's (2002) approach was employed. First, each data item (for example, interview transcript or document) was checked to confirm internal consistency. Once two or more *same-type* data items had been internally analysed, these were compared against each other to confirm commonalities, or inconsistencies. In the third step, *different-type* data items (for example, interview transcripts and documents) were compared. This triangulation of data items and sources enabled verification and confirmation of categories and themes. In addition to these procedures, the researcher participated in several informal and formal reviews where the conclusions and interpretations were discussed with supervisors and with other educational leaders familiar with the Primary Years Programme decision-making process, and their feedback was sought and considered.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

All research must be rigorous and 'must be open to critique and evaluation' (Long & Johnson, 2000, p. 30). Within the positivist paradigm, research is measured by *validity*, or the 'extent to which a research fact or finding is what it claims to be' (Bassey, 1999, p. 75) and *reliability*, or the 'extent to which research facts or findings can be repeated' (p. 75). Both terms have often been used interchangeably in error, thus causing much consternation (Bassey, 1999; Creswell, 2013). The usefulness of validity and reliability in qualitative research, however, has been questioned, as such research often does not seek generalisability, but focuses on the study of a particular instance or 'singularity' (Bassey, 1999, p. 5). As a measure of the required rigour in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1986) put forward the notion of *trustworthiness*.

To meet the requirements of trustworthiness for this study, Efron and Ravid's (2013, pp. 70-71) six strategies for ensuring and strengthening trustworthiness were used:

a) Triangulation.
   As already described, the researcher used more than one data source (interview and document data) to compare findings and interpretations;

b) Disciplined subjectivity.
   As a result of a reflexive process, the researcher acknowledged previous professional experience in, and knowledge of the international schools' sector, IB World Schools and the Primary Years Programme, which may have provided a bias to this research study.

c) Thick description.
   The researcher used data from multiple interviews and documents, to provide a 'detailed and rich account of the context [and] the participants' perspectives' (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 71).

d) Member checking.
   To enable presentation of the participants' perspectives honestly and authentically, the researcher shared the interview transcripts and analytical interpretations with the participants for their comment and feedback. The interview transcriptions were made available to the participants for their agreement as a part of this process. The researcher's findings were discussed with each participant, and their reflections were actively sought.

e) Peer review.
   To assist with the credibility and accuracy of interpretations and findings, the researcher sought constructive feedback from peers who were able to provide an 'additional set of eyes' (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 71). Mock interviews were also

conducted with two senior educational leaders who have been involved in a similar decision-making process, and constructive feedback was sought as to the suitability of the discussion themes and key questions.

f) Data audit.
To assess if 'interpretations, insights and conclusions reflect … the information gathered throughout the study' (Efron and Ravid, 2013, p. 71), the researcher regularly used reflective journaling and logs to record all actions, thoughts, interpretations, insights and data obtained during the course of data collection and analysis. Simple communication logs (from Miles et al., 2014, pp. 124-128) (Figure 3.4), data accounting logs (from Miles et al., 2014, pp. 122-124) (Figure 3.8), and document summary forms (from Miles et al., 2014, p. 127) were employed to track and log all communications with the site and participants, and to record notes, initial interpretations and follow up questions from interviews and documents.

ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

As my beliefs about how knowledge can be generated align with the constructionist epistemology and an interpretivist research paradigm, both the participants and I were seen to be involved in the 'co-construction of knowledge' (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009, p. 279). Again, due to this close involvement, I was aware and mindful of my own biases (Gillham, 2000), and worked towards mitigating the potential effects of these on the research outcomes (Flyvberg, 2006). The issues of bias were a particularly important consideration for this research study given that I had extensive professional experience in the international schools' sector, in IB World Schools and with the Primary Years Programme in particular. While I attempted to be as objective as possible, it was acknowledged that these experiences could potentially colour my views and interpretations of the data. To ensure that I had an accurate understanding of what the participants were saying during interviews, I probed for further information and clarification. This process also provided me with interview data that I was then able to use to demonstrate understanding (Basit, 2010,).

It was also recognised that my professional experiences were also a potential benefit to this study, in that the existing knowledge of, and familiarity with, the international schools' sector, the IB and its programmes, allowed me to engage in a deeper, more empathetic discussion with participants, as well as a more nuanced analysis of the data.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As with any research, assurances that the study has been designed and conducted with regard for ethical considerations needs to be provided. The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2018 update)* (NSECHR) (NHMRC, 2007a) and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018 update)* (ACRCR) (NHMRC, 2007b) were used as guides to ensure that appropriate ethical considerations and procedures were in place for this study.

This study's research design was reviewed and received ethical approval (Approval number 2018-42E) from the Australian Catholic University's Human Research Ethics Committee on March 29, 2018. A copy of the ethics approval is included as Appendix A.

ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The essential elements in explaining and framing a research study are the assumptions, limitations and delimitations (Simon & Goes, 2013). All research contains these elements (Creswell, 2013) and it is important for researchers to exercise critical awareness and acknowledge these (Simmons, 2009) so that they are understood before the study commences. In the following section, the assumptions, limitations and delimitations which impact this study are presented.

Assumptions

Assumptions are essential elements contained in a study that allow and enable research to proceed. They are often necessary beliefs held by the researcher which cannot be proven (Simon & Goes, 2013). Leedy and Ormrod (2018) suggest that assumptions are so integral to a study that 'without them, the research problem itself could not exist' (p.62).

In conducting this study, the researcher made the following assumptions:

a) Participants in the study:
   - Would fully understand the questions to be asked;
   - Would freely provide honest and factual responses to the questions to be asked;
   - Would be representative of the group of decision-makers; and,
   - Would be able to recall past events with sufficient detail.

b) The interview questions allowed for full and reliable responses to be elicited.

c) The number of schools making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme will continue to grow indicating the significance of the research problem under investigation.

d) The type and quantity of data planned to be collected would be sufficient to address the research question and sub-questions.

Limitations

Limitations are factors which affect the results of the study, but over which the researcher has no control. By stating the limitations, the researcher is able to acknowledge difficulties in the interpretation of results and give the reader a sense of the meaning of the results (Simon & Goes, 2013). These factors are not usually apparent at the commencement of research but become so over the duration of the study.

The following limitations were identified by the researcher:

a) Study site.
Only one faith-based international school located in Asia agreed to be involved in the study.

b) Sample size.
Although it was intended that additional participants from the study's participant groups 2 (teaching staff) and 3 (school management) would be involved, only two participants from participant group 1 (senior leadership team) agreed to be involved. The small number of participants was acknowledged as a severe limitation as it potentially limited the formation of 'rich, "thick" description' that is required for case study methodology (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). Triangulation between the interview data gathered from each participant became an important step in the data analysis process (as described above), and patterns within the interview data were carefully identified in order to account for the limited sample size. In addition, triangulation between the interview data and the document data was also carefully undertaken for the same reason.

c) Access to documents.
Documents gathered only included those available publicly on the School's website. Certain documents which may have added greater perspectives (such as the School's IB application documents, minutes of meetings and other internal communications) were not available to the researcher as they potentially contained sensitive, private or personal information. The lack of documents internal to the study site was acknowledged as a severe limitation as it potentially limited the formation of 'rich, "thick" description' that case study methodology requires (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). The study was based on the assumption that those publicly available documents which were accessed provided sufficient data to enable triangulation with the interview data, and the subsequent addressing of the research question.

d) Access to literature in languages other than English.
Given the nature of the IB and its global footprint, a large amount of literature may exist in languages other than English (Hara, 2018). For the purposes of this study, only English language literature was accessed due to the limited other language skills of the researcher, as well as to make the search for, and analysis of, the relevant literature more achievable.

Delimitations

Delimitation factors also affect the study, but these are factors over which the researcher has control. These factors concern the parameters, scope, limits or boundaries of the study, and are usually decisions the researcher has made to address the manageability of the study (Simon & Goes, 2013). The delimiting factors for this study (including the choice of research focus, research question and sub-questions, research foundations, case study methodology, problem-based methodology, and participants), have been addressed earlier.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Through this largely descriptive chapter, the researcher has presented and justified the decisions made regarding the research design and method for this study. In addition, the researcher has provided a description of problem-based methodology framework, the site and participants, his role in the study, the ethical considerations and the assumptions, limitations and delimitations of this study. The following chapter, Chapter 4, displays the data from which results and then findings are generated.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study was to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme. The research question guiding this study was:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

Through data collected via semi-structured interviews and document analysis, this study sought to understand the reasons behind, and the process undertaken to make this decision from the perspective of the decision makers themselves. The purpose of this chapter is to present the results and findings from this research. In the first section, a description of the case, or the situation that the School was in prior to making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, is given. This is followed by the results, which, following the use of problem-based methodology (Robinson, 1993) as an analytical framework, have been presented as a theory of action. As outlined in Chapter 3: Research Design, problem-based methodology provides a lens through which educational problems and their solutions can be viewed and understood in terms of decision makers' contextual and personal constraints, their actions, and the consequences of their actions (Robinson & Donald, 2015). After a description of the Primary Years Programme decision-making process is given, a diagrammatic representation of the theory of action is provided to assist the reader in understanding why and how the school's decision makers decided to implement the Primary Years Programme. In the final part of this chapter, the major findings of this research are presented. Throughout this chapter, quotes from interviews with the participants (the School Principal and the Head of Elementary) and from documents which were analysed (see Figure 3.7), have been included to support the interpretations made. It should be noted that while interview quotations have been used to support interpretations, it is difficult to express the full essence of the participants' meaning as certain mannerisms (for example, hesitations, emphasis, etc.) cannot be captured in the quotations without providing a full transcript.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

To enable a deeper understanding of the case, some of the historical background regarding the School's association with the IB should first be outlined, as this provides more detail of the context in which the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was made. Keeping consistent with the previous chapters, the researcher has referred to the research site as the 'School' so that it can be distinguished from references to other schools, or schools in general. As already described in Chapter 3, under description of research site, the current School Principal was first appointed as the founding Head of High School in 2009. The primary function of that role was *'to build, from scratch a secondary school in the international context, serving the Jewish community of [the city] principally, although non-Jews are welcome to a certain section of the School. The aim was to establish a prestigious secondary school'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The School Principal's personal mission was used as a guide to key decisions that were made in establishing the High School, and was described as, '*My mission is to provide every Jewish child with personal education and development, academic and holistic, so that they are able to attend, or to get an acceptance from the best university possible for them. So that's my mission, because as an educator that is my overriding mission'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

One of the key decisions that needed to be made was which curriculum to implement in the newly established High School – *'Because I started a school. I had to have a curriculum'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The School Principal indicated that many different curricula were considered, but the philosophical and pedagogical approaches of some of those curricula did not meet the School Principal's mission or the requirements of the School. For example, in describing the other curricula which were considered for the High School, the School Principal made the following comments:

> *I was terribly disillusioned with the A Level and GCSE system. I used the GCSE and A Levels, and I found it very linear and I found it not the curriculum for the 21st century in any shape or form* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

And,

> *Both the French Baccalaureat and Israeli Bagrut are not what they were. There are aspects of it that are strong. The standard and the content, or their driving force, has been lost somewhere along the line. The German, I would say is better, so they've still maintained it* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

And,

> *The American curriculum was not for me. The APs[11] were not for me* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The School Principal stated that after comparing all curriculum options, they found that the *'IB, certainly the Diploma Programme, we'll have to take one at a time, was the only programme that may fulfil my mission'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The application and implementation process for the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes took approximately a year and the School was authorised to offer these programmes in 2011. The School Principal commented:

> *I chose the Diploma Programme first. I think that we actually should have applied to the Guinness Book of Records for being the fastest acceptance of the Programme of any school. We applied, I think, at the end of 2009, by the time we got our act together, maybe beginning of 2010; and in January 2011 we became an IB authorised Diploma School* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The School's decision makers decided not to apply for Primary Years Programme authorisation for the Elementary School at this time, as there were concerns with the Elementary School curriculum that was in place.

At this point, and worthy of note is the comment made by the Head of Elementary regarding the reasons that the decision to implement the IB programmes was made. In response to the question asking for the reasons that the programmes were implemented, the Head of Elementary commented that while the positive features of the programmes were considered during the decision-making process, the actual reasons for IB Programme implementation ran far deeper. The Head of Elementary alluded to the fact that the School's circumstances were considered important in the decision-making process. The Head of Elementary commented:

> *So [the School Principal] chose [the IB programmes] because of the holistic - all the stuff you've got here - the philosophies, the holistic approach, the professional development, the membership of an international education network - everything you've put down there, I would apply. But it was more than that* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

[11] The acronym 'AP' refers to the US College Board's Advanced Placement Program.

This comment by the Head of Elementary forced the researcher's inquiry to include a deeper investigation of the School's circumstances that led to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. This inquiry produced the results outlined in the following sections.

As previously indicated (see Chapter 3: Description of research site: School improvement context), the School leaders had identified several challenges related to the Elementary School curriculum. The School Principal explained that this resulted in a lack of clarity over the curriculum. This was the primary concern.

> *It was something the Board [of Directors] picked up very strongly on, and it was sort of the death knell of that whole system, was that they couldn't get their heads around what the kids were actually learning* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

In 2011, the current Head of Elementary was appointed, and the current School Principal was promoted from the role of Head of High School. The Head of Elementary recounted that, upon their appointment, the School Principal and School management (i.e., the Board of Directors) made clear their concerns with the Elementary School curriculum. The appropriateness of implementing the Primary Years Programme, and so becoming a three-programme IB World School, was a part of these discussions. However, as a result of prior teaching experience in the School, the Head of Elementary suggested that the issues with the Elementary School curriculum should be addressed as a matter of priority:

> *Already from when I was talking to them about coming into position, the Board and [the School Principal] were saying to me, 'How do you feel about going down the PYP[12] road?'. So, the conversation started seven years ago, when I come on board. I say, 'No problem, absolutely, but we are not in a position'. And I knew the School because I had been a teacher in the School for many years before that. I was saying, 'We're not ready to just jump into the PYP. We're going to need time to figure out our curriculum more than anything'. The 'what' of what we were doing* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

When asked to provide further details regarding how the concerns with the Elementary School curriculum were manifested, both the School Principal and the Head of Elementary identified three challenges: (a) curriculum inconsistency and incoherence; (b) declining general and academic standards; and, (c) lack of school identity. Details of the challenges related to each of these three areas are explained below.

[12] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.

Curriculum inconsistency and incoherence

The phrases *curriculum consistency* and *curriculum coherence* are used interchangeably in the literature (Lee et al., 2012), and generally refer to the alignment of all curricular elements such as aims and philosophy, pedagogical approaches, learning standards and expectations, content, and assessment (Oates, 2011).

Within the Elementary School, curriculum inconsistency and incoherence presented as a result of the historical development and growth of the School. Although an American curriculum was adopted when the School was founded, it had been exposed to numerous changes resulting from successive leadership teams (i) making adjustments to suit community demands; (ii) adopting numerous educational initiatives and programmes, and (iii) implementing elements of other curricula with which they were familiar. The reasons for these actions were not investigated as they were not the focus of the study. When the Head of Elementary was asked if the curriculum which was in place at the time could be identified, the reply was that, '*It always depended on the leadership. The School was set up by American families, so always followed an American curriculum'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

As a result of these ongoing curriculum changes and adjustments, many different, mostly inconsistent, educational initiatives and programmes, and approaches to pedagogical and assessment practices had been adopted and implemented by the Elementary School teaching staff. It also appeared that this inconsistent approach to curriculum was compounded by the high turnover of leadership and teaching staff in the Elementary School (as discussed later in this section). The Head of Elementary confirmed that once this situation was identified, there was a desire to achieve curriculum consistency within the Elementary School – '*Because many curricula had been used in the past, so consistency was needed*' (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018). Supporting these claims the School Principal stated, '*There was inconsistency, there was, I would say, there was a lack of clarity about what the curriculum actually was'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Not only were the issues of curriculum inconsistency and incoherence felt within the Elementary School, they were also felt at a whole School level. The fact that the High School

had implemented the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes was the source of this feeling. These two IB programmes provided the High School with, amongst other elements, a vision, a strong curriculum foundation, and a common approach to pedagogy, and teaching, learning and assessment practices. This situation, when placed alongside the lack of curriculum clarity in the Elementary School, was viewed as not only providing curriculum inconsistency and incoherence across the School, but also a factor which caused division and separation between the High School and Elementary School. When asked if there was an aim to achieve curriculum consistency and coherence, and thereby a unified approach across the whole School, the Head of Elementary confirmed – *'In terms of the framework that we are putting around what we are doing. We think about a universal approach. We will think about the skills, concepts and knowledge in the same way. We are all going to think about attitudes in the same way'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Declining general and academic standards

A resultant effect of the historical adjustments and changes to the Elementary School curriculum, and the high turnover of staff, was a perceived decline of general and academic standards. This perception had built up over a considerable period of time and it came to be accepted as normal by teachers, parents, and particularly, the students. As an example of this decline, the School Principal observed that the Elementary students' attitudes towards the School uniform reflected the decline in general standards – *'[the Head of Elementary] had a problem, because [the Head of Elementary] had the day-to-day running of a school [where students] had long hair, no uniform, trainers'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). In addition, it was felt that academic standards had also declined for the same reasons. The School Principal made raising standards a priority. When asked to corroborate other interview data the School Principal stated, *'my first directive to [the Head of Elementary] was about standards because, as you said, they were all over the place … I said to [the Head of Elementary], 'Get the academics up!''* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Lack of school identity

The foundational aim upon which the School was established (i.e., the provision of Jewish studies and secular education for the children of the Jewish population of the city) was clearly and consistently expressed in both interview and document data. As an example, the Head of Elementary explained, '*The School was established twenty-six years ago as [the city]'s only*

Jewish day school. It was started because, at the time, there were a small group of Jewish families in [the city] who wanted their children to have Jewish education. That is why the School was started' (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). Document data added more detail – '*The original concept for [the School] was to teach a Jewish child how to live in two civilizations – Jewish and secular – and how to achieve synthesis between Jewish culture and the culture of the wider world'* ('History', School website).

Even though the foundational aim of the School was clear, there was a concern regarding the identity of the Elementary School. The Head of Elementary linked this concern directly to the lack of clarity regarding the curriculum that was operating in the Elementary School – '*Previously the School didn't quite have an identity. Was it using an American curriculum? Was it using the British curriculum? The Australian curriculum?*' (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The Head of Elementary emphasised that this lack of identity was a concern and needed to be addressed – '*The School lacked an identity, so there was a need to develop an identity for the School'* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

It became apparent that the main challenges facing the School leaders were a direct manifestation of the lack of clarity associated with the curriculum. Although the Elementary School was faced with these challenges, this did not occur in isolation, as there were three contextual factors operating in the background which provided additional challenges for the School leadership (i.e., the School Principal and Head of Elementary) and management (i.e., the Board of Directors). These contextual elements were (a) the instability of staffing; (b) the changing community demographics; and, (c) the existing IB programmes in the High School.

The instability of staffing

As previously suggested, the Elementary School faced issues with the lack of stability of teaching staff. When discussing the staffing instability, the School Principal commented that '*we came into a school obviously where the number that left, you know, the turnover rate was pretty high'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). A number of factors could have contributed to this situation including the transitory nature of the city's non-local population, and the seemingly better employment conditions and remuneration offered by other international schools in the city. As already discussed, the resultant effect of the high turnover

of teaching staff was the inability to establish, follow through and embed any of the educational initiatives and other curriculum changes that had been started.

The changing community demographics

The School was also challenged by the changing demographics of the community. The Head of Elementary stated that as the School grew, the number of nationalities represented in the student, parent and staff body increased. It was recognised that the American focused curriculum which had operated in the Elementary School was becoming less suitable in addressing the needs of the increasingly diverse community – '*As the community became more diverse, today we have eighteen nationalities, I think it was thought that it had to become less American and had to shift over to something more international*' (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

The existing IB Programmes in the High School

As already indicated, the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes were already implemented in the High School. Although not the focus of this study, the implementation of these two programmes was discussed with the School Principal so that the contextual background and the relationship between the School and the IB could be understood. In this discussion, the School Principal made a notable distinction between the context in which these two programmes were implemented, and the context in which the Primary Years Programme was implemented. The Middle Years and Diploma Programmes were implemented on the establishment of the High School and were developed and embedded as the School grew into the higher-grade levels. The School Principal described this as a creative process – '*I always call it a vision of creating*' (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). Whereas these programmes were implemented in a newly established High School, in contrast, the implementation of the Primary Years Programme occurred in an already established Elementary School, and hence, required changes to the existing practises, structures and processes. The School Principal stated, *'[the Head of Elementary] had to pull all that together to change the mindset'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). First commenting on the implementation of the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes as a *'vision'*, the School Principal outlined the distinction between the circumstances in which the IB programmes were implemented as follows -

> *But I would say it was a vision rather – I wouldn't use – I personally wouldn't use the word 'problem'. But in other schools maybe it's more relevant. For us it wasn't. From where I sit [the Head of Elementary] had a problem* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

As described in this section, there were concerns regarding the Elementary School curriculum which was in operation. This concern manifested as a number of challenges related to curriculum inconsistency and incoherence, the perceived decline of general and academic standards, and a lack of a school identity. These challenges were expressed against a background of a high turnover of teaching staff, changing community demographics and the existence of the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes in the High School – all of which added to the challenges faced by the School leadership and management. The section that follows employs problem-based methodology (Robinson, 1993) as an analytical framework and primarily draws upon interview data to develop a *theory of action* (see Robinson, 1993; Robinson & Donald, 2015) to understand the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. In keeping with problem-based methodology, first, the constraining factors to problem-solving and decision-making identified by the participants have been described. The decision makers' actions within these constraints are then outlined, followed by a description of the intended and unintended consequences of those actions. Following this, a description of the Primary Years Programme decision-making process undertaken at the School, is given. A diagrammatic overview of the theory of action is presented at the end of this section.

THEORY OF ACTION

The constraining factors

The School Principal and the Head of Elementary discussed the various factors which they had to consider as they attempted to decide the course of action to address the challenges that they faced. While not explicitly identifying them as constraints, the School Principal and Head of Elementary listed the following four factors as those which had to be considered during the problem-solving and decision-making process: (a) the provision of a high-quality secular curriculum; (b) the maintenance of the strong Jewish studies curriculum; (c) the centrality of the School in the community; and, (d) the need to align with the School's vision.

The provision of a high-quality secular curriculum

The School is situated in a context where there are great demands for student academic achievement from the community. Given that it is a private, fee-paying school, the community expects the provision of a high-quality secular education as indicated by the Head of Elementary – '*I would say the nature of any private school community, is that people are saying, 'We're paying you a lot of dollars every year, so we are going to demand that you give us service'. The moment you don't, they let you know that you aren't'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The provision of a high-quality secular curriculum was one of the drivers which led to the foundation of the School, as explained by the School Principal in the School's 25th Anniversary commemorative video, *'This tiny group of parents who united together as Jews to say, 'We want a Jewish education for our children, and of course we want it to have a secular, an excellent secular component as well''* (School Principal, 25th Anniversary video 2016). The demand for a high-quality secular curriculum primarily comes from the parent population and is linked to the expectation that their children will achieve admission to universities around the world after completing grade 12. This expectation is not unusual in the international school sector, and many such schools use the university destinations of their graduating students as a measure of the quality of education that they provide. This is reflected in a comment made by one of the School's first Board members in the School's 25th Anniversary commemorative video - '*I think it's great that we have a high school and from what I understand, you know, the children are graduating and going to lots of great universities'* (First Board member, 25th Anniversary video 2016). The focus on ensuring that students are provided with the opportunity to attend university level education was also reinforced in the School Principal's personal mission (as quoted in the description of the case above). Even though university destinations, arguably, are more of a pressing concern for high school students and their parents, there is a similar expectation from parents of students in the younger grade levels. The School Principal reflected this demand in an anecdotal comment towards the end of the interview – *'I'm going to the Pre-School 'Back to School' night tonight and I will be talking about university to parents of one-and-a-half year olds!'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

An additional dimension which was factored in by the School leadership when considering the provision of a high-quality secular curriculum was the landscape of the city's international school sector. In order to remain competitive, and to attract and retain students in this

context, which boasts almost sixty international schools, the School's leadership and management have to be aware of the curriculum offerings of the other international schools, and have to offer a comparable, if not a better, quality of education. Therefore, the way in which other international schools cater for their school community is constantly and closely monitored. The Head of Elementary indicated this, *'[The School Principal] looked around at the time and said, okay, what [are] a lot of schools here doing in order to cater for such a diverse population and in order to cater for such a diverse teaching body?'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). This type of question meant that the School's leadership kept a close eye on the actions of other international schools in the city.

The maintenance of the strong Jewish studies curriculum

The other foundational aim of the School was to provide a Jewish studies curriculum for the children of Jewish families in the city. The School views Jewish studies as not only religious instruction, but also Hebrew language learning, and Jewish cultural and identity education. Typical of the comments made were:

> *It is important that the children learn to read, write and speak modern Hebrew; learn to read, write and communicate using classical Hebrew – the Hebrew of the Bible – that they have a place to learn about all the Jewish holidays, festivals, observances and celebrations; and that they have a place to delve into what forms the sense of Jewish culture, and Jewish identity, Jewish ethics and Jewish values* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

And,

> *I think it's very important to learn Hebrew because it brings us back to where we came from in a way* (Grade 7 student, 25th Anniversary video 2016*).*

And,

> *[The School] teaches Judaism as a way of life, encourages each child to take pride in his or her Jewish identity and seeks to develop individuals who are more knowledgeable and committed to the Jewish tradition* ('Mission', School website).

The School takes a modern, liberal approach to the practice of Judaism, due primarily to its international context and diverse community demographic (i.e., parents, students, teachers, staff). The Head of Elementary explained, '*Our whole basis of how we practice Judaism is that we take our traditions, which are two thousand years old, but we move them along with time'* (Head of Elementary, 25th Anniversary video 2016).

The School's Jewish studies curriculum is seen as an integral part of the life of the School. This position is evident in School documents in which the following quotes are typical examples:

> *Jewish life continues to be central at all campuses* (Annual Report 2017-18).

And,

> *Our challenging curriculum highlights the advantages of a Jewish education* ('About us', School website).

The School Principal stated that they believed that the Jewish studies curriculum added value, at a holistic level, to the students' education and personal development. The School Principal acknowledged that this value was not just confined to Jewish faith-based schools, but could also be seen in other faith-based schools – *'I had seen the benefits of a Jewish school, where the philosophy, the ethos underpins everything, and I had seen that that was providing value added, as with any religious school – I don't think it's limited to Judaism – that value added to the students' personal development and to academic outcomes'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

While the Jewish faith-based context was fundamental to the development of the School, the associated Jewish curriculum was also viewed as an element which allowed the School to attract and retain students. A student commented on the School's 25th Anniversary commemorative video that, '*One of the main reasons my parents sent me to this school is because of the Jewish Education'* (Student, 25th Anniversary video 2016).

The centrality of the School in the community

The School serves the small Jewish community residing in the city and it is, along with the Synagogue and the Jewish Community Centre, considered one of the core institutions in the Jewish community in the city. The School's website indicates the central place that it holds in the Jewish community, where it is described as *'a unifying feature of [the city's] thriving Jewish community'* ('History', School website). The School, in turn, holds families and the community as central, and actively promotes and welcomes their involvement. Families and the community are, therefore, heavily involved in the day-to-day life of the School, and members of these groups volunteer significant amounts of time and resources to the benefit of the

students and the School. The following quotes typify the close interaction and relationship between the School and the community:

> *Community is at the heart of [the School], and the school prides itself on its commitment not only to the Jewish community in [the city], Asia and around the world, but also to the many communities (parental, alumni, student) that necessarily intersect with and comprise an international school such as [the School]* ('Community', School website).

And,

> *[The School] functions as one large family, providing support, care, help and direction – and we are delighted to invite you to learn more about our unique school here in [the city]* ('About us', School website).

And,

> *Family involvement is key and begins from the moment you visit our campuses* ('About us', School website).

And,

> *When you care so much for the children, you all want to get involved, whether it's on the side of fundraising, organising our Annual Dinner, taking part in PTA*[13] *events. Our PTA is extremely strong. The number of volunteers in our community that give up countless hours of their own time to make a difference because they want to make a difference* (Head of Elementary, 25th Anniversary video 2016).

Given this strong reciprocal relationship between the School and the community, the School's leadership strongly believe that the inclusion of parents, stakeholders and the community in School life is an important consideration. The Head of Elementary outlined this important relationship and indicated that the School's leadership constantly asked themselves the following type of questions – '*How do we get the parents to feel that they are a part of [the] school*? *[How do we] ensure that there was a positive feeling amongst the parent body and staff body?'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). It was apparent that the School leaders felt the responsibility to maintain the School's place in the community, to strengthen stakeholder and community involvement in the School.

[13] The acronym 'PTA' refers to the School's Parent Teacher Association.

The need to align with the School's vision

As previously described (see Chapter 1: The International Baccalaureate: IB authorisation process and conditions), the IB requires the development of a vision and mission which aligns with those of the IB's as a part of the authorisation process for any of the programmes. In this case the School Principal (as Head of High School at that time) had developed such a vision and mission for the High School as part of the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme authorisation process. When the School Principal was promoted to this position the vision and mission was adopted for the whole School. This was indicated by the School Principal – *'So, at that point my vision was to create the perfect curriculum for children aged eleven to eighteen. It very quickly became a vision of creating a whole school curriculum from one to eighteen'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

At this point the idea of becoming a three programme IB World School became a goal. This stance was taken as the IB programmes which had already been implemented in the High School seemed to fulfil the requirements of the School. The School Principal stated that becoming a three programme IB World School became the focus - *'I said, 'We are going to become an IB School because it's the way forward; because if you've got two programmes you should have all three; because it ticks all the boxes''* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The Head of Elementary believed that the goal of becoming a three programme IB World School was established upon implementation of the IB programmes in the High School:

> *I'm pretty sure [the School Principal] would say this to you, that on the day [the School Principal] took on the MYP[14], [the School Principal] already had the vision that at some point down the line, whenever that would be, PYP[15] would be in the Primary School. I think we need to credit [the School Principal] with that. I really think that was [the School Principal]'s thinking at the time* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

From their experiences with the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes, the School leadership and management fully supported, and placed great importance on the vision of becoming a three programme IB World School. This is evidenced by the fact that becoming a three programme IB World School was included as the first point in the School's Strategic Priorities (Annual Report 2017-18).

[14] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.
[15] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.

Actions

As outlined in the description of the case, the School leadership faced a number of challenges which all stemmed from the lack of clarity around the curriculum. These challenges were set against a background of instability of staffing, changing community demographics, and the existing IB programmes in the High School. The School's leaders believed that before they could consider the implementation of the Primary Years Programme, these challenges had to be addressed.

The actions taken to address the challenges faced by the School leadership were founded on their beliefs of the criteria which would ensure the success of the School. The Head of Elementary described that the School leadership believed that the success of the School was broadly based around three elements – the people (*'the teachers'*), the curriculum (*'what we are doing'*), and pedagogy (*'how we are doing it'*):

> *When you are looking at a school's success there are probably three very important key factors. Number one, probably the most important are the people teaching the children. The teachers. For us this is what we feel. Number two is what we are doing, and number three, how are we doing it* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Appreciating that any change could take a considerable amount of time, the Head of Elementary, who led the change process in the Elementary School, was afforded plenty of time by the School Principal and the Board to enact the required changes. The School Principal stated, '*I also gave [the Head of Elementary] time to structure and organise the Elementary School as a very structured environment, which it was not. So, that took time'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). In commenting on the length of time that the change process took, the School Principal stated that *'it took years'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The Head of Elementary added:

> *We gave us a lot of time. What actually happened was I gave us, and we all gave us very, very, broad times. We gave us a lot of time. I think I had sort of made it a five-year project, and I think we beat that deadline by two and a half years, or two years* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

The Head of Elementary described three priority areas which the School leadership determined needed to be addressed before the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be considered. These three areas were identified as staffing, curriculum, and a positive feeling amongst stakeholders:

> *My first task was to create stability in staffing. My second task was to have a curriculum, and to put that into place, so that we know the 'what', and my third priority was, and these are not in any order, but the third was to ensure that there was a positive feeling amongst the parent body and the staff body, so that everyone was ready to go on a journey* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Attracting and developing high quality teaching staff

As already discussed earlier, for various reasons the Elementary School had experienced a high turnover of teaching staff. The School Principal explained – '*we came into a school obviously where the number that left, you know, the turnover rate was pretty high. We've completely changed that now and the retention is very high*' (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). The hiring and retaining of high-quality staff became very important for the School's leadership and management, and, as such, became one of the priority areas in the School's Strategic Plan (Annual Report 2017-18). The School Principal explained in the School's 25th Anniversary commemorative video – '*The secret of the success at [the School] is the passion of the people working together. I think hiring top quality teachers is absolutely key*' (School Principal, 25th Anniversary video 2016). In discussing how staffing stability was achieved, the Head of Elementary explained that changes were made to the workload, expectations and employment conditions of teaching staff which allowed the School to compete with the conditions offered by the other international schools in the city – '*We had, by that point, I would say, positioned ourselves as an employer of choice. So that if people had to choose between [another school] and [another school] and [the School], they would start to come to us*' (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). When asked to outline specific changes that were made, the Head of Elementary added:

> *We lowered the amount of administrative tasks and paperwork that teachers are so often bogged down with. We simplified everything. You come, you do your work, as long as you are responsible enough to look after your planning and your classroom, we don't look at the clock. Go home at three thirty, go home at four o'clock, go and have a life. It was about saying a lot of us came into teaching, one because we love education, and we want to work with children, but also because it was always seen as the career choice that could hopefully give you that work-life balance. But people were finding themselves sitting in classrooms or staffrooms until seven p.m. We took away ninety-five percent of evening obligations. We have no weekend obligations. We finish early on a Friday, you see what I'm saying?* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

In addition to the adjustments to the workload, expectations and employment conditions for teachers, the School leadership actively sought to employ teaching staff who had experience

with the Primary Years Programme framework. By employing experienced Primary Years Programme teachers, the mindset, or attitudinal changes which the School leadership wanted to achieve was facilitated, as these teachers brought the collaborative practices, pedagogical approaches and the IB values to the School. This also assisted in developing a sense of unity within the Elementary School. The School Principal explained – '*Also, we started employing, which we didn't have before, PYP*[16] *trained teachers. So that changed the mindset of the Elementary School and that made it into one'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). Not only were teachers with relevant Primary Years Programme experience targeted, the Head of Elementary was also seeking people who shared the vision of the School. In discussing the staffing, the School Principal reflected that it was a slow process to build a cohort of suitably experienced staff who shared the School's vision. This not only required hiring suitably qualified and experienced staff, but also required extensive staff training:

> *Also for [the Head of Elementary] to have the opportunity to make [the Head of Elementary's] own staff – slowly, slowly – it took years – to the point where [the Head of Elementary] was hiring people who had the vision, shared [the Head of Elementary's] vision, and [the Head of Elementary's] view, and therefore, we had a better calibre of staff as well. When it came to training them, it was a natural progression, and now we look to appoint already trained people* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

And,

> *Again, I'm very fortunate with my Board, that in PYP, everybody has to be trained. For MYP*[17]*, one per faculty, and for PYP, everybody has to be trained. So, we train a lot of people, and that's one of our strengths* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Putting strong curriculum foundations in place

As described by the Head of Elementary, and reinforced by the School Principal, there were concerns due to the lack of clarity regarding the curriculum operating in the Elementary School at the time of their appointment and promotion (respectively). In acting to address the curriculum inconsistency and incoherence issues, the School leaders decided to first review and consolidate the various teaching and learning approaches operating in the Elementary School, and then adopt content and assessment standards (i.e., scope and sequence documents) from other national curricula. The School Principal indicated that this process of

[16] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.
[17] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.

curriculum reform was in line with a recommendation made by an IB consultant during the School's process of implementing the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme. This approach ensured that foundational curriculum structures were in place before the implementation of the IB programmes. Due to the previous success of this approach, the same was adopted when the challenges presented by the existing Elementary School curriculum were being addressed:

> *I wanted to reach that point that when we implement … I also knew from my experience, I won't say which school, but there was a school in [the city] that adopted the PYP[18] without an academic programme in place, and they were still scratching around and the whole thing went flop, because they couldn't get their heads around it. With the MYP[19], I was extremely fortunate to have an advisor at the time from the IB - he's not there anymore – and he was brilliant. He said to me, 'Adopt a curriculum, it doesn't matter what it is'. Similarly, with the Primary School, we discussed it, and [the Head of Elementary] adopted, for example, we had adopted the New South Wales curriculum as a compromise. And [the Head of Elementary] stuck with that. So, for Maths standards, for example, we used New South Wales, but since [then, the Head of Elementary has] refined and improved the Maths year after year. Now [Head of Elementary] brings in elements, for example, of the Singapore curriculum, to enhance further* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The Head of Elementary reinforced the success of this approach, and noted that the process of reforming the curriculum was expected to take a significant amount of time:

> *… because as you know the Primary Years Programme does give you pretty good scope and sequence documents in terms of ultimately the outcomes, but they don't compare in the sort of detail to what you get from the Australian Curriculum, from the American Curriculum, from the Singapore Curriculum. I said first we will decide what our curriculum is going to be and then we will slowly start putting the framework around this, and I say slowly because in my mind, before we even started with the words 'PYP' in the School, we had slowly been building up to it for four years* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

It was also recognised that the previous lack of clarity, confusion and disparate approaches to the curriculum was a result of the heavy reliance on the prior teaching, learning and assessment experiences of the teachers and leaders who came from all over the world. Therefore, the current School leaders recognised that a common, or unified, approach to the curriculum was necessary. The Head of Elementary stated that a series of questions were asked in order to guide the decisions made regarding the reform of the curriculum:

[18] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.
[19] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.

> *So, in our case, the issues we had were the same in the High School and the Primary School. How do we ensure that the teachers that we have, that are coming from all over the world, can buy into the one curriculum framework? The Americans come with the American system, the Australians with the Australian system. How do we ensure a holistic approach? How do we ensure that it is inquiry driven and inquiry based?* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

As described previously, a resultant effect of the lack of clarity and confusion surrounding the curriculum was a perceived decline in academic standards. Via actions such as (a) the setting of improvement targets by the School Principal; (b) the adoption of content and assessment standards from other curricula; and, (c) the establishment of common approaches to teaching and learning, the improvement of academic standards and expectations across the Elementary School naturally occurred. The School Principal explained the target setting process:

> *So, every year I set [the Head of Elementary] different targets. The first year was the Maths, 'cause Maths was a mess. Now, English, of course, tends to be better than Maths, in most places anyway. And being very articulate children of very articulate parents, the English was okay or better, but the Maths was not. So, every year, whether it was the Maths, whether it was the English, whether it was the Social Studies, whether it was the languages – which are very, very strong in the School – [the local language] as well as Hebrew. Every year I gave [the Head of Elementary] a new target* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The actions taken by the School leaders to enact curriculum reform ensured that appropriate curriculum foundations were in place, and a common approach to teaching and learning, and assessment standards were adopted throughout the Elementary School.

Keeping a positive feeling amongst stakeholders (trust)

In describing the areas which needed to be addressed before the implementation of the Primary Years Programme could be considered, the Head of Elementary stated that a *'positive feeling amongst the parent and staff body'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018) needed to be ensured. It is worthy of note that the Head of Elementary used this expression on a number of occasions during the course of the initial interview. When the Head of Elementary was asked to explain what this meant in the follow up interview, they clarified that this was concerned with building a sense of trust amongst the parent and staff community in the educational leaders' vision for the School, their plans to achieve that vision, and the motivations behind their decision-making actions. The historical lack of clarity and the resultant confusion had affected stakeholders' trust in the leadership of the Elementary

School. Therefore, regaining stakeholder confidence in the School leadership was a high priority, and it was recognised as essential to enable the School to move forward and develop:

> *Stakeholders needed a sense of trust in the educational leaders … [and to] have confidence that the School was working in the best interests of the children's education. We had to be in a place where if I had said to the parents that we were going with the British Curriculum, they would have the confidence that it was the right decision* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

The School leaders determined that once the three areas of staffing, curriculum and trust had been addressed, they felt confident that the suitable conditions existed to enable the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme to be considered.

Consequences

The final part of the problem-based methodology framework, as applied to this study, requires an investigation into the intended and unintended consequences of the actions taken by the decision makers. There were a number of consequences which affected the School, students, parents and the decision makers (the participants) themselves. These consequences are described below.

The School

It was clear that becoming a three programme IB World School with the implementation of the Primary Years Programme brought a significant positive impact to the School. The Head of Elementary stated - *'Looking back now, I could never have imagined the positive impact … that the impact would have been this great and this positive for the School. I really could never have known that'* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

Among the positive consequences reported by the School Principal were: (a) the establishment of a consistent curriculum foundation and framework which was being built on and developed (*'So, we are constantly enhancing curriculum, but now within the Primary Years Programme framework'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018)); (b) a more collaborative environment (*'There is a connection which has been greatly enhanced, because we have grades four and five on this campus – we moved grades four and five three years ago to this campus. So, there is much more influence, and a philosophical sharing. We also have some projects where the High School kids go over to the Elementary School to deliver projects'*

(School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018)); and, (c) a strengthened sense of community especially amongst the teaching staff (*'As we made more events together, we suddenly started getting High School teachers becoming friends with Elementary School teachers. The faculty is much, much closer. [There was] no connection in the past, in the early years, and now there's a strong connection'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018)).

Students

The aims and philosophy underpinning the Primary Years Programme integrated with the School's Jewish studies component, and, therefore, added value to the students' education and development. The Head of Elementary explained that – *'[The Primary Years Programme] complements Jewish life, Jewish ethics, Jewish values, Jewish teaching and learning, and everything we were trying to do from a Jewish perspective'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

The implementation of the Primary Years Programme was intended to bring enhancements to students' academic development as it allowed for a consistent philosophical and pedagogical approach to be adopted across the Elementary School, and therefore, common academic standards. As the Elementary School was authorised to offer the Primary Years Programme in early 2018, it has not yet completed a full academic year with the programme in place. It is, therefore, too early to determine the full impact of the Primary Years Programme on students' achievement and learning outcomes.

Parents

It was reported that the common approach and language associated with the IB programmes allowed stakeholders, especially parents, to better appreciate the School's vision and mission, understand the way in which the students were learning, and to engage with the philosophy and aims of the IB programmes – *'[It is] amazing to have a universal language, and to have a situation where all the key stakeholders of the School are on the same page'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

In an anecdotal recount, the Head of Elementary suggested that the understanding of the aims of the Primary Years Programme also allowed an enthusiasm for the programme to develop, especially amongst the parent body – *'The majority of parents come up [and say] 'This is just*

so amazing' … There is a love for what is going on, I would say' (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

It was, however, felt that the parent body needed more information and a deeper understanding of, not only the Primary Years Programme, but the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme as well. The School had distributed various publications and held information events in order to raise awareness and understanding of the aims, philosophy, and teaching, learning and assessment approaches of the programmes for parents, but found that continued focus in this area was necessary – *'For parents, I still don't believe they know enough about any of the programmes. The more we teach and train … no, I wouldn't say that. They're not keeping up with our training. So, we have to be more creative and more extensive in our training for parents. Some get it, some don't'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

Participants

In addition to the shifts in attitudes amongst the parent body, participants also reported a change in their perspectives through the Primary Years Programme decision-making, preparation for authorisation, and implementation processes. As an example of the shift in attitudes towards the Primary Years Programme, the School Principal shared the following:

> *[The Head of Elementary] didn't want to do [the Primary Years Programme] when [the Head of Elementary] first arrived. I think [the Head of Elementary] maybe didn't know it. I also wanted [the Head of Elementary] to embrace it, and [the Head of Elementary] now is a greater advocate of the Primary Years Programme than I am* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The participants' personal learning outcomes included a deeper level of understanding of (a) the decision-making process, and, (b) aspects of the process of change leadership and management, especially in educational settings. As an example, the Head of Elementary reported that their learning from the process was that decision makers should make key decisions with confidence after the necessary information has been gathered and the potential consequences assessed. The following quotes typify the Head of Elementary's personal learning outcomes in this respect:

> *Decisions [need to be] made from a place of confidence. I think where people get very scared of change is if the leadership is scared of change … or if the leadership is wishy-washy about it, and not really sure how it's going to look* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

And,

> *When you really believe in something and you've done your due diligence, and you're thinking in the best interests of the children and this School, people will come along on the journey* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

In addition, the Head of Elementary also commented on the change process. They implied that a shared vision made the process easier and allowed both overt and covert efforts to be made to encourage the required changes to enable the School leadership to consider the implementation of the Primary Years Programme. The Head of Elementary stated:

> *By the time I said 'PYP'[20] for the first time to any Elementary School staff, everyone was on board. Okay. But had I said 'PYP' two years, or three years or four years earlier, sixty percent of them would not have been on board. That is why I didn't say it earlier. We needed to get the School to a place where everyone, the moment we said it, would be on board. I think for effective change management, you've got to do all the behind the scenes work, so that when you actually make the change, everyone's on board. If you try to make the change without having everyone on board, it's going to fail, or it's going to be much harder. But I think if we're all on the same page, it makes it that much easier* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

With reference to implementing the IB programmes, the School Principal reported that a committed team of leaders was essential for the successful leadership of the IB programme implementation process in a school – *'One has to have a core of leaders within each programme who are passionate about the programme'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). With specific reference to the manner in which the Primary Years Programme was implemented in the School, the School Principal stated that they appreciated the assistance of external consultants, and saw value in including the parents in the process:

> *I learnt that the way the Elementary School did the PYP training – to bring in a PYP person and invite the parents in … was very, very, very good and very helpful. So, bringing the parents into the process and trying to train them, was, I would say, my biggest takeaway* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018).

The Primary Years Programme decision process

In order to gain a holistic understanding of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme at the School, an investigation of the process of decision-making that was undertaken was conducted. This section presents the results which are specifically associated

[20] The acronym 'PYP' refers to the IB's Primary Years Programme.

with the decision-making process. As in the previous section, interpretations made have been supported by quotes from interviews with the participants (the School Principal and the Head of Elementary) and from documents which were analysed (see Figure 3.7).

The process of deciding to implement an IB programme was not an unfamiliar one for the School's leadership (i.e., School Principal and Head of Elementary) and management (i.e., the Board of Directors), as some members of these groups already had some experience with this type of decision-making. This experience came from their involvement in the decision process for the Diploma Programme and Middle Years Programme in 2011. The School Principal reported that the Board were, therefore, very supportive of the process of considering the Primary Years Programme (*'The Board were extremely positive because of everything they had learnt about the IB, the DP[21] and the MYP[22]'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018)). Given the existing Middle Years and Diploma Programmes in the High School, the consideration of the Primary Years Programme was approached as a natural and inevitable progression in the School's development (*'It seemed like a sensible thing to do'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018)). In addition, the Head of Elementary indicated that the existing IB programmes in the High School were found to fit well with the Jewish faith base of the School - *'[the School Principal] found that this complemented Jewish life, Jewish ethics, Jewish values, Jewish teaching and learning, and everything we were trying to do from a Jewish perspective and, so in a way it was a no brainer'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

The responsibility of making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme rested with the School leadership as they had the day-to-day management of the School. The School Principal stated that they led the decision process for the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes in 2011, and in turn, guided the Head of Elementary when the implementation of the Primary Years Programme was considered – *'I led the decision-making process and trained [the Head of Elementary] up'* (School Principal, interview, September 6, 2018). Therefore, the responsibility of preparing the Elementary School for the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme rested with the Head of Elementary, who managed all the changes necessary prior to the implementation of the Primary Years Programme. This was due

[21] The acronym 'DP' refers to the IB's Diploma Programme.
[22] The acronym 'MYP' refers to the IB's Middle Years Programme.

to the fact that the Head of Elementary was based at the Elementary School site and was the most senior leader at that site – *'[It was] me saying to the Board and to [the School Principal] because I was the one on the ground at the Primary School'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

Even though the decision-making task rested with the School leadership, the Board had to be involved in all major strategic and policy decisions, including the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme – *'[The] Board was very involved every step of the way'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). As both the School Principal and the Head of Elementary hold ex-officio positions on the Board (see Figure 3.1), they are able to provide regular reports and updates to members of the Board at the monthly meetings – *'Both [the School Principal] and I report to the Board at Board meetings every month'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). Therefore, the School's management structure allowed members of the Board to regularly and actively monitor the progress of all the developments and changes prior to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme:

> *[The Board] would have been asking the right questions every month. They would have been saying things like, 'Okay, [Head of Elementary], you've got the curriculum in place now, you've had really great staff retention. Where are we at?'. When you're in these meetings and you're presenting, and every month we would present where the curriculum was at; what was the newest development that'd taken place; how this thing had grown and evolved* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

It can be seen that although the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was driven by the School leadership, it was necessary, given their fiduciary duties and oversight role, for the Board to be very involved in, and actively support the decision to implement, and thereafter, the ongoing offering of, all three IB programmes.

In addition to discussing the involvement of the School leadership and management in the process of decision-making to implement the Primary Years Programme, both participants also discussed the approach that was taken during the process. The School leaders based their approach to the Primary Years Programme decision-making process on enhancing communication between stakeholders, and on taking a slow and cautious attitude to change.

The School leaders and management believed that open and transparent communication assisted the building of strong relationships between all stakeholders and was key for facilitating the type of changes that were necessary in preparation for the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The Head of Elementary also suggested that the School's small size was an advantage. The Head of Elementary stated – *'This is the beauty of the small school, the relationships. There are those few people in senior management, less than a handful. So, we all communicate with one another all the time'* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018). The importance of communication between all stakeholders was believed to be essential to the development of the School, and as such, enhancing communication, particularly with the use of information technologies, was a strategic priority area for the School. This was evidenced by statements made by the Head of Elementary in interview, and by the Chairman of the Board in the School's *Annual Report 2017-18* :

> *Our overall communication is good, but is also identified as, in our strategic plan, a continued area for growth* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

And,

> *This report, along with … the enhancements to the website and other initiatives, are part of our continuing priority of constantly enhancing communication and transparency between [the School] and you, our valuable school community* (Board Chair's Message, Annual Report 2017-18).

As previously indicated, a great amount of time was given to achieve the changes required to place the School in a position to consider the implementation of the Primary Years Programme. This was a result of the cautious approach to change that was adopted by the School leadership. The Head of Elementary described this approach as a strength:

> *… one of our strengths is the very slow and cautious attitude and approach we take to everything*. *We don't just jump into every new initiative because it's a new initiative, or because someone has said it's good* (Head of Elementary, interview, June 20, 2018).

It became apparent that the School's leaders' approach to change leadership recognised, albeit implicitly, that a careful balance between the four constraining factors (as outlined above) had to be maintained. The Head of Elementary, in discussion with the researcher about the application of the problem-based methodology framework in this study, reflected on the implied nature of the constraining factors. The Head of Elementary reflected:

> *In a way you were asking 'how do you problem solve when those are your constraints?'. Those are your four limitations, find the solution that is going to fit in with those. When you are in something, you are in it. You don't always, necessarily, explicitly think about those things. They are all implied. They are all implied all the time. But then when you pointed it out the way you just did, I have to agree. I have to agree that you've made my thinking visible. That's very helpful* (Head of Elementary, interview, August 31, 2018).

This part has been used to present the researcher's findings regarding the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in the case study School. In order to provide the reader with a summary, the researcher has presented a diagrammatic overview of the theory of action for understanding the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in the School as Figure 4.1. This has been adapted from Robinson and Donald (2015), and Hannah, Sinnema and Robinson (2018), and incorporates the list of the challenges which the School's decision makers faced.

THEORY OF ACTION

CHALLENGES	○ Curriculum inconsistency & incoherence; ○ Declining general & academic standards; and, ○ Lack of School identity. **SET AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF –** ○ The instability of staffing; ○ The changing community demographics; and, ○ The existing IB programmes in the High School.
CONSTRAINTS	The School must – • Provide a high-quality secular curriculum, **AND** • Maintain the strong Jewish studies curriculum, **AND** • Keep its central place in the community, **AND** • Align with its vision.
ACTIONS	With a slow and cautious approach, the following actions were taken – ○ Attracting & developing high quality teaching staff. ○ Putting strong curriculum foundations in place. ○ Keeping a positive feeling amongst stakeholders (trust). **ONLY THEN** School leaders believed that they were in a position to consider the implementation of the Primary Years Programme in the Elementary School.
CONSEQUENCES	<u>For the School:</u> ○ Establishment of a consistent curriculum foundation & framework; ○ A more collaborative environment; and, ○ A strengthened sense of community. (The scale of the positive impact was not envisaged). <u>For Students:</u> ○ Value added to students' education and personal development. **HOWEVER** It is too early to ascertain the impact on academic achievement & learning outcomes. <u>For Parents:</u> ○ A better understanding of the School's vision & mission; and, ○ A greater enthusiasm for the IB programmes. **HOWEVER** More training is needed to strengthen understandings of the programmes, & what & how children are learning. <u>For Participants:</u> ○ A change in perspective & attitude towards the Primary Years Programme; and, ○ A deeper understanding of the decision-making process & change leadership in education.

Figure 4.1. Theory of action for understanding the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. This was achieved by investigating the reasons for, and the

process behind that decision in one school. The results of this research, which have been presented in the preceding section, have led to the findings which are described below. The findings are discussed in detail and against the research literature in Chapter 5.

This research found that in the period of time before the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was made (i.e., the period of time between the trigger point and the decision point – see Figure 2.7), three interrelated actions, on the part of the School's decision makers, were required -

1) Understanding the challenges and constraints;
2) Establishing achievable curriculum improvement goals; and,
3) Building communication and collaboration.

These actions were regarded as the necessary components which facilitated the Primary Years Programme decision-making process. Therefore, bringing these to the surface aided in achieving a deeper understanding of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

Understanding the challenges and constraints

The School's decision makers had to first have an understanding of the challenges and constraints that they were facing. In this case, the results demonstrated that the main challenges facing the School decision makers stemmed from the confusion over the curriculum and associated curricular standards and practices in place in the Elementary School. The results also demonstrated that the constraints on the decision makers actions were associated with the requirements to 1) provide a high-quality secular curriculum, 2) maintain the strong Jewish studies curriculum, 3) keep the School's central place in the community, and 4) align with the School's vision. Therefore, prior to considering the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme,

the School decision makers had to understand the challenges and constraints of the context (Finding 1).

Establishing achievable curriculum improvement goals

The School's decision makers then had to establish improvement goals specifically for the Elementary School curriculum. In this situation, the confusion associated with the lack of clarity over the Elementary School curriculum resulted in a number of concerns, including disparate teaching and learning practices, and, in particular, the perception of declining

academic and general standards. Over the course of a number of years, the School leadership team (the School Principal and the Head of Elementary) established a number of targets to improve teaching and learning practices and academic standards in the Elementary School. Therefore, prior to considering the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme,

the School decision makers had to establish achievable curriculum improvement goals (Finding 2).

Building an environment of communication and collaboration

The School's decision makers had to build communication and collaboration in order to develop trust in their leadership and decision-making actions, particularly amongst the parent and teaching body. In this situation, the School leaders undertook several measures designed to build and strengthen communication and collaboration with community groups (parents and teachers). As this area was prioritised in the School's strategic development plans, measures such as hosting regular information sessions for, and using technology to enhance the communication with parents; as well as adjusting the approach to human resources by revising teachers' working conditions and expectations, were employed. These measures assisted in building a sense of community and developing more trusting relationships, which, in turn, facilitated the implementation of the necessary changes and improvements to the Elementary School's philosophy, pedagogy and practices, so that the School's aim of offering a high-quality secular curriculum could be realised. Therefore, prior to considering the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme,

the School decision makers had to build an environment of communication and collaboration (Finding 3).

The three actions outlined above allowed the existing challenges in the Elementary School to be addressed so that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be considered from a stronger curricular, contextual and environmental foundation than that which was in place previously. Therefore,

the School decision makers could only consider the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme once these actions were taken (Finding 4).

The findings of this study can, therefore, be summarised in the following statement:

> *In this single school case study, the School's decision makers could only consider* ***the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme*** *when* ***the challenges and constraints of the context*** *were understood;* ***achievable curriculum improvement goals*** *were established; and,* ***communication and collaboration*** *within the community was built.*

As a summary and an aide mémorie for the reader, a diagrammatic overview of the findings of the study (as described above) follows as Figure 4.2.

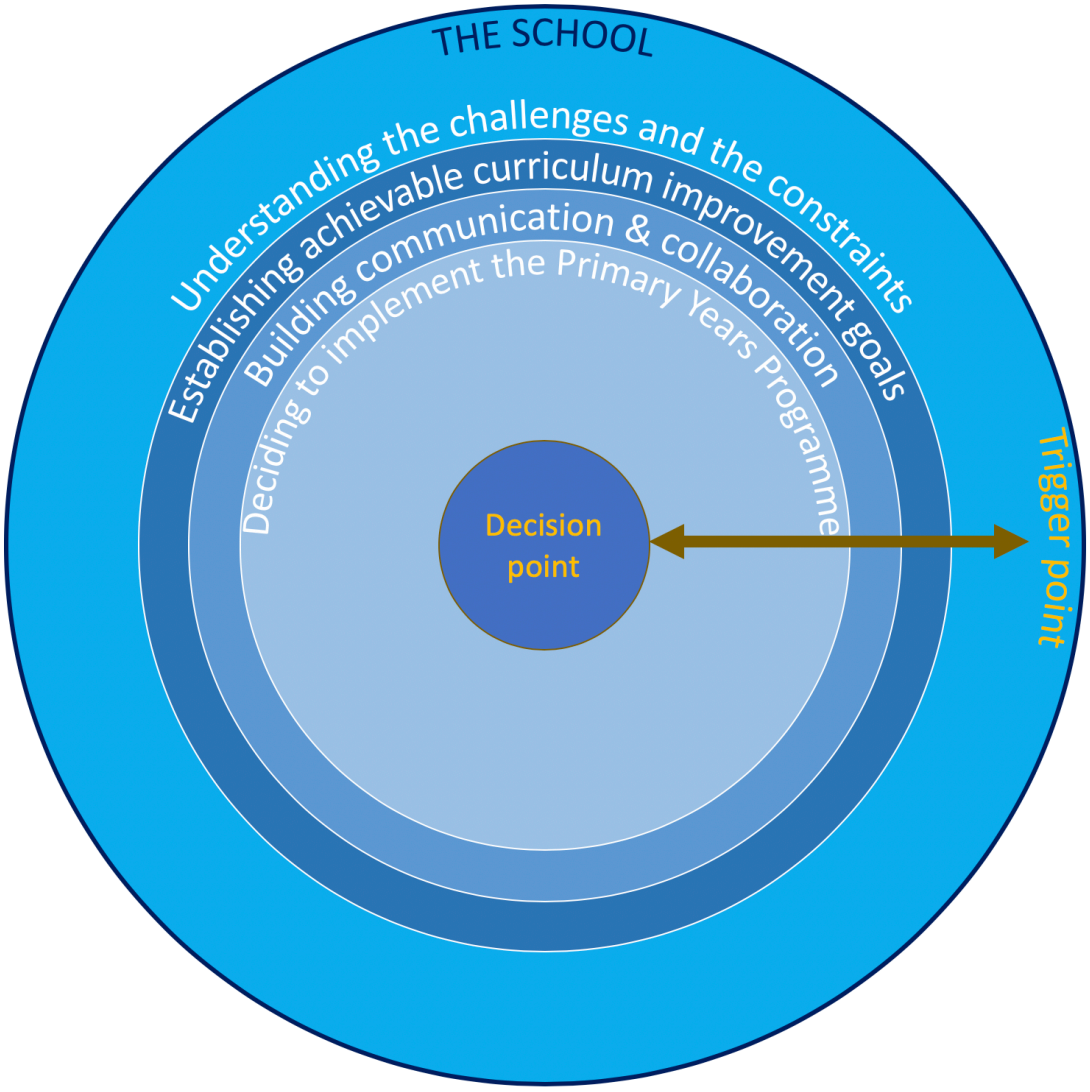

Figure 4.2. Summary of research findings.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The researcher has used this chapter to describe the results and the findings from this research which seeks to understand a School's decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The use of the problem-based methodology framework assisted in developing a theory of action from the themes generated through the data analysis process. The resultant

theory of action then allowed for four findings to be drawn. The findings show that the School decision makers had to develop a deep understanding of the challenges and constraints, then establish achievable curriculum improvement goals and build a culture of communication and collaboration before deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme. As previously indicated, these findings are discussed in detail and in relation to the research literature in the following chapter, Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study is to understand school decision makers' decision to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme. The question that was developed to guide this research was:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of this study and to address the research question and sub-questions posed at the commencement of this research. This chapter commences with a restatement of the findings as presented in the conclusion to Chapter 4. The research question and sub-questions are then addressed. Subsequent to this, the researcher exposes the findings of this study to a process of theorising, and alongside the proposition of a model for decision-making in this case, a theoretical proposition will be advanced. Recommendations for practice and for research are then proposed, and, in bringing this study to a close, a review and concluding comments are presented at the end of the chapter.

REVIEW OF FINDINGS

At the end of the previous chapter, Chapter 4, the findings of this study were summarised in the following statement:

> *In this single school case study, the School's decision makers could only consider* ***the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme*** *when* ***the challenges and constraints of the context*** *were understood;* ***achievable curriculum improvement goals*** *were established; and,* ***communication and collaboration*** *within the community was built.*

These findings were then presented diagrammatically in the following model (Figure 5.1), which has been reproduced here to allow easier reference. This model represents the decision makers' actions in the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme from trigger point to decision point:

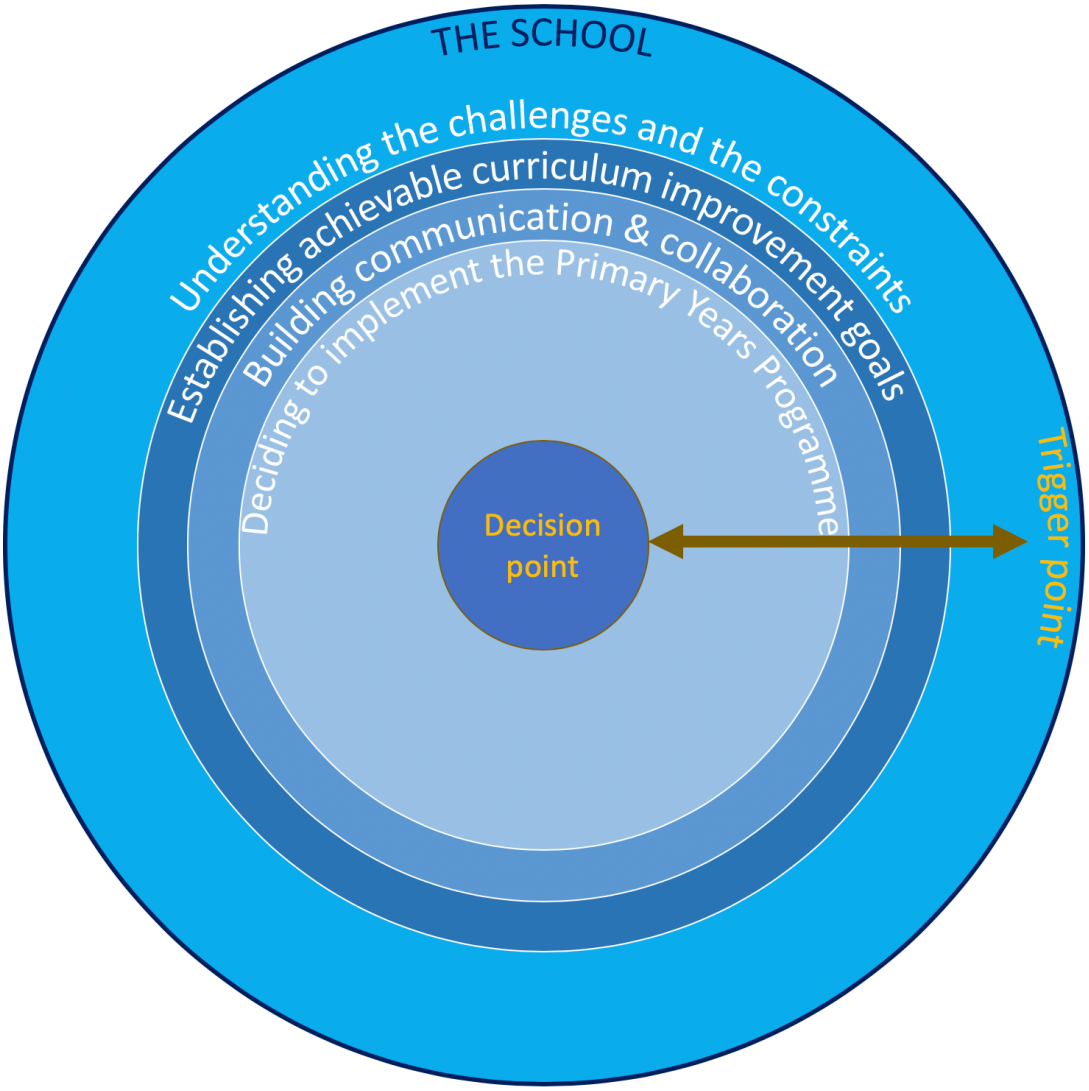

Figure 5.1. Summary of research findings (reproduction).

In the part that follows, these findings are discussed and further developed, and are then presented in a revised model.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the researcher concentrates on addressing the research question and sub-questions which were developed to guide and focus this study. Through this discussion, the links between the interpretations of the study's findings and contemporary literature will be demonstrated. At the outset it should be noted that the interpretive approach adopted for this study implies that the research question and sub-questions cannot be answered; rather they are addressed with a view that the interpretations of the research are provided for the reader to review. The interpretations made from the research will be used to address the questions. It is also acknowledged that this study is context specific. IB World Schools exist in a large variety of locations and social, economic, political and cultural contexts. Therefore,

only limited generalisations can be made from the findings of this single school case study. The researcher will leave the reader of this thesis to determine the extent to which the findings and interpretations can be applied to their own context and situation.

In order to provide a logical structure to this part, the research sub-questions are first addressed before moving to the main research question. The two research sub-questions which were developed to concentrate and focus this study are:

1) *Why do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?*
2) *How do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

The main research question which guided this research is:

> *How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?*

Research sub-question 1: Why do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?

Findings in the existing literature generally indicated that the reasons schools decided to implement the Primary Years Programme were based on the positive perceptions of the IB and its programmes (see Doerksen, 2012; Gough et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2009; Monreal, 2016; Perry et al., 2018; Stillisano et al., 2011). Guided by the findings from those studies, this research sub-question was originally designed with the intention of eliciting a list of programme features which the School's decision makers, while making the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, considered would benefit the School. However, during the data collection, this intention was found to be too narrow. As already indicated in Chapter 4, the Head of Elementary, during the initial interview, acknowledged and indicated that while they considered the programme features during their decision-making process, minimal attention was paid to these features. Instead, the Head of Elementary indicated that the reasons they decided to implement the Primary Years Programme ran far deeper than the list of programme features that was presented prior to the interview (see Appendix F). It was clear that the School's decision makers viewed the circumstances of the School as a more important driver of the decision to implement the IB Programmes.

It appeared from discussion with participants that the challenges that they faced, particularly regarding the confusing and unclear Elementary School curriculum which was in place, and

the constraints that were present (for example, the need to provide a high-quality secular education), were the circumstantial factors which bore a greater influence over their decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The reason the School's decision makers decided to implement the Primary Years Programme was more than simply the programme's innovative features, philosophy, pedagogy, or other features so widely reported in prior research. The findings suggest that the context and environment of the School were factors which played a far greater influencing role than initially expected.

While Gough et al.'s (2014) study of the benefits and challenges associated with Primary Years Programme implementation in thirteen Victorian government schools primarily focused on perceptions of the programme as the main influencing factor in deciding to implement it, it is noteworthy that they also reported that the 'circumstances of the school' (Gough et al., 2014, p. 62) provided a significant factor. Of note, however, is that the schools involved in Gough et al.'s (2014) study implemented the Primary Years Programme because they were facing closure due to falling enrolments and, therefore, needed a 'point of differentiation' (Gough et al., 2014, p. 62). This was not the case for the School participating in this study. It was not facing closure, and, since many other international schools in the city already offered the Primary Years Programme, the implementation of the programme did not provide a point of difference for the School. As discussed in Chapter 4 (Description of the case), the participants believed that the School's Jewish faith-base provided the point of difference for the School. Although the actual circumstances of the School involved in this study differ to the circumstances of the schools involved in Gough et al.'s (2014) study, these findings support Gough et al.'s (2014) claim that the most significant reason school's decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme is as a response to the contextual challenges and constraints, or the *situation*, of the School.

It is curious then, that only Gough et al.'s (2014) study mentions the circumstances of the school as an important factor in deciding to implement the Primary Year Programme. The other studies that were reviewed and referenced when attempting to address the question of why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme focus on the positive features and/or perceptions of the programme as the main reasons for deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme (see Figure 2.6). It appears that these lists of positive programme features which are so widely reported in the relevant literature, although useful

to some degree in understanding the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, only serve to act as a curtain which obscures analysis of the circumstances of a school which is in the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme. Amongst the literature, the lack of inquiry into, and the exposure of the circumstances of the schools which have decided to implement the Primary Years Programme is evidence of this shortcoming with the current literature.

The researcher believes that when inquiring into the reasons that school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme, it is important to consider the contextual and environmental factors which play a part in the decision. The researcher suggests that all future inquiries into the reasons why school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme, whether commissioned by the IB or through independent study, must address this question by focusing beyond the curtain of the positive programme features or perceptions which are extensively reported in the limited literature that is currently available.

Research sub-question 2: How do school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme?

At a superficial level of analysis, the findings show that the process by which the School's decision makers made the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme generally followed that which has been described in the literature. Gough et al. (2014) indicated that the decision process generally involved school leaders first proposing the idea of implementing the Primary Years Programme, and then presenting this proposal to the school's management body for approval. Ateşkan et al.'s (2016) study, which investigated the results of the implementation of the Middle Years Programme in Turkish schools, although focusing on a different IB Programme, reflected a similar decision-making process as Gough et al.'s (2014) study. When the findings of these two studies are coupled with the findings of this research, it suggests that the process of deciding to implement any of the IB programmes is not programme dependent, and the decision to implement any IB programme follows a similar process. This claim, however, is founded on a superficial view and description of the process of deciding to implement an IB programme. In order to truly understand how the School's decision makers decided to implement the Primary Years Programme, a thorough investigation of the process of decision-making was pursued, where a far more detailed picture of the process was generated.

Unlike the participating schools in Gough et al.'s (2014) study and Ateşkan et al.'s (2016) studies, the School had already implemented two other IB programmes - the Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme - in the High School. These two programmes had been in place for approximately seven years before the implementation of the Primary Years Programme in the Elementary School was considered. Therefore, as the School Principal stated, members of the School's leadership team and Board of Directors already had an understanding of the IB and its programmes, the expectations and requirements of programme authorisation and implementation, and the potential benefits that the Primary Years Programme could bring to the School. Although unclear exactly when, the goal of implementing the Primary Years Programme, and thus becoming a three programme IB World School, or a *full continuum school* (Lee et al., 2012), became a strategic priority for the School's leadership and Board (as indicated in the School's *Annual Report 2017-18*).

Given this situation, the researcher, therefore, considered the decision to implement the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes in 2011 as the trigger point (see Figure 2.7) for the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in this School, and so investigated the decision-making actions from this point forward. Accepting that the Primary Years Programme decision trigger point was the implementation of the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes, implied that it was accepted that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was intentionally not rushed, or taken in haste. This then becomes clear evidence of the slow and cautious approach to significant change which the Head of Elementary claimed is taken by the School's leaders. The researcher believed that the lack of haste and long lead in time to the decision to implement Primary Years Programme indicated that the decision was not temporally fixed, limited or restricted.

The investigation of the decision-making process between the trigger and the decision points showed that it was an intricate and complex one. All the decision-making actions taken by the School's decision makers during this period of time were considered the build-up to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, and so were viewed as a part of the Primary Years Programme decision-making process. As the findings show, the School's decision makers, upon their appointment, clearly recognised that the circumstances that the Elementary School was in, as well as the curriculum that was in place, was not conducive to

considering the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. This recognition was as a result of their understanding of the contextual challenges and constraints. Once these were understood, the School's decision makers set the goal of bringing the Elementary School to a position where the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be considered without obstruction from the other significant challenges. In order to achieve this goal, the School's decision makers undertook three actions: 1) understanding the challenges and constraints; 2) establishing achievable curriculum improvement goals; and, 3) building communication and collaboration.

This process of goal setting followed by the School's decision makers closely reflects Sperandio's (2010) recommendation that decision makers have a clear vision for the School's future. Although Sperandio's (2010) quantitative study focused on the factors which influenced schools to offer the Middle Years Programme, her recommendation can equally be applied to school decision makers who are considering the Primary Years Programme. Sperandio (2010) also suggested that a careful and complete process of decision making be undertaken when considering the implementation of the Middle Years Programme. The process of decision making undertaken at the School has already been demonstrated as careful, as evidenced by the slow and cautious approach taken; and complete, as evidenced by the School's decision makers' understanding of the context and environment before and during the decision process. Although it can confidently be stated that the decision-making process undertaken at the School aligns with Sperandio's (2010) recommendation for a careful and complete decision-making process, it is clear that this approach itself was a careful and considered decision made by the School's leaders. The School Principal's anecdotal description of the less than successful decision and implementation process undertaken at another school suggests that there may exist other challenges, expectations, or pressures placed upon school decision makers which force a hasty or rushed decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, which potentially could lead to less than desirable outcomes.

The role of the Board of Directors (the Board) must also be addressed when considering the process of decision-making. Existing literature suggests that a school's board, or management body, must be involved in the decision process due to their fiduciary duties (Gough et al., 2014). It is clear from comments made by both participants that the Board was involved in the process both in a supportive, as well as an active role. As described in Chapter 4 (Description

of the case), the Board supported the School's leaders by providing them with the resources to design and implement strategies needed to improve the Elementary School curriculum so that the existing challenges could be cleared. In addition, the Board also actively provided the oversight, strategic vision and financial support needed to enable the School's leaders to meet the strategic priorities as outlined in the School's *Annual Report 2017-18*. As participants in this study did not include any of the School's Board members, any other detailed discussion regarding the involvement of the Board outside of the comments made by the participants, would be speculative. It is acknowledged that participation of members of the Board could potentially have added additional perspectives to this study. This, which has already been recognised as a limitation, is certainly worth considering for future inquiry and investigation.

This discussion of the two research sub-questions provides a foundation from which the research question, which was developed at the commencement of the study, can be addressed.

> **Research question: How can we understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme?**

In order to address the research question and to discuss how we, as a research community, can understand school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme, it is necessary to first return to the findings of the study, which were summarised in the following statement:

> *In this single school case study, the School's decision makers could only consider* ***the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme*** *when* ***the challenges and constraints of the context*** *were understood;* ***achievable curriculum improvement goals*** *were established; and,* ***communication and collaboration*** *within the community was built.*

When the findings contained within this statement (indicated in bold type) are coupled with the discussion of the research sub-questions above, we find the following conceptual links between the two. The first finding states that the School's decision makers had to understand the challenges and constraints of their context before they could consider a decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. This finding is directly linked to the discussion under research sub-question 1 above. Dunn (2015), in an unrefereed publication, implied that his school's decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was made with extreme caution, and the potential wide-ranging risks and consequences of the decision were closely

assessed. He, however, did not elaborate on what exactly the risks and consequences were. It is significant here to note that by taking the time to understand the School's context and environment, and thereby being able to identify the challenges and constraints that they faced, the School's decision makers were better informed and could better understand both the potential risks and positive and/or negative impacts of implementing the Primary Years Programme on the School.

The next two findings state that the School's decision makers had to establish achievable curriculum improvement goals and build communication and collaboration within their communities before they could consider a decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. These two findings described the actions taken by the School's decision makers as a result of their understanding of the context and environment of the School and are linked to the discussion under research sub-question 2 above. When considering how the School's decision makers decided to implement the Primary Years Programme, it can be noted that after the circumstances of the School had been understood, the School's decision makers determined that these actions were necessary to ensure that the Elementary School's curriculum, processes and structures were in order, and therefore, ideal circumstances existed, before the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme could be considered. Once these findings came to light, the researcher found the actions taken by the School's decision makers closely reflected the body of literature regarding the leadership of IB programme implementation. The literature suggests that strong leadership (Gillam, 1997; Hall et al., 2009), alongside the school leaders' ability to build trust (Hartman, 2008) through communication and collaboration (Visser, 2010) are vital in the process of IB programme implementation. In this research, the School leaders' efforts to establish curriculum improvement goals and a common approach to teaching and learning, was seen as implementing the strong leadership which the literature suggests is needed. In addition, the School leaders' actions to build communication and collaboration as outlined in Chapter 4 (Theory of action), were clear efforts to build trust in their leadership so that the improvement which was required could be facilitated.

Taking these notions as a whole, a key finding of the study shows that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in this single school case study could only occur when the wider context and environment in which the decision was made was understood. If

this is accepted, it is then recognised that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme does not occur in isolation to, or removed from, the situation in which it takes place. Further, it is significant that this decision is intricately linked to, and dependent upon the challenges and constraints of the School's context and environment, as well as the School's decision makers' approach to curriculum leadership and improvement.

At this point, the reader's attention is drawn to Lee et al.'s (2012) study exploring the challenges faced by school leaders in five East Asian IB schools. Lee et al. (2012) found that these leaders faced challenges from five distinct areas as follows: (1) coherence and consistency within and across IB programmes; (2) complexity of school organisation; (3) recruitment and selection of suitably qualified staff; (4) provision of ongoing professional development; and, (5) parental expectations. Although Lee et al.'s (2012) study explored the challenges faced by school leaders after IB programmes were implemented, it is noteworthy that similar challenges presented themselves prior to the implementation of the Primary Years Programme in the School at the centre of this study. The argument can be made that the School can, in fact, be viewed as an already established IB World School as it had already implemented two other programmes, and the implementation of the Primary Years Programme was the next developmental step. Therefore, when viewed from this perspective, it is unsurprising that the challenges the School faced reflected the list put forward by Lee et al. (2012). This observation serves to reinforce the notion that when deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, school decision makers must acknowledge and consider the context and circumstances of the School which includes any existing relationships with the IB or its programmes.

Through the discussion of the research question and sub-questions, the researcher has begun to theorise from the findings of this research. As a result, the researcher now advances a theoretical proposition as a significant outcome of this study.

THEORETICAL PROPOSITION

In this part the researcher uses the findings of this study, and the subsequent discussion of these findings, to advance a theoretical proposition which is:

The decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is only possible in the space where understanding of the context and environment, strong curriculum leadership, trust in leadership, and decision-making on significant curriculum change all coalesce.

In the following section, the researcher presents, for consideration, the development of a model for decision-making which demonstrates the links in this theoretical proposition.

The development of a model

The theoretical proposition which the researcher advances here has been developed as a model which is based on the summary of findings, as presented at the end of the previous chapter, Chapter 4, under Findings (Figure 4.2), and the beginning of this chapter, under Review of Findings (Figure 5.1). The discussion in the previous part of this chapter demonstrated that the findings of this study are intricate and complex. As such, the researcher believed that in order to reflect these intricacies and complexities, further theorising was required. The theoretical model followed a revision process consisting of four stages, with each iteration of the model described below.

Stage 1: Understanding the context and environment

The participants in this study were employed in other roles within this School prior to their promotion to their current leadership appointments (i.e., the School Principal previously as the Head of High School, and the Head of Elementary previously as a teacher). These experiences, amongst others, allowed the School's decision makers to identify the challenges that they faced, and recognise, albeit implicitly, the constraints on their decision-making actions. Through these actions the School's decision makers developed an **understanding of the context** (for example, the physical, social, faith-based, political and economic elements) **and environment** (for example, the perceptions, sentiments and expectations of the various community groups) of the School.

Stage 2: Establishing strong curriculum leadership

The challenges that the School's decision makers faced stemmed primarily from the unclear and confusing Elementary School curriculum. As already discussed, these challenges, which had built up over a period of time, included a lack of curriculum consistency and coherence; a perceived decline in general and academic standards; and a lack of identity. It seems that prior

to the appointment of the current School Principal and the Head of Elementary, the School suffered from a lack of curriculum leadership. The reasons for this were not investigated, as the focus of this study was the Primary Years Programme decision-making that occurred against this background. A concerted effort to address the challenges delivered by the existing Elementary School curriculum was made upon the appointment of the School Principal and the Head of Elementary, who established achievable curriculum improvement goals and targets, or **strong curriculum leadership**. The word *strong* is used here to imply that the School decision makers undertook a number of planned and determined improvement actions that were based upon a clear, shared vision and a set of achievable improvement goals, and actively supported the teaching staff to make improvements to their teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Stage 3: Building trust in leadership

Alongside the two actions described above, the School's decision makers engaged in building cultures of communication and collaboration between the various community groups (i.e., parents, teachers, leadership and the Board). The building of such cultures was undertaken over a significant period of time and involved revisions to the employment conditions and expectations of the teaching staff, as well as increasing the involvement of, and communication with the parent body. The building of cultures of communication and collaboration within the School assisted the **building of trust in the School's leadership** and was an essential precondition to the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

Stage 4: Deciding on significant curriculum change

It was apparent that the School's decision makers had determined that whether or not the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme was taken, the challenges presented by the confusing and unclear Elementary School curriculum had to be addressed. By their actions, the School's decision makers recognised that addressing this challenge would expose the Elementary School to significant changes to its philosophy and pedagogy; teaching and learning practices; and administrative structures. In essence, in deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme, the School's decision makers recognised that they were **deciding on significant curriculum change.**

A model of decision-making

The decision-making model presented here incorporates the scope of the study (i.e., the trigger point to decision point), the findings from the study (i.e., the actions taken by the decision makers to move from the trigger point to the decision point – indicated in grey text), and the notions developed after a process of theorising was undertaken (indicated in capitalised text).

This decision-making model (Figure 5.2) focuses on the actions that were taken between the trigger point and the decision point (see Figure 2.7). The model places the decision point at the centre and surrounds it with the four actions which the decision makers took in order to build the conditions, or space, that was required to reach the decision point. The actions listed in this model are all interrelated, and deeply interconnected. From the perspective of the decision makers, the actions listed in the model moved in and out of their leadership focus as the decision process moved from the trigger point to the decision point.

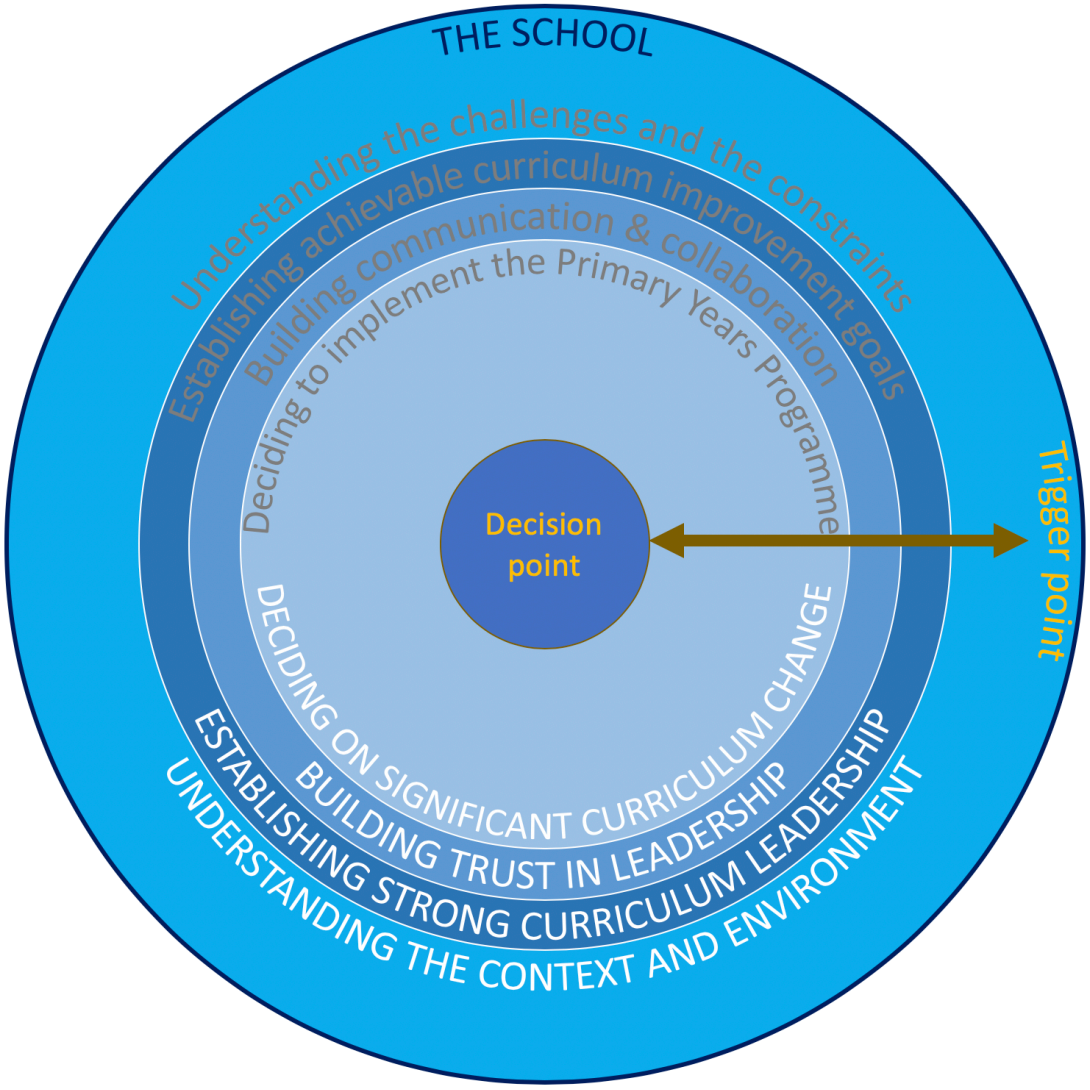

Figure 5.2. A model for decision-making.

The theoretical proposition

In bringing all these notions together, the researcher proposes that **the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is only possible in the space where understanding of the context and environment, strong curriculum leadership, trust in leadership, and decision-making on significant curriculum change all coalesce.** This space is indicated in the model with yellow shading and is presented below (Figure 5.3). Again, the researcher stresses that it is recognised that the theorising which has led to the development of this model is made only for the School at the centre of this study. As such, the researcher is very interested in exploring if this model will hold in other contexts and encourages its testing for further analyses across a number of contexts. Until such deeper analysis is undertaken, the reader is left to determine the benefits of this model in their own context.

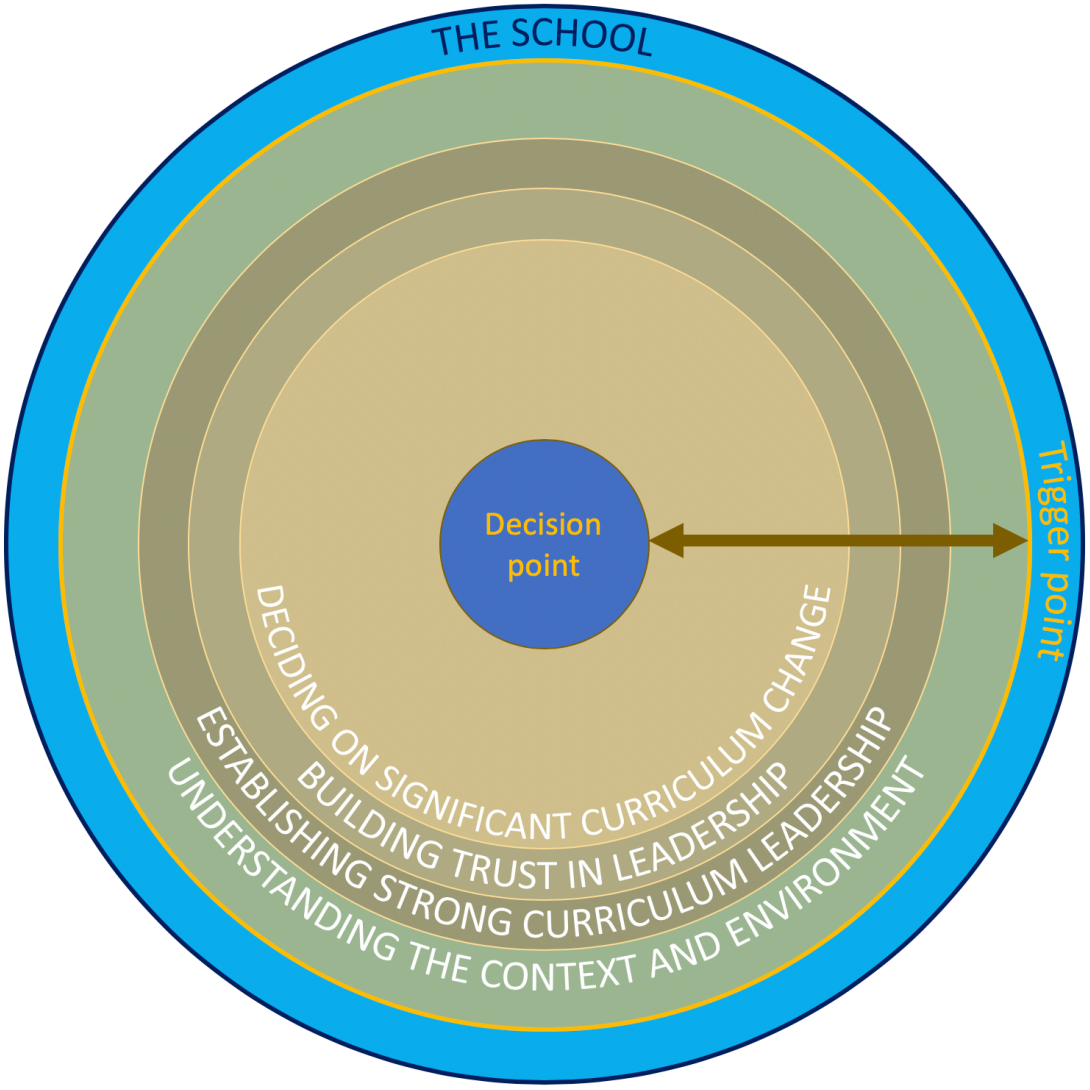

Figure 5.3. Theoretical proposition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for practice

The findings of this study have brought to light that school decision makers who are in the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme must not only consider the positive features that the programme could potentially bring to their school, but, more importantly consider the circumstances and needs of their school by first developing a deep understanding of the context and environment in which their school in placed.

It is acknowledged that the IB requires schools wishing to implement any IB programme to complete a feasibility study while in the consideration phase of the authorisation process (see Figure 1.3). It appears, however, that there is very little guidance from the IB regarding the content of the feasibility study, or the depth or level of detail required. It can only be assumed that the IB consultants who are appointed to work with interested schools through the

authorisation process, provide the school decision makers with the appropriate guidance with regard to these elements of the feasibility study. It is, therefore, recommended that both school decision makers and the IB consultants ensure that the feasibility study is not trivialised and adequately demonstrates the deep understanding of context and environment that is held by the school's decision makers. Additionally, it is recommended that the IB, as an organisation, provide explicit expectations for the contents of the feasibility study, by making the demonstration of deep understanding of the school's context, and the suitability of the programme to the School, a non-negotiable element.

Recommendations for research

This study demonstrated that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme is an intricate and complex one which has not been fully explored. It is acknowledged that there is room for further and wide-ranging inquiry to develop a deeper understanding of school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme.

This study investigated the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in one school located in a particular context and environment. Schools which have implemented, or are in the process of implementing the Primary Years Programme exist in a wide range of contexts and environments, including governmental, non-governmental, private or independent schools; secular schools or schools with a faith base; schools which are subjected to state or nationally mandated curricula; and, schools which have no other IB programmes in place. It is worth further investigation of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme within this wide variety of schools to ascertain any commonalities or differences in the reasons for, or the process of deciding to implement the Primary Years Programme.

Of further research value would be the investigation of schools which, after going through the Primary Years Programme decision process, decide not to implement the programme. It is recognised that, again, such schools exist in a wide variety of contexts, however, investigation in these schools can only be conducted with the support of the IB, as details of interested Primary Years Programme schools are, generally, not publicly available.

In regard to research methodology, this study employed problem-based methodology (Robinson, 1993) as an analytical framework to investigate the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme from the perspective of the decision makers. Problem-based methodology proved a useful framework to develop a theory of action through investigation of the decision makers' personal and contextual constraints to their decision making, their actions in the face of these constraints, and the consequences of those actions. While the theory of action that resulted from the use of the problem-based methodology framework provided a useful tool for analysis, the framework itself does not contain a statement of the challenges faced by the decision makers as an element. The researcher found that the inclusion of the challenges (or dilemmas) faced by the decision makers within the theory of action was integral for a deeper understanding of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The researcher, therefore, recommends that future applications of problem-based methodology for investigating decision-making do not fail to include a detailed description of the challenges (or dilemmas) faced by the decision makers before inclusion of the other elements necessary to construct a theory of action.

This study has only served to begin the process of untangling the complexities and intricacies of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. It now has to be left to others to carry on and explore this phenomenon to greater depth so that the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme can be more fully understood.

REVIEW AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This research was undertaken with the purpose of gaining an understanding of school decision makers' decision to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme. The study was set against a background of the growing number of schools worldwide making this decision and implementing the Primary Years Programme. This observable phenomenon, however, is accompanied by a dearth of research into this area, and therefore, a gap in knowledge and understanding has appeared concerning school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. I was, therefore, interested in understanding the reasons behind, and the process of making this decision, given that it represents a complex process to enact significant curriculum change, including, amongst others, changes in a school's philosophy; pedagogy; and teaching, learning and assessment practices.

The scope of the study focussed specifically on the period of time between the initial idea of implementing the Primary Years Programme (the trigger point) and the actual decision itself (the decision point). This qualitative, single school case study has opened the discussion regarding the phenomenon and provides independent research to add to the corpus of literature regarding decision making around the implementation of the IB programmes.

The use of Robinson's (1993) problem-based methodology as an analytical framework allowed for the decision makers' actions to be investigated and analysed within the context of the challenges they faced; the perceived and actual constraints on their decision-making actions; the actions themselves; and, the consequences of those actions. Subsequent to analysing interview and document data using constant comparative approaches, the researcher developed a theory of action to aid in the explanation of the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme at a Pre-school to Grade 12, faith-based, international school located in a modern Asian city.

The findings show that in this single school case study, three actions on the part of the School's decision makers were first necessary before the implementation of the Primary Years Programme could be considered. The findings demonstrate that the space in which the decision to implement significant curriculum change can be considered, is formed only when school decision makers have developed a deep understanding of their context and environment; have established strong curriculum leadership; and, have built trust in their leadership.

It is suggested that when school decision makers decide to implement the Primary Years Programme at their schools, it is inadequate to solely consider and rely on the lists of programme features that are available in the literature. Instead, a deep understanding of the school is necessary in order to determine if those programme features so widely reported are an appropriate fit with the school's context and environment. Additionally, it is inappropriate to make the decision to implement the Primary Years Programme in haste. It is vital that time is given for the school's context and environment to be deeply understood, for strong curriculum leadership to be established, and for trust in leadership to be built, before deciding to embark on a process of significant curriculum change such as this.

In concluding this study, the reader is asked to view school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme by considering the purchase of a shoe as an analogy. The buyer makes a decision to purchase a shoe based on two considerations: 1) the features of the shoe, and 2) the suitability of that shoe to the purchaser's feet, needs and activity. While the first consideration is usually based on information about the product that is generally easily available (for example, via product reviews, etc.), the importance of the second consideration cannot be underestimated. As an example, while all of the features of a pair of sandals may be known, it would be inappropriate for the buyer to purchase these for a trek in the Himalayas. This is similar to school decision makers' decision to implement the Primary Years Programme. The decision to implement the programme must be based on a knowledge of the features of the programme, but more importantly, be based on a knowledge of the suitability of the programme to the school's context, activity and needs. It is, therefore, a recommendation of this study that the IB, as an organisation, raise the profile of and strengthen the requirement for the feasibility study that must be undertaken by those schools interested in implementing the IB programmes during the initial phase of the programme authorisation process. The feasibility study should be undertaken with an aim of truly understanding the context in which the Primary Years Programme will be implemented and the needs that the programme will fulfil.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethics approval

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Human Research Ethics Committee
Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: Professor Brendan Bartlett

Co-Investigators: Professor Lauren Stephenson

Student Researcher: Sanjay Lalwani (Master Research Student)

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:
How did it come to this? Why does a school implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme?

for the period: 31/12/2018

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: 2018-42E

This is to certify that the above application has been reviewed by the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (ACU HREC). The application has been approved for the period given above.

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that all conditions of approval are adhered to, that they seek prior approval for any modifications and that they notify the HREC of any incidents or unexpected issues impacting on participants that arise in the course of their research. Researchers are also responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research,* the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and the University's *Code of Conduct*.

Any queries relating to this application should be directed to the Research Ethics Manager (resethics.manager@acu.edu.au).

Kind regards

K. Pashley

Date 29/03/2018
Acting Research Ethics Manager

Research Ethics | Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Australian Catholic University
T: +61 2 9739 2646
E: Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au
W: ACU Research Ethics

APPENDIX B: Introduction/permission to conduct research letter

ACU
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

ACU | education and arts

INTRODUCTION LETTER/PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear

As part of a research project for my Master of Philosophy degree being undertaken at the Australian Catholic University (ACU), I am requesting permission to conduct research at your School.

My research project investigates the processes your School has undertaken in deciding to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP). Being a PYP educator myself, I am interested in exploring why and how a school decides to implement the PYP. I aim to approach this project from a leadership and decision-making perspective. The purpose of this project is to broaden knowledge and develop understanding of educational leadership, decision-making and International Baccalaureate Education, and to investigate the interaction between these areas.

My research project will require gathering and analysing relevant records which have documented your School's IB PYP decision making process (including minutes of governing board, executive leadership and/or staff meetings, School publications and announcements, parent information letters, and IB application documents), as well as conducting and examining interviews with various members of your School's community who have been intimately involved with the decision to implement the PYP curriculum framework.

I, therefore, seek your permission to access relevant documents, and conduct interviews with some members of your School's senior leadership team, governing or management body, and teaching staff.

For your information, those invited to participate in the interviews will be provided with a Participant Information Letter and asked to sign a Consent Form. They will be advised of the voluntary nature of this study, and of their right to withdraw at any time without adverse consequences. Confidentiality of participants and the School will be maintained at all times. All information gathered will be de-identified prior to analysis, and only the ACU Student Researcher and Investigators will have access to the de-identified information provided. I have enclosed, for your reference, a copy of the Participant Invitation Letter, Consent Form and Interview Discussion Themes and Key Questions.

The research project, as described, has been designed to minimize risks associated with participation, and has gained the necessary ethics clearance from ACU's Human Research Ethics Committee.

I would appreciate of you could confirm, via any of the contact details listed below, if you are agreeable for this project to be undertaken at your School.

If you have any questions, or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Professor Brendan Bartlett (Chief Investigator), or Professor Lauren Stephenson (Co-Investigator).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Sanjay Lalwani

Encl. Participant Information Letter
Participant Consent Form
Interview Discussion Themes and Key Questions

Faculty of Education and Arts
Locked Bag 4115 Fitzroy MDC Fitzroy Victoria 3065
Level 8, 250 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, VIC 3002

ABN 15 050 192 660
Australian Catholic University Limited
CRICOS registered provider: 00004G

1

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Sanjay Lalwani
CONTACT DETAILS: email

CHIEF INVESTIGATOR: Professor Brendan Bartlett
CONTACT DETAILS: email

CO-INVESTIGATOR: Professor Lauren Stephenson
CONTACT DETAILS: email

APPENDIX C: Participant information letter

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

PROJECT TITLE:	**How did it come to this? Why does a school decide to implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)?**
APPLICATION NUMBER:	**2018-42E**
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	**Professor Brendan Bartlett**
STUDENT RESEARCHER:	**Sanjay Lalwani**
STUDENT'S DEGREE:	**Master of Philosophy**

Dear
You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?
The research project investigates a school's decision regarding the implementation of the IB PYP, and the reasons behind this specific decision. It aims to explore how and why this decision is made to bring light to the phenomenon of a growing number of schools worldwide implementing the IB PYP. This project aims to document the experiences of a school in making this decision in order to inform other school leadership teams, state and national education authorities, and the International Baccalaureate itself.

Who is undertaking the project?
This research project is being conducted by Sanjay Lalwani and will form the basis for the degree of Master of Philosophy at Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Professor Brendan Bartlett, and Professor Lauren Stephenson. Sanjay holds a Bachelor of Education degree in Primary Education from the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership from the Australian Catholic University (ACU). He has experience in international education having worked in the international schools' sector for the past twenty years, a significant portion of which was in an IB World School using the PYP curriculum framework. Sanjay has a strong background in inquiry pedagogy, the use of technology in education, and mathematics education.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?
This research project has been classified as 'low risk', and two potential areas of risk have been identified – 1) that of interview anxiety, and 2) that of inconvenience to the participant. In an effort to minimise interview anxiety, all participants have been provided with the list of interview discussion themes and key questions with this information letter. To minimise the inconvenience of taking part in this project, all participants will be invited to nominate the most convenient date, time and location for the interviews to take place during the data collection period. All participants are welcome to contact the student researcher prior to committing to participating in this project should there be any questions or if clarification over any matter is needed.

What will I be asked to do?
Participation in the research project will involve one 60-minute, audio recorded, one-on-one interview with the student researcher, will potentially a second one-on-one interview lasting no longer than 60 minutes, should further clarification or discussion be needed. The interview discussion themes and key questions accompany this information letter. You will be invited to nominate the most convenient date, time and location for the interview to take place during the data collection period.

How much time will the project take?
You will be asked to commit to one 60-minute, audio recorded, one-on-one interview with the student researcher, and if further clarification or discussion is required, a second one-on-one interview, lasting no longer than 60 minutes.

What are the benefits of the research project?
Although this project offers limited direct benefits to individual participants, this project potentially results in increased knowledge and understanding of decision making in educational contexts, and will add to the academic literature surrounding educational decision making, with specific reference to implementing the IB programmes.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences. In that case, all data collected from you prior to withdrawal will be removed from the study and destroyed.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?
The results of the project may be published in academic journals, for example, the *Journal of Research in International Education*. To maintain participant confidentiality and privacy, all data, once collected, will be de-identified. This means that all identifiable personal and school information will be removed before the data analysis phase. The school will only be referred to in general terms and participants will only be identified by their role in the school community and the IB PYP decision-making process. Participant's personal and school information will only be available to the supervisors and student researcher.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?
Yes. Once the project has been completed and all data has been collected and analysed, the student researcher will forward the results of the project to every participant by email.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?
If you have any questions regarding this project please contact Professor Brendan Bartlett, Professor Lauren Stephenson or Sanjay Lalwani using the contact details listed below.

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?
The study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (review number 2018-42E). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Manager of the Human Research Ethics Committee, care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Manager, Ethics
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research),
Australian Catholic University - North Sydney Campus,
PO Box 968, North Sydney, NSW 2059.
Ph.: +61 2 9739 2519 Fax: +61 2 9739 2870
Email: resethics.manager@acu.edu.au

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

I want to participate! How do I sign up?
Please email Sanjay Lalwani to confirm that you would like to participate in this research project. Please attach signed copies of both consent forms to the email. Sanjay Lalwani will then contact you to schedule an interview.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Sanjay Lalwani

RESEARCHERS' CONTACT DETAILS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Professor Brendan Bartlett email

CO-INVESTIGATOR
Professor Lauren Stephenson email

STUDENT RESEARCHER
Sanjay Lalwani email

APPENDIX D: Consent form

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

ACU | education and arts

CONSENT FORM

Copy for Participant to Keep

TITLE OF PROJECT: Why and how did your school decide to implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme?

APPLICATION NUMBER: _____

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Professor Brendan Bartlett

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Sanjay Lalwani

I ..... *(the participant)* have read (*or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in up to two 60-minute, audio recorded interviews, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time without adverse consequences. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: _____ DATE: _____

Faculty of Education and Arts
Locked Bag 4115 Fitzroy MDC Fitzroy Victoria 3065
Level 8, 250 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, VIC 3002

ABN 15 050 192 660
Australian Catholic University Limited
CRICOS registered provider: 00004G

APPENDIX E: Interview themes and key questions

How did it come to this? Why does a school decide to implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)?

CHIEF INVESTIGATOR: Professor Brendan Bartlett
CO-INVESTIGATOR: Professor Lauren Stephenson
STUDENT RESEARCHER: Sanjay Lalwani

Interview Themes and Key Discussion Questions

Interview Themes	Key Discussion Questions
1. Participant Details	- Describe your role and responsibilities in the School. - Describe any previous experiences in similar roles, or with different curricula, or with any IB Programmes.
2. School	- Describe the School and the wider context in which it operates. - Describe the School's areas of strength and areas for development.
3. IB PYP Curriculum Framework	- Describe your initial impressions or perspectives of the IB PYP. - Describe the experiences you under went to develop your knowledge of the IB PYP. - Describe your current perspectives of the IB PYP.
4. IB PYP Decision-Making Process	- Describe the IB PYP decision-making process from initial concept to the application to be a Candidate School. - Describe how you were involved in the decision-making process. - Describe differing perspectives that were considered during the process. - Describe the needs that you anticipate will be addressed with the introduction of the IB PYP. - Describe how the success of the program at your School will be measured.
5. Community Engagement	- Describe how the various community groups (students, staff, parents, School Council, etc.) were informed of, or involved in, the decision-making process. - Describe how the various community groups were informed of the decision.

APPENDIX F: Reasons for implementing an IB programme (from literature)

THE REASONS A SCHOOL DECIDES TO IMPLEMENT THE IB PYP/MYP
RESULTS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

REASONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PYP

Perceptions of IB Programmes

- Programme's high expectations for students
- Development of socially responsible behaviour
- Relevance and significance
- Engaging and challenging
- Educational philosophy
- Based on sound research
- Provides a clear direction for the school
- Internationally recognised curriculum
- Inquiry based
- Global perspectives

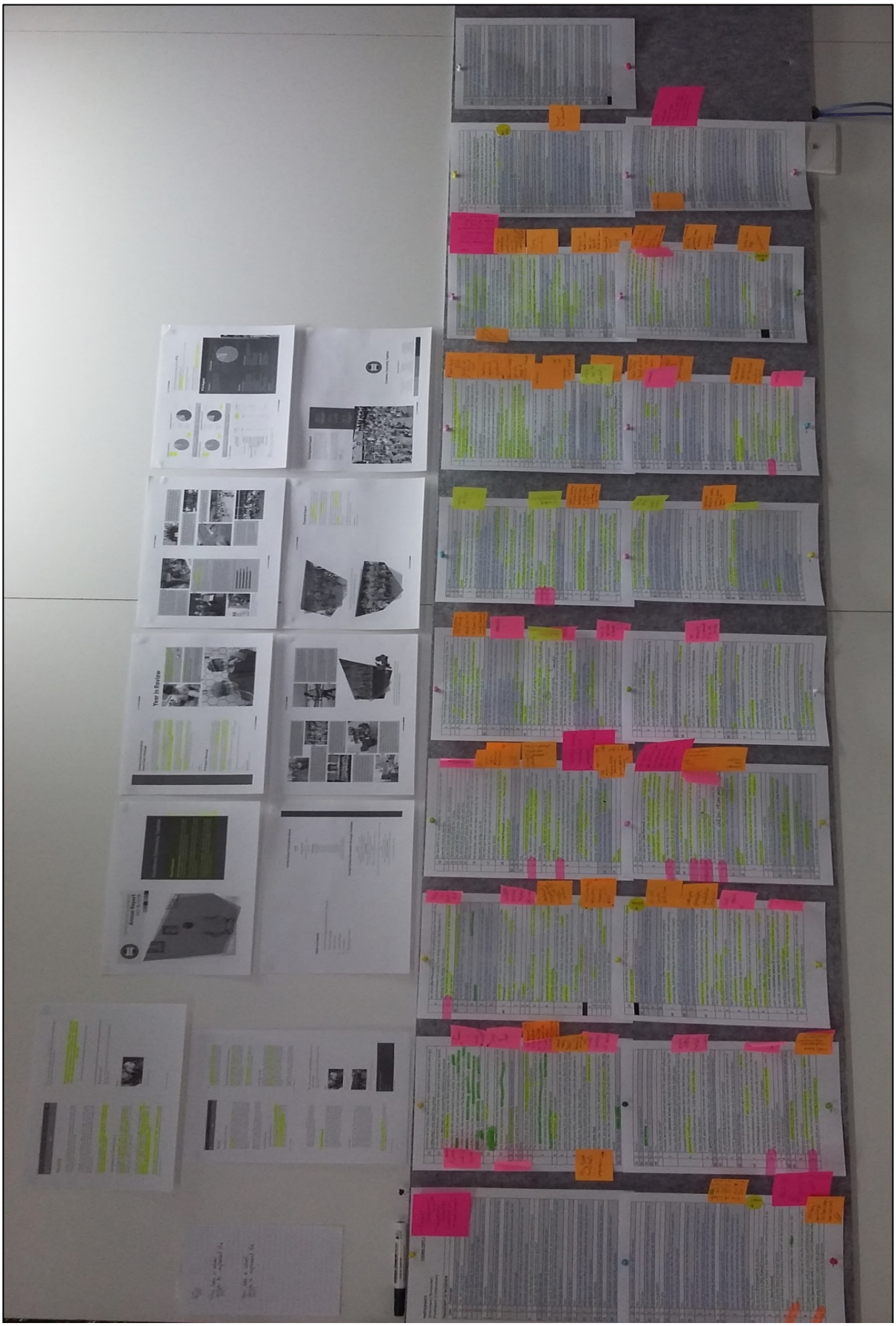
(Doerksen, 2012; Gough et al., 2014; Stillisano et al., 2011)

REASONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MYP

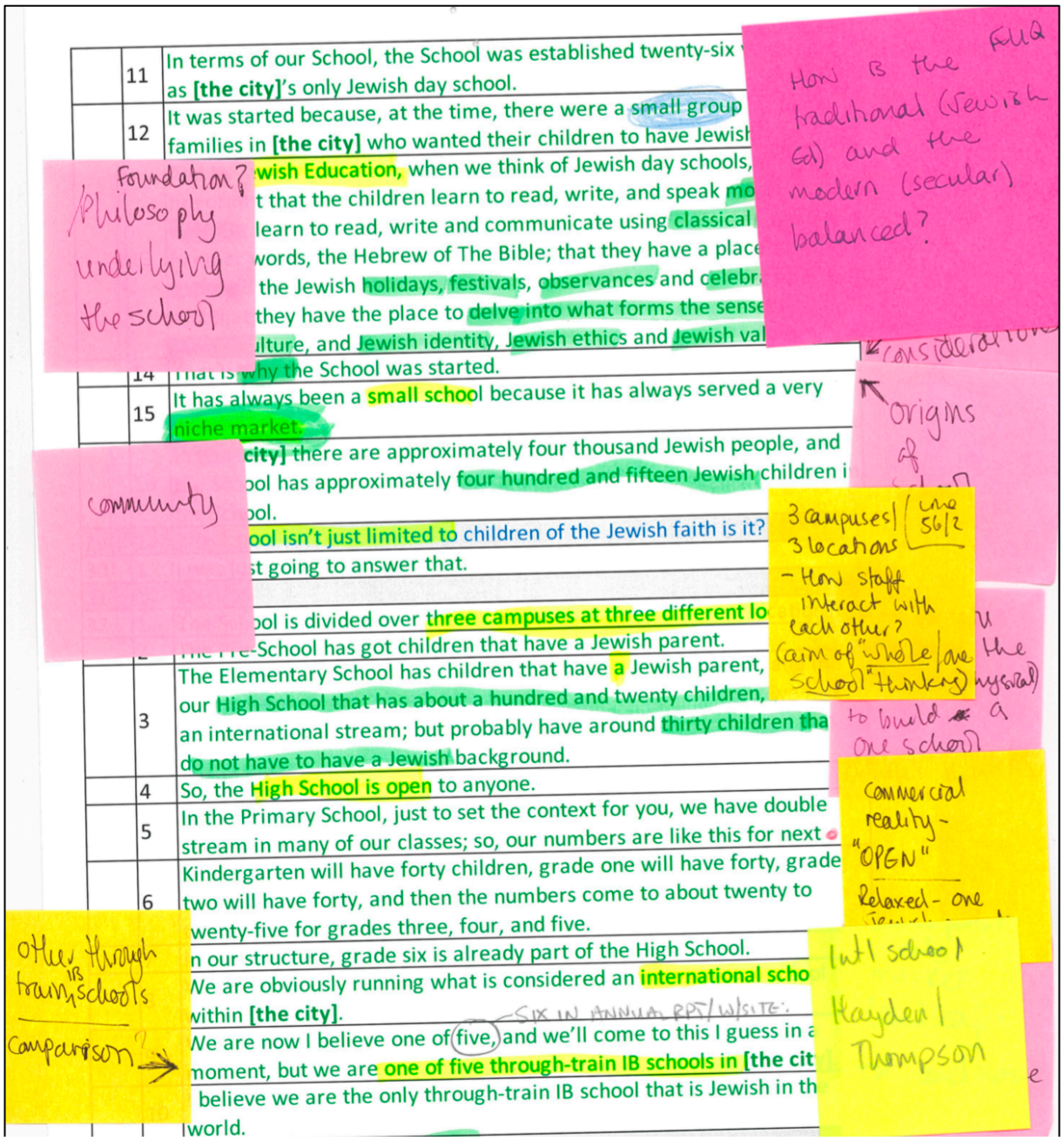
- Pedagogy
- Holistic approach
- Educational philosophy
- Development of global citizenship
- Academic rigor
- Interdisciplinary teaching
- Quality assurance
- Professional development & growth
- Membership of an international education organisation
- Flexibility (to develop course content)
- Assessment
- Recognition of the IB brand
- Breadth
- Inclusive nature
- Curriculum support
- Marketing
- Links to other schools

(Monreal, 2016; Sperandio, 2010; Visser, 2010; Wright, Lee, Tang & Tsui, 2016)

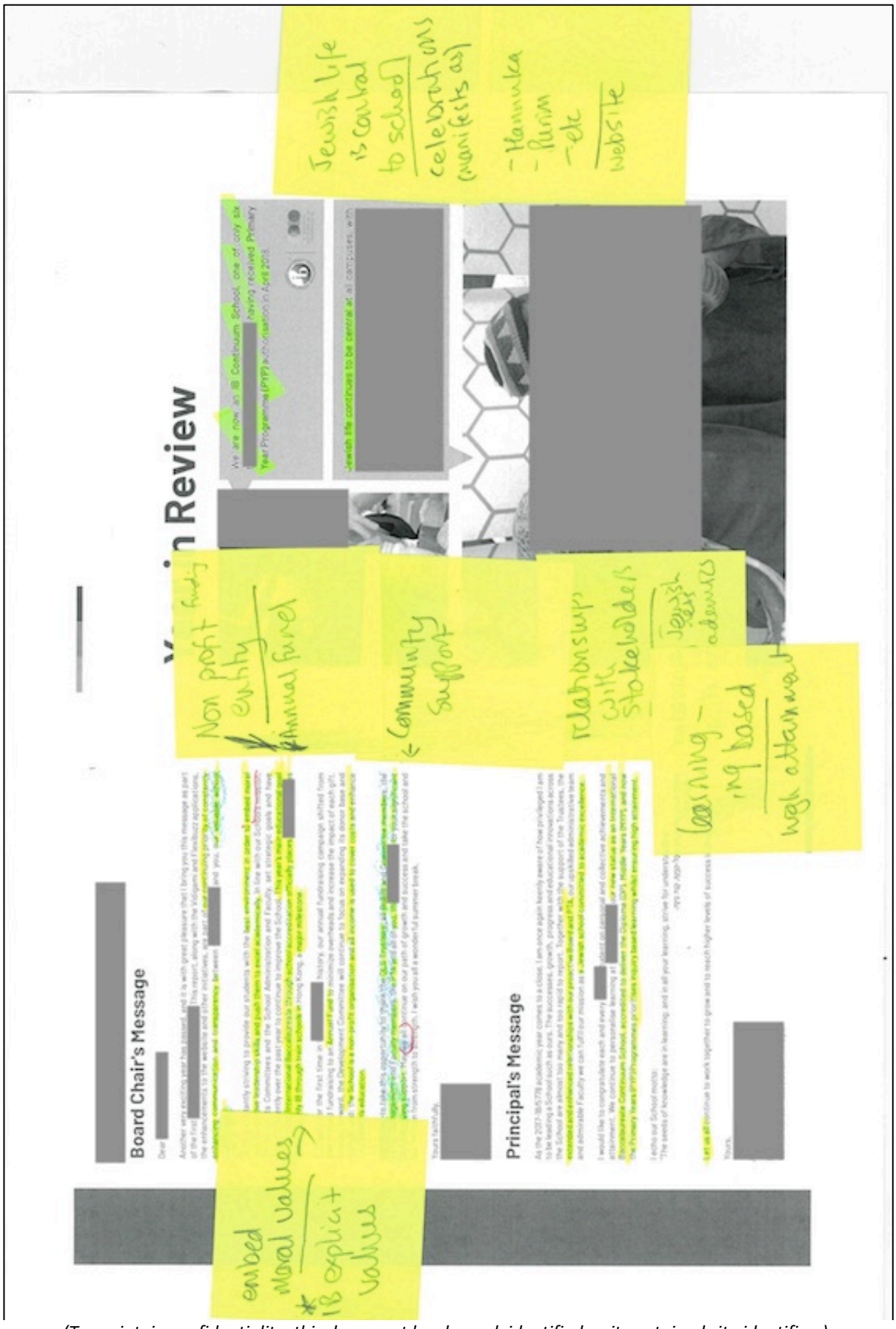
APPENDIX G-1: Image of data during coding



APPENDIX G-2: Segment of coded data – Interview transcript

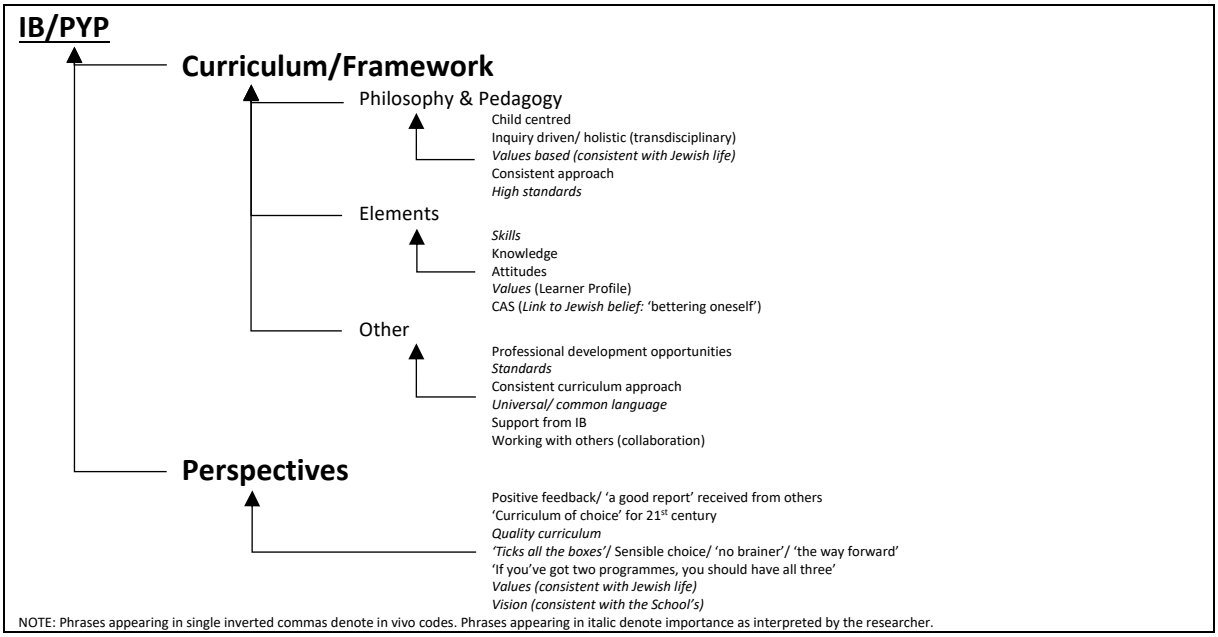


APPENDIX G-3: Segment of coded data - Document



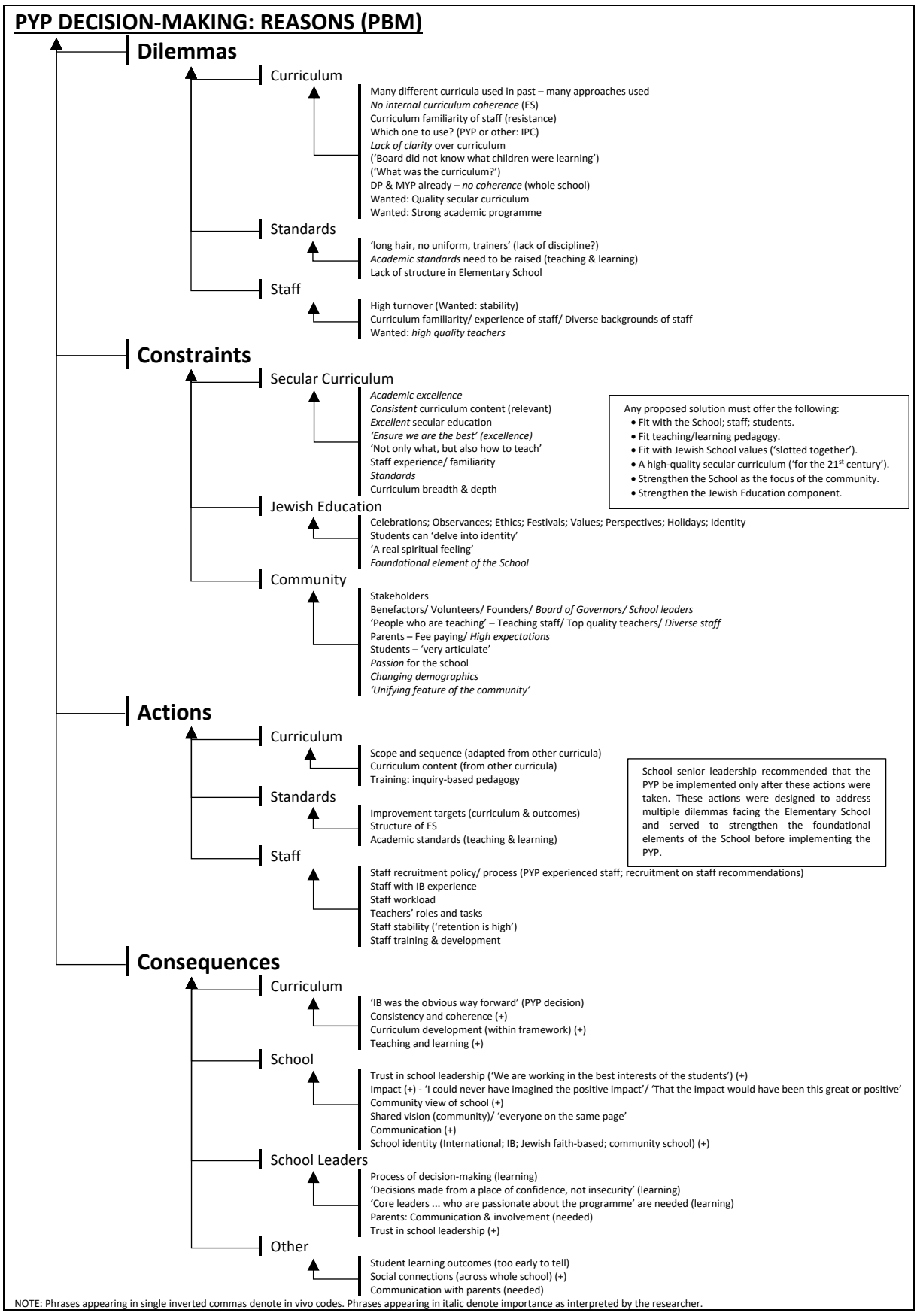
(To maintain confidentiality, this document has been deidentified as it contained site identifiers).

APPENDIX H-1: Data matrix: Category: IB/PYP



NOTE: Phrases appearing in single inverted commas denote in vivo codes. Phrases appearing in italic denote importance as interpreted by the researcher.

APPENDIX H-2: Data matrix: Category: PYP decision-making – Reasons (PBM)



NOTE: Phrases appearing in single inverted commas denote in vivo codes. Phrases appearing in italic denote importance as interpreted by the researcher.